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10/15/77
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FYI: Scali briefly explained our vote saying that it expressed our concern that the General Assembly's action might delay and hamper rather than promote efforts to settle the Palestinian question and bring peace to the Middle East. End FYI.

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MIDDLE EAST NEGOTIATIONS--THE PALESTINIANS AND PLO

Q: Do you have any comments on President Asad's statement about the US and the PLO?

A: We continue to believe that an eventual overall Middle East peace settlement must pay due attention to the legitimate interests of the Palestinian people. However, the solution to the Palestinian problem is a matter for the parties to decide in the negotiations. How the Palestinian issue is addressed in the negotiations must also be decided by the parties. As far as negotiations between the PLO and Israel, or so-called US recognition of the PLO, that issue is really academic since the PLO does not recognize Israel's right to exist.

3/5/75

June 4, 1975

PALESTINIAN PROBLEM

Q: Did you and President Sadat make any headway on the Palestinian problem and did he press that the PLO be invited to Geneva? What is your view of an independent Palestinian State on the West Bank?

A: We discussed a whole range of issues associated with the Middle East problem but I am not going to get into a discussion of the details.

The US position has always been that any final settlement must take into account the legitimate interests of the Palestinians.

4/21/75

PALESTINIANS

Q: Will the U. S. be reassessing its position towards the PLO in the wake of a failure of our diplomacy in the Middle East and will the PLO be attending the Geneva Conference when it resumes?

A: Our position has been and remains that an eventual overall settlement of the Middle East problem based on Resolutions 338 and 242 must take into account the legitimate interests of all peoples in the area, including the Palestinians. I reaffirmed this in Vladivostok and this remains our position. The Palestinian problem is one of the issues in the negotiations.

The invitation for the Geneva Conference to begin in December 1973 notes that the issue of representation is one to be discussed in Geneva by the parties at Geneva.

The issue of negotiations between the PLO and Israel or our so-called recognition of the PLO is really academic since the PLO does not recognize Israel's right to exist.

Joy

June 12, 1975

PLO ATTENDANCE AT ILO MEETING

Q. Why did the U.S. vote against the setting of the PLO at the ILO meeting in Geneva when on some previous occasions the U.S. has abstained in its voting on PLO representation?

IF ASKED: Will the U.S. withdraw its contribution to the ILO?

A. I think you have to understand that the ILO is set up in a unique tripartite structure as set forth in its Constitution and its Declaration of Philadelphia. It was formed to promote social justice and freedom and dignity of workers through various measures, using time tried labor, management and government meetings. The delegation is comprised of workers, employers and government representatives. Our opposition to the PLO having observer status is that the PLO is neither a workers organization nor an employers organization, nor is it a government.

* * * * *

prefer to refer to State

In response to second question, if asked, you may say that the U.S. has no plans to withdraw its contribution from the ILO.

* * * * *

FYI: For any specific details about the nature of the ILO or our delegation, you should refer to State.

September 26, 1975

PALESTINIAN QUESTION - NEXT STEP?

FYI: Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud is quoted in the New York Times as saying that any next step in the Middle East "will have to involve the Palestinians."

Q: Does the President agree with Saudi Foreign Minister Saud that any next step in the Middle East must deal with the Palestinian issue?

A: We have always said that any final settlement in the Middle East must take into account the legitimate interests of the Palestinian people.

Q: Does this mean the next step will focus on the Palestinians?

A: We have not thoroughly reviewed what the next steps should be, but as the President himself has said repeatedly we believe that there can be no stagnation or stalemate in the current situation. We look forward to any forum which provides the prospect of further progress toward an overall solution.

RECOGNITION OF THE PLO

Q. Doesn't the message of thanks to the Palestinian leadership however conveyed by the President and Secretary Kissinger constitute de facto recognition of the PLO, and in fact, elevate them in the eyes of other governments?

A. There has been no change in our attitude toward the PLO. The President expressed our gratitude to all parties who helped in the evacuation from Beirut. The State Department has said that the American Embassy in Beirut, on instructions from the Secretary, conveyed orally to the Palestinian leadership through third parties, his appreciation for their assistance.

Q. What basically is our attitude toward the PLO?

A. Our position remains that as long as the PLO does not recognize Israel's right to exist or acknowledge Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, we will not deal with them.

