

THE WHITE HOUSE
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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Meeting with Jordanian/Palestinian
Delegations (U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
James A. Baker, III, Chief of Staff
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs
Edward Djerejian, Assistant Secretary of
State
Dennis Ross, Director, Policy Planning Staff
Richard Haass, Special Assistant to the
President and Senior Director, Near East
and South Asian Affairs, Notetaker

Jordanian

Dr. abd al-Salam Majali, Head of Delegation
Lieutenant General Abd al-Hafiz Marai
Dr. Marwan Muasher
Dr. Fayiz Tarawnah

Palestinian

Dr. Haidar Abdel Shafi, Head of Delegation
Dr. Saib Arigat
Ghassan al-Khatib
Saud al-Amiri

DATE, TIME December 17, 1992, 10:40 - 11:00 a.m.
AND PLACE: The Oval Office

The President: We are concerned about the deportations. I hope everyone understands our policy. We have weighed in with Israel. I hope their courts will invalidate their decision. We are concerned also about violence and how it should be coped with. We do not think deportations are the right way. (Ø)

Dr. Majali: Violence is creating violence. But incidents of this kind are creating too strong of a reaction from Israel, which is a state. It must control itself. The real answer is to end the occupation. Once the negotiations show real potential the violence will go down. (Ø)

Dr. Shafi: We accord Palestinians the right to combat the occupation, including the use of force. But we condemn cold-blooded killing. But Israeli are killing Palestinians in cold blood. Death squads are active. All violence is linked to the

occupation. There is a vicious circle as long as there is no peace. Hence the importance of progress. Deportations -- especially mass deportations -- will not solve anything. They will only deepen the circle of violence. It is important for the peace process to move. This meeting offers an opportunity to appraise where we are. What we have is 13 months without progress. (Ø)

The President: I keep worrying that the extremes on both sides will want nothing done. (Ø)

Chief of Staff Baker: We obviously share your distress at this development. I worry that those who are instigating violence are doing so with the express purpose of sabotaging the peace process. It is important not to play into their hands. You were right to say that violence leads to violence. We won't depart from our long standing opposition to deportations or violence. But despite the fact that the peace process might not have made as much progress as all had hoped, the peace process is the best hope. I hope it continues and expect the next Administration to continue. (Ø)

Dr. Majali: Deportations are not an answer. These people will only be retrained and come back. The Israelis are simply adding fuel to the fire. These people will also be violent in Lebanon. (Ø)

Dr. Shafi: Early this morning I was called by a Jewish friend from Israel. He said people were saying that the Palestinian delegation was supporting the deportations and asked me if that was true. I said certainly not and that were denouncing them as a violation of human rights regardless of who was affected. (Ø)

The President: Was this person against the deportations? (U)

Dr. Shafi: Yes. I would like to thank you for this meeting. It is necessary to appraise the past 13 months. You are the author and the initiator of the peace process. We followed closely what you said in Madrid about fairness, justice, Resolution 242 and land for peace. We remain committed to the peace process despite the hard constraints we accepted as the price for getting Shamir to join. Nevertheless, we remain committed and want to see progress. There has been a frustrating lack of progress after 13 months. 242 is explicit in the terms of reference. There is no ambiguity regarding withdrawal and the inadmissability of acquiring territory by force. The problem is Israel's having established facts illegally in the occupied territories. We agreed to an interim period to deal with the human reality. I am sorry to see that we Palestinians are often accused of posturing and procrastinating. This is unfair. The difficulty is that Israel wants to legitimize what it has done in the occupied territories. I don't think we will get anywhere unless pressure on Israelis is exercised. I understand there can be no imposed solution, but given the disparity between Israel and the Palestinians in military strength (although we are strong morally and politically) we need pressure. (Ø)

The President: We will be talking about what we can do to give the process a push. I am convinced the next Administration will want to remain involved in a fair and equitable way. Governor Clinton is committed to the process. I am unclear as to what any additional pressure or push should be. I hope we are clear, however, in our opposition to deportations. I am glad to be able to receive you in the White House. It is symbolic of our involvement and respect for those who have participated in the peace process. It is a way to say thank you. (Ø)

-- End of Conversation --