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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Credential Ceremony of Israeli Ambassador Zalman Shoval

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President for
National Security Affairs
Richard Haass, Special Assistant to the President
and Senior Director for Near East and South Asian
Affairs

Zalman Shoval, Israeli Ambassador to the United
States

DATE, TIME December 17, 1990, 3:42 - 3:55 p.m.
AND PLACE: Residence

The President: Welcome officially. I was pleased with the Prime Minister's visit. The mood was good. You came at a very interesting time. I just hope we can make things move forward. He came here in a most engaging way. We were very pleased. (C)

Ambassador Shoval: He too was pleased; he was very appreciative with what you told him. (C)

The President: When did he go to back? (U)

Ambassador Shoval: Thursday night, after meeting with Secretary Baker. On the way to the airport, he got a cable concerning the stabbings, which put him in a bad mood. In the old days, violence was directed at military and strategic objectives. But just to go in and kill three workers they knew, this is what aroused a terrible Israeli reaction. The government was asked to do something. A democratic government must do something to assuage popular will. It is not easy. (C)

The President: So what's the status as of today? (U)

Ambassador Shoval: The government has decided to deport four members of Hamas; these four were associated with pamphlets calling on people to stab Jews. After difficult deliberations, they decided to expel the four. But there must be legal procedures and the four can appeal to the Supreme Court. (C)

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The President: One more outbreak of a problem. (C)

General Scowcroft: You know we take a dim view of deportation.

(C)

Ambassador Shoval: I know. If something comes up in the UN and you express yourselves, we hope there might be a mention of those killed. Israel feels this is a double standard. We know your view of deportations. (C)

The President: But those being deported did not do the stabbing.

Ambassador Shoval: No, but they are part of Hamas. (C)

The President: I hope nobody thinks we in the U.S. condone stabbings. The issue is cause and effect and the world only notices the latter. Is there a new UN action? (C)

General Scowcroft: It will be added to the existing one. (U)

Ambassador Shoval: Why not add a reference to the stabbings? (C)

The President: We can try. (C)

Richard Haass: It would be possible to try but if we cited one incident, others would want to cite others. (C)

Ambassador Shoval: It would help. (U)

The President: But what Richard is saying is that it might prove hard to contain it. Anyhow, well see. (C)

Ambassador Shoval: Thank you.

(Closing pleasantries)

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