

June 9, 1981
**Telegram from Washington Embassy to Foreign
Office, Subject: administration response**

Citation:

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Summary:

Secretary of State Alexander Haig, who maintained close ties with the Israeli diplomats, told the Israeli ambassador in a phone conversation on 9 June 1981 that Israel's action in Baghdad caused a serious complication for the U.S., reiterating that "President Reagan thinks the same".

Original Language:

Hebrew

Contents:

Original Scan
Translation - English

[Translators note: all words in double quotes "" are words used in English in the original Hebrew document]

Ministry of Foreign Affairs- Communications Division

Top Secret

Date: 090681 [June 9th 1981]

Topic: Administration's response

Top Secret/ Urgent for morning

In accordance with the instructions of the Prime Minister, this morning I spoke with Haig who is at Camp David with the President and the president of Mexico.

I told him that I was asked by the Prime Minister to express to him our disbelief and indignation at the speed with which they published the sever condemnation of Israel (which we reject and view as unjust), before they received the prime minister's letter to Reagan, and this after I had informed them of its imminent arrival.

Haig replied by asking us to view it in conjuncture with the whole sequence of events and developments: □The State Department's first announcement, immediately following the Israeli government's message, was aimed at calming everyone down.

He is certain it achieved its goal to a certain degree. □Right after that tremendous pressure began to mount, from the leadership of the Senate and the House to issue an even more severe condemnation of Israel. At the same time, the Saudis and other Arab states too applied great pressure on the administration. In addition, protests and concerns were expressed by Europe and other friends of the US across the globe. This sticky situation which became more and more heated made the administration feel that it must make an announcement that will take the sting out of the criticisms both domestically and abroad. That is why we published the condemnation, and- in his opinion- the issue was concluded. We of course noticed that the message was worded in political terms, not judicial language. The first message, due to its moderate tone, garnered anger and severely negative responses, while the second one brought about the desired measure of calm.

Haig said there will be no further condemnations. They will adopt from this point on what he described as "a holding position", which he believes to be a logical position. We must recall that our actions in Bagdad caused serious complications for the US, and it is along those lines which president Reagan is thinking.

With that said, Haig does not think that from a historic perspective any damage was done by the actions of the air force.

He said that from the side of the US administration "There will be no crazy action and statements".

He himself will not agree to be party to anymore "Difficulties". Haig mentioned that his first announcement met with un-positive responses from other circles in the US government, including the Whitehouse.

But even with Haig's good will and desires to pinpoint and soothe the points of friction with Israel, the Prime Minister cannot expect that the US administration "will condone" the Israeli action.

Haig requested that I remind the Prime Minister of Haig's words to him in Jerusalem regarding our mutual strategic goals.

The Secretary stands behind what he said then. Regarding the current disagreement he said "please tell the PM that he will not come of it badly". In the response of the administration there is no panic and emotionality, and they will do all in their power

that congress not take action which will hurt the military aid and supply to Israel.
We agreed that after the President's visit to Mexico we will meet for candid discussion
to review the situation and see how we move forward.

Evron.