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Document Number: 168173

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168173

PC

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 27, 1990

Dear Mayor Koch:

I have read your letter of May 25 very carefully. I appreciate the time you devoted to writing about the serious issues of peace in the Middle East and the U.S.-Israel relationship.

Every occupant of this office since the birth of Israel, myself included, has believed strongly in U.S. support for the security and well-being of Israel. We have an enduring, fundamental commitment to Israel, one which I am determined to build upon.

I hope you will take another look at our statements. Nothing has changed in our policy on Jerusalem: we want a united city, never to be divided again, with its final status to be decided in negotiations. With respect to the recent violence, no one has blamed Israel for the act of a disturbed individual. The violent aftermath of that event, however, attests to the fundamental point that people must have the hope provided by a promising peace process -- something we continue to believe is in the interest of Israel, the Palestinians, and the United States. Finally, by now you will have noted our veto of a U.N. Security Council resolution on a U.N. role in the Occupied Territories. We vetoed because this resolution went far beyond the limited idea that we were prepared to consider and that Israel had accepted in the past.

Thank you again for your thoughts.

Sincerely,



The Honorable Edward I. Koch
Robinson, Silverman, Pearce
Aronsohn & Berman
1290 Avenue of the Americas
New York, NY 10104

900028

Close on

NSC Log #4288

Pres Sgd LTL
6/27

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

05/25

D.

Jane did a note to Sittman for NSC
to do a response to this letter,
but forgot to make a copy for you.

She asked that I leave you this note.

sew

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FROM/LOCATION

1. Jane Hilliard/The White House

TO/LOCATION/TIME OF RECEIPT

1. Linda Casey/Kennebunkport

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TOR: 25 2108Z

Needs thought
reply

CS

INFORMATION ADDRESSEES/LOCATION/TIME OF RECEIPT

1.

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SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS/REMARKS:

Linda:

For the President, FYI, Koch was most anxious he see the attached.
I have staffed to NSC for preparation of a reply.

Jim Cicconi

UNCLAS

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Di -
Pls track -- NSC
should have
JC

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WASHINGTON
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Comments:

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*ALSO ADMITTED IN FLORIDA

May 25, 1990

WRITER'S DIRECT NUMBER:

Bridgette Montagne
Staff Assistant to the President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Ms. Montagne:

Enclosed is a letter to the President that is extremely important. I would appreciate it if you would forward it to Kennebunkport, where I believe he is vacationing over the weekend. Many, many thanks.

All the best.

Sincerely,

Edward I. Koch

EIK/ft
Encl.

Jim-
The
original

Di- who's handling
response? Did we send to
Bobbie -- pls be sure we're
tracking jim

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May 25, 1990

WRITER'S DIRECT NUMBER:

George Bush
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

You suggested when last we met that I write to you if I believed there was something to be said on an important matter. I am writing to you with deep respect on a matter of the gravest concern to me and millions of Americans and others throughout the world.

The relationship between the State of Israel and the United States since its inception during the administration of Harry S. Truman and continuing through yours has been a special one of support, even if on occasion there were differences in the foreign policies of Israel and that of our country. We always understood that Israel, a democracy formed by the tattered remnants of history's most murderous period, would have to endure constant threat of attack by Arab countries and by Arab terrorists. Twenty Arab countries even now are in an official state of war with Israel. And I, like Jews and non-Jews, have disagreed with certain of the actions taken by Israel, but at the same time we understand that thousands of young Israelis have laid down their lives on the battlefield in four wars and that tens of thousands more, including innocent civilians, have been injured. Undoubtedly the Israelis have on occasion

exhibited a fortress mentality perhaps similar to that of the British when they stood alone in 1940.

Nevertheless, on balance, indeed overwhelming balance, the democratic air breathed in Israel is so different from that breathed in so many of these Arab states where they kill one another based upon religious schisms, e.g., Lebanon.

Why this prelude? It is to try to convey to you the importance of continued U.S. support of that tiny Jewish nation. I fear that the statements made by yourself and others in your Administration convey increasing hostility towards a beleaguered ally. I am sure you don't see it that way, but let me briefly cite chapter and verse.

Your reference, not so long ago, conveying your opposition to Jewish residence in East Jerusalem, as well as on the West Bank; your Administration's criticism of Israel in the most recent incident where a lunatic Israeli shot and murdered eight Arabs, implying that it is Israel's government's actions that provoked the incident, yet no one in your Administration or the world at large castigates the Jordanian government for the action, not of a lunatic Arab but someone who willfully, for purposes of revenge, attempted to assault, maim and murder, with knife and gun, ten innocent French civilians.

Now to refer to the past: When an Egyptian soldier on duty shot, murdered and maimed innocent Israeli tourists in the Sinai, where was world denunciation of Egypt and President Mubarak? There was none, nor did Israel ask that there be such a response against the Egyptian government or President Mubarak. Mubarak apologized, the Israelis accepted the apology and understood that it was neither his fault nor that of the Egyptian government. Prime Minister Shamir apologizes on behalf of the Jewish nation for the act of a lunatic and the cascade of denunciation continues.

Some will say that the change in the Administration's attitude towards Israel comes as a result of a better relationship between the United States and the U.S.S.R., so that our need for a strong ally in the Middle East is lessened. If that is true then will we not go down in history as fair weather friends? Would you want that appellation applied to your Administration?

The latest matter, not yet finalized but clearly being considered and floated in the press, is the contemplation by Secretary of State Baker of support for an Arab resolution

at the United Nations to station in Israel and on the West Bank United Nations forces. Such an act would be an outright assault upon the sovereignty of the State of Israel, and worse, would encourage every Arab on the West Bank to increase his and her participation in rioting so as to involve the United Nations even further in the affairs of Israel and the occupied territories.

I urge you for the reasons that I have described and because I would hope that you would want to be remembered, as President Reagan is, for having supported and stood by our only ally in the Middle East, the State of Israel, to consider the broader implications of these issues. In the event that such a resolution is brought before the Security Council, I urge you to direct that the United States delegate cast a veto.

All the best to you and Barbara, and I hope your brief holiday is filled with joy and covered with sunlight.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'E. Koch', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Edward I. Koch

EIK/ft