

THE WHITE HOUSE
CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

ID# 271288

C0074

INCOMING

DATE RECEIVED: SEPTEMBER 19, 1991

NAME OF CORRESPONDENT: THE HONORABLE ROBERT ABRAMS

SUBJECT: URGES THE PRESIDENT TO RECONSIDER HIS
DECISION NOT TO APPROVE LOAN GUARANTEES
FOR ISRAEL

ROUTE TO: OFFICE/AGENCY	(STAFF NAME)	ACTION		DISPOSITION	
		ACT CODE	DATE YY/MM/DD	TYPE RESP	C COMPLETED D YY/MM/DD
LANNY GRIFFITH		ORG	91/09/19	DA	09/10/02
REFERRAL NOTE:					
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COMMENTS:

ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENTS: MEDIA:L INDIVIDUAL CODES: 2200

IG MAIL USER CODES: (A) (B) (C)

*ACTION CODES:	*DISPOSITION	*OUTGOING	*
*	*	*CORRESPONDENCE:	*
*A-APPROPRIATE ACTION	*A-ANSWERED	*TYPE RESP=INITIALS	*
*C-COMMENT/RECOM	*B-NON-SPEC-REFERRAL	*OF SIGNER	*
*D-DRAFT RESPONSE	*C-COMPLETED	*CODE = A	*
*F-FURNISH FACT SHEET	*S-SUSPENDED	*COMPLETED = DATE OF	*
I-INFO COPY/NO ACT NEC		*OUTGOING	*
*R-DIRECT REPLY W/COPY *			*
*S-FOR-SIGNATURE *			*
*X-INTERIM REPLY *			*

REFER QUESTIONS AND ROUTING UPDATES TO CENTRAL REFERENCE
(ROOM 75, OEOB) EXT-2590
KEEP THIS WORKSHEET ATTACHED TO THE ORIGINAL INCOMING
LETTER AT ALL TIMES AND SEND COMPLETED RECORD TO RECORDS
MANAGEMENT.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 2, 1991

Dear Mr. Abrams:

On behalf of the President, thank you for your letter concerning U.S. policy toward loan guarantees for Israel. Since the end of the war in the Persian Gulf, the United States has worked hard to take advantage of the potentially historic opportunity to move the Arab/Israeli peace process forward. In recent months, the Administration has achieved a great deal--fashioning a process that, for the first time, would launch direct negotiations among Israel, Palestinians, and all of Israel's Arab neighbors.

Over the past two years, Israel has opened its doors to more than 300,000 Soviet and Ethiopian immigrants. The steady influx of men, women, and children from around the world over past decades has been central to Israel's success. The United States has long supported immigration to Israel, and President Bush has been pleased to play a role in this enterprise. It is no exaggeration to state that many of the Soviet and Ethiopian Jews now in Israel would not be free and safe were it not for years of sustained U.S. effort.

The Administration is currently involved in extremely sensitive negotiations to pin down the final details that are related to convening a peace conference. What must be avoided is anything that would distract the parties from the hard choices and decisions that they have yet to make to get to the negotiating table.

As you know, President Bush asked Congress to defer for 120 days consideration of Israel's request for \$10 billion in additional U.S. loan guarantees that are intended to help Israel absorb its many new immigrants. President Bush has made it clear that the request for delay in no way calls into question the need for a strong and secure Israel. As the President has said. "For more than 40 years, the United States has been Israel's closest friend in the world, and this remains the case and will as long as I am President of the United States."

Delay is being urged by the President for the best of all reasons: peace. It is the President's judgement that if Congress addressed absorption assistance now, a contentious debate will result--one that could have the effect of losing the participation of either the Arab or the Israeli negotiating partners. If this were to occur, the best chance to promote Arab/Israeli peace since the Camp David Accords will be lost,

with uncertain and potentially dangerous consequences in the region. Postponement will also afford both the Administration and Congress an opportunity to study Israel's needs in greater detail and to craft a program that has the greatest likelihood of promoting successful absorption at minimal taxpayer cost, while at the same time contributing to prospects for peace.

I appreciate your sharing your views with the Administration on this important issue. Please let me know if we can be of assistance to you in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Debra R. Anderson".

Debra R. Anderson
Deputy Assistant to the President and
Director of Intergovernmental Affairs

The Honorable Robert Abrams
Attorney General
State of New York
Department of Law
120 Broadway
New York, NY 10271



STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF LAW
120 BROADWAY
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10271

ROBERT ABRAMS
ATTORNEY GENERAL

L. Guffert

September 13, 1991

The Honorable George Bush
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing to express my shock and dismay at your astonishing characterization of supporters of the loan guarantees for Israel as a "hostile horde" and your complaints against the "powerful political forces" that have objected to your threat to use your veto to delay those urgently needed guarantees.

For twenty years the United States has pursued a bi-partisan human rights agenda focused on freedom for Soviet Jews. Democrats and Republicans, both in the White House and the Congress, have challenged the Kremlin at every turn to set Soviet Jews free and allow them to go wherever they please, including to their historic homeland, Israel.

Now, all our hopes are being realized. The gates are open and unprecedented numbers of Jews are leaving for Israel -- to be reunited with their families, to be able to practice their religion unmolested, to be free.

This joyful humanitarian event, the free movement of hundreds of thousands of people, should be celebrated and assisted. Israel is straining to absorb the vast numbers of newcomers and needs to build huge numbers of new housing units. They are not asking for us to pay for the housing. They are not even asking for us to lend the money for the housing. All we are asked is to help guarantee their loans. And as Israel has never defaulted on its loans, this is not a financial decision, but rather a political one.

The loan guarantees are a legitimate need, and that need is now. There

should be no delay, Mr. President, of any length, let alone until 1992.

In my view, there is no justification for any linkage between the absorption loan guarantees and the peace process, and your effort to connect the two has put excessive, undue pressure on the Israelis to make concessions even prior to the onset of the peace process. Freedom for Soviet Jews should be supported on its own merits. Basic human rights and basic human freedom demand that we Americans continue to help Soviet Jews in their final steps to freedom from decades of Communist tyranny.

I have recently returned from leading a group of state Attorneys General to Israel, and it is clear to me that no one in the Middle East wants peace more than the Israelis. Their actions this week to end the hostage standoff are one further sign of that determination.

We must remember that the U.S. is not a disinterested umpire to the Arab-Israeli dispute. Israel is our strong, loyal and democratic ally. Israel was terrorized by Iraqi Scud missiles but showed restraint and accommodated U.S. goals during the Gulf War.

Therefore, Mr. President, instead of castigating the supporters of the Israeli loan guarantees, who, after all, are doing nothing more than exercising their First Amendment rights of free speech, I urge you to join them in support for providing guarantees immediately. Acting now need not harm the peace process. But acting now will aid a magnificent humanitarian victory.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Robert Abrams", written in a cursive style.

ROBERT ABRAMS