

FAS 014/1

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SUMMARY RECORD OF CONVERSATION BETWEEN MR LUARD, PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE, FCO, AND THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS, OVER DINNER AT THE EXCELSIOR HOTEL, LONDON AIRPORT AT 8.30 P.M. ON SATURDAY, 15 MAY 1976

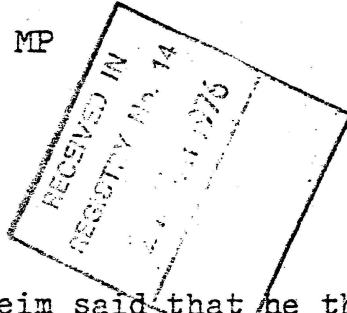
Present:

Mr Evan Luard MP

Mr M S Weir

Mr A F Green

CYPRUS



Dr Kurt Waldheim

Mr Mayohofer-Grünbühel

Mr M Popovic

1. Dr Waldheim said that he thought it best to let the dust settle for a period before taking further steps in relation to the Cyprus problem. The participants should be allowed to realise that theirs was not the only, nor the most pressing, problem before the international community. He had made it clear to the parties that he would wish to consider the matter before attending a further round of discussions at the new and lower level. This was not a question of prestige but of whether those representing each side had sufficient authority to seek to negotiate effectively. Dr Waldheim then remarked that, at a recent meeting with the Turkish Foreign Minister, the latter had hinted at internal difficulties in Turkey arising from the Cyprus dispute. He had the impression that Denktash was exploiting these difficulties.

2. Mr Luard enquired whether it would help the negotiations to make progress if the Greek and Turkish Governments were to be more directly involved. Dr Waldheim agreed that this would be helpful but the Turks were not enthusiastic - they had turned down a similar proposal in the past. They were, of course, opposed to what they described as the internationalisation of the negotiations. In Dr Waldheim's view it was best not to insist, for the time being, on a particular timetable for negotiations: the forthcoming local elections in Turkey could only inhibit the Turkish Government. Meanwhile the EEC could help with discreet representations in Ankara. Mr Luard commented that the Foreign Secretary would take the opportunity of the NATO Ministerial Meeting in Oslo to meet both the Greek and Turkish Foreign Ministers and urge them to put pressure on the Cypriot communities to make progress in the negotiations.

3. Mr Luard said that he gathered that Mr Denktash had indicated his readiness to withdraw but had given no indication of the possible extent of such withdrawal. Dr Waldheim confirmed that this was so. He added that it was for consideration whether UNIFICYP's activities in the northern sector of Cyprus should be maintained since the Turks were quite evidently not keeping to their agreements. In reply to a question he confirmed that the Finnish Government had made a request for a reduction in their force in Cyprus. The UN had replied that they understood the Finnish problem but hoped that the Finns would be able to postpone any reduction in their contingent until arrangements had been made to replace them. The Norwegians would be willing to do so but the introduction of a new contingent would require a reference to the Security Council and the Russians might demand that troops from a Socialist country should be included in the UNIFICYP Force. He would therefore prefer to make up for the lost numbers by increasing the

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contingents from existing contributors. Mr Weir enquired whether it was not now possible to reduce the size of UNIFCYP as a whole.

Dr Waldheim agreed that there would be logic in this. UNIFCYP was not a fighting force and the task of observation could be achieved with fewer men. This would, however, reduce the effectiveness of UNIFCYP; as had been shown by their reaction to the Turkish threat to Nicosia Airport in 1974, the Force were not entirely without an ability to influence events.

4. Returning to the question of negotiations, Dr Waldheim said that at his recent meeting with Mr Caglayangil, the latter had introduced a new element. He had suggested a meeting of the two Foreign Ministers and the Secretary-General of the UN. Dr Waldheim said that he had not ruled out this suggestion but he was conscious that the Turks only wished to maintain the impression of negotiations.

TIMOR

5. Mr Luard enquired about progress over Timor and whether Winspeare was likely to pay an early visit there. Dr Waldheim said that he saw little purpose in a further visit at this juncture. He could envisage some kind of act of self-determination under UN auspices but it was not clear what form it would take. The Indonesians clearly wished the UN to legalise their "anschluss". Their Permanent Representative at the UN was constantly seeking to persuade his Government to keep the UN and the non-aligned on their side. A process similar to that employed in West Irian could be considered if the Indonesians would accept it. The Chinese were, however, opposed to any involvement by the UN.

MIDDLE EAST

6. Turning to the Middle East, Dr Waldheim said that the Syrians needed some kind of face-saving device to enable them to renew the UNDOF mandate at the end of May. He agreed with Mr Weir that the signs of an incipient reconciliation between Egypt and Syria could mean that they would be less likely to compete in the militant promotion of Palestinian rights. He also agreed that Syria's deep involvement in the Lebanon would be a strong incentive to avoid simultaneous trouble with the Israelis on the Golan Heights. There was nonetheless a tactical need to help the Syrians, perhaps by a visit to the area by himself similar to that which he had paid the previous November. One hurdle was the possibility that the report of the Committee on Palestinian Rights might be referred to the Security Council before the UNDOF mandate had been renewed.

7. Mr Weir enquired whether, if the mandate was not renewed, the Secretary-General would feel obliged to withdraw the Force or whether he would leave it to the contributors to take their own decisions; Dr Waldheim replied that this matter was, in the first instance, one for the Security Council. In practice, an attempt to renew the mandate against Syrian wishes would lead to a veto by the Russians and possibly by the Chinese. Thereafter withdrawal of the UN Force was inevitable. It would not, however, be precipitate; negotiations with the Syrians would take a month or two to complete. The necessary contingency plans had already been made. Mr Weir enquired whether, if the mandate were not renewed and if no move were made to seek the removal of the Force, it might be possible for them to stay on. The Secretary-General replied that this would be impossible. It was essential to have the consent of the Security Council and of the parties directly involved.

The Syrian problem was that they could not continue indefinitely to renew the mandate unless there was some form of negotiation to which they could point. It was therefore necessary to pursue the possibility of informal negotiations. The Syrians needed something for the sake of appearances; it was essential to avoid a vacuum. The Israelis had not yet replied to his own proposal for informal talks; it was not essential that they should reply in writing. The US Representative at the UN had replied orally and the Israelis could do likewise. The PLO had not yet made any reply but it would nonetheless be helpful to have a reaction from the Israelis. It would be useful if this could be conveyed to them. Mr Luard undertook to arrange this.

8. Dr Waldheim went on to refer to an idea which Arafat had recently mentioned to Guyer for an interim administration of the West Bank under the auspices of the UN and the Arab League. This was the kind of idea which could be considered by means of an informal approach or by contact groups or some such method of negotiation. He repeated his anxiety to avoid a vacuum so as to help the Syrians to give a positive response.

9. Mr Luard enquired how the Secretary-General saw matters turning out if the UNDOF mandate were renewed. Dr Waldheim said that he envisaged the informal talks with a view to finding some way of accommodating the Palestinians either at a Geneva Conference or in some wider forum. Mr Luard asked whether Dr Waldheim foresaw the next move taking place in Sinai or on the Golan Heights or on the West Bank? Dr Waldheim saw no prospect of further movement in Sinai at least until some progress had been made elsewhere. Progress on the Golan Heights was possible if the Israelis were ready to make real concessions but Asad was taking a tough line because he knew that the Israelis would only make minor concessions which would be of little value to him. However, it was now clear that developments in Lebanon would be decisive to Syria's attitude to the Arab/Israel problem.

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