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RECORD OF A MEETING BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE VICE  
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES IN WASHINGTON ON FRIDAY 26  
JULY 1985 AT 1500

Present:

The Prime Minister

Vice President Bush

HM Ambassador, Washington

Mr. Craig Fuller (Chief of Staff  
to the Vice President)

Mr. Charles Powell

Mrs. R. Ridgway (Assistant  
Secretary of State for European  
Affairs)

Terrorism

The Prime Minister recalled her earlier discussion of terrorism with Vice President Bush during their recent meeting in London and the joint statement which they had issued. Subsequently it had become clear that other countries were not prepared to take part in measures to isolate Beirut Airport. France in particular had been adamant that it would not support such measures. She saw no point in Britain and the US going ahead alone. Other means would have to be found to enforce security at Beirut Airport.

Vice President Bush said that the Task Force which President Reagan had appointed was undertaking a very serious study of the problem of terrorism and responses to it. There was some fascinating new technology which could help,

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for instance in combatting hijacking. He mentioned exotic gases which could be fired into the cockpit of a hijacked aircraft. He had noted that, during the discussion of terrorism at the International Democratic Union Conference that morning, M. Chirac had taken the view that the Soviet Union was the cause and origin of a great deal of international terrorism. He himself was more sceptical. The Prime Minister agreed that it was difficult to identify precise evidence of Soviet responsibility for terrorist acts, although she had no doubt that they fostered the climate in which terrorism flourished. She pointed to the Marxist leanings of the PIRA.

Vice President Bush said that there was a certain frustration in the US about the difficulties in the way of hitting back against terrorists. "We want to be macho, but can't find a way to express our machismo." There was little doubt that a small group of countries were primarily responsible for terrorism. Libya was the worst offender. It was a pity that groups opposed to Qadhafi had not taken greater hold there. Although the US had worked closely with President Asad of Syria over the release of the hostages, there was no doubt that he too was deeply implicated in support for terrorism.

#### Middle East

The Prime Minister said that she had recently seen King Hussein and had subsequently arranged for a message to be sent to Secretary Shultz giving an account of her talks. The King had transmitted a list of Palestinians from whom members of a joint Jordanian/Palestinian delegation for talks with the US might be drawn. It ought to be possible for the US to find

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four names on the list whom they could accept. It was not envisaged that these Palestinians would conduct negotiations with Israel. They were selected simply to open a dialogue with the US, which should in turn open the way for the PLO to accept UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. She hoped that the US Administration would respond quickly. Otherwise there was a risk that King Hussein's initiative would lose momentum. There was also the possibility that an Arab Summit would be held soon and complicate peace efforts.

Vice President Bush said that he understood there were difficulties over at least some of the names on the Jordanian list, although the US had not rejected them as had the Israelis. The Prime Minister repeated the importance of an early response to King Hussein. Time was of the essence, and it was important to make progress while Mr. Peres remained Prime Minister. Once the arrangements had been made for Ambassador Murphy to meet a joint delegation, we would be ready to receive a Jordanian/Palestinian delegation including former Mayor Milhem and Bishop Khoury in London.

#### Southern Africa

The Prime Minister said that she had been greatly irritated by the French action in tabling a Security Council resolution calling for economic measures against South Africa. This had come without warning a matter of days after the French had subscribed to a joint statement by the Ten which had not made any provision for such measures. It exposed the hollowness of French claims to believe in strengthening political cooperation in Europe. The Prime Minister continued that we understood the Administration's difficulties with Congress over economic measures. But she hoped that if mandatory sanctions against South Africa were proposed at the

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UN, the United States would veto them.

Vice President Bush said that the matter had been discussed in the National Security Council that morning. The US would not "go the sanctions route", although there was an evident need for greater efforts to explain the Administration's policy. The Prime Minister said that the United Kingdom equally rejected the sanctions, and she had made this clear in the course of her television broadcasts that morning. The best hope of breaking down apartheid lay in economic development. Mrs. Suzman had made some very helpful public statements to the effect that sanctions would be counter-productive, and would bear most heavily on the black population. We should rest on these. A sustained effort was called for to convince President Botha and his Government of the need for change. She had represented this to him strongly when they had met last year, making a particular point of the need to halt forced removals. This seemed to have had some effect. But President Botha had to be persuaded to find some means to involve the black population in political life. It was difficult to see a way forward which would not touch off revolution.

Vice President Bush said that he could guarantee that there would be no change of policy by the United States on sanctions. The Prime Minister said that she assumed that Britain and the United States would both abstain on the French Draft Resolution currently before the Security Council unless it were amended to provide for mandatory sanctions, in which case both would veto. Vice President Bush agreed.

(At this point the Prime Minister was summoned away for some minutes for a telephone conversation with the President and Mrs. Reagan at Camp David.)

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Strategic Defence Initiative

Vice President Bush said there had been some discussion in the National Security Council that morning of the British Government's response to the Administration's invitation to participate in SDI research. The feeling had been that, rather than set the target of a specific sum for contracts to be awarded to Britain, it would be better to work for a comprehensive agreement setting out the terms and conditions of British participation, and to go forward in the meantime with a number of immediate projects. He emphasised that the US very much wanted the United Kingdom to take part on a substantial scale.

The Prime Minister recalled that the UK had been the first country to offer to take part in SDI research. There was a long history of cooperation in sensitive defence research between the two countries, and Britain had very considerable expertise. Britain's record as an ally of the US was unequalled. We played a crucial role in the Central Front in Europe. History showed that we had stood firm when others had wavered or fallen. Full account should be taken of this in working out the arrangements for our participation. We would want a substantial proportion of the research work, consonant with our relationship and with our scientific standing. We wanted to be full and worthy partners, not just small component makers. Vice President Bush said that he had the impression that not enough work had yet been done by the US Government agencies concerned. He could assure the Prime Minister that if problems arose, the President would be

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anxious to see them smoothed over. The Prime Minister said that it was important to get a joint working group together as quickly as possible to discuss areas of work in which British firms and laboratories should take part, as well as the terms and conditions of our participation. She repeated that the British share in SDI work must be substantial.

The meeting ended at 1550.

CDP

27 July, 1985.

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