ANGOLAN APPLICATION FOR UN MEMBERSHIP

FOR YOUR BACKGROUND ONLY:

The Security Council will take up consideration of UN membership for Angola this afternoon. Several hours of debate are scheduled, including remarks by Ambassador Scherer, followed by a vote, probably early this evening. The U. S. delegation is instructed to veto the membership application on the grounds that Cuban forces still constitute the main support for the Angolan government. We do not necessarily want to reiterate the U. S. position, but rather make it clear that our position hasn't changed.

Q. Angola's application for UN membership is to be considered today in the Security Council. How will the U. S. vote?

A. I think we'll just have to wait for ^{the vote for} our position to be known.

Q. Well, are you implying that our position has changed on Angola, or that we might abstain?

A. I do not mean to imply any change in our position; we will just have to wait for the vote later today.

PLO FUNDRAISING IN THE U. S. ?

Q. Is the U. S. Government looking into Jack Anderson's charges that the PLO is undertaking a fundraising campaign in the U. S. ?

A. I understand the Department of State is looking into the matter to see if any violations of U. S. law are involved and, if so, the Department of Justice will also be involved. I refer your questions to those two departments.

PLO REPRESENTATIVES IN THE U.S.

Q. Is it true that two PLO representatives have been in the United States seeking contact with Department of State officials in the last few days?

A. Two PLO representatives have been in Washington for the past two weeks or so and have seen a number of private Americans. No official of the Government has seen or talked to them.

Q. Is it true that the Department of State sent a message to the PLO representatives?

A. A number of private American citizens have been contacted by the two representatives and these citizens relayed to the Department the desire of the two men to meet with U.S. officials. We reiterated through these citizens standing United States policy on substantive contacts with the PLO. This remains unchanged and no official will be seeing them.

Q. Is that not a form of dialogue with the PLO, which we have always said we would not engage in until the PLO recognized Israel's right to exist?

A. On the contrary, it was a restatement by a private person, of our position against official contacts so long as the PLO does not recognize Israel's right to exist.

Q. Who are the American citizens involved?

A. I do not see that it is up to us to give out that kind of information about the activity of private American citizens without their permission.

Q. Who were the officials who were contacted in the Department?

A. Various officials in the NEA Bureau (A: *Administration*).

Q. Are the representatives going to open a PLO office here?

A. We understand the PLO has an interest in doing so.

Q. Will we permit that?

A. As we have explained in connection with the PLO Information Office in New York, so long as the office is registered with the Department of Justice under the Foreign Agents Registration Act, conforms to our laws, and the persons staffing have legal status under our visa laws, there is no legal bar to its being opened.

Q. How did these people get here? What passports do they have? What visas?

A. I do not know. We are checking that.

Q. In general, what is the status of a person affiliated with the PLO seeking a visa to enter the United States?

A. The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) has placed the PLO on its list of prescribed organizations. Any individual affiliated with the PLO who was so identified at the time of application would be required to obtain a waiver to receive a visa. The waiver is granted by the INS on the recommendation of the Department.

Q. Was such a waiver granted in this case?

A. We have no record of any request for a waiver on the basis

Not for use

Q. Who decides their visa status?

A. Visas are granted abroad by consular officers in the U.S. embassy. Once a visitor is here, his visa status is determined by the Immigration and Naturalization Service in Justice---

Of course, in consultation with the Department of State.

Q. Who determines if a PLO Information officer would fulfill their legal requirements?

A. The Justice Department would have to determine if they were not fulfilling the legal requirements.

Clearance: NEA - Mr. Atherton
Visa Office - Mr. Arias

NEA/ARN:
NEA/P:GFSherman:NHowell

11/19/76

FILE

PLO REPRESENTATIVE IN WASHINGTON

Q. What information do you have about the visa and passport of the PLO representative now in Washington to open an office here? Will you extend his visa? Where was it issued? How?

A. We are still checking the details of Sabri Jiyris' visa status. While that continues, I have nothing for you on this question.

FYI: According to our Embassy in Nicosia, they issued Jiyris a B-1 "business-pleasure" visa, whose maximum duration is three months. It is a single entry visa. INS must determine, upon his entry into the United States, how long he can actually stay here. We do not know yet from INS exactly when he arrived and what determination was made. It is confirmed that Jiyris is carrying a Sudanese passport. If you get questions on these details--type of passport, type of visa, duration, etc.--please take the questions. We do not want the information to come out piecemeal, and until we have it all and decide what will be done, we prefer to withhold public comment.

Q. Is it true, as reported in the New York Times Saturday, that the State Department knew in advance that Mr. Jiyris was coming to Washington?

A. It is not true that this was known by the Department in Washington. And, as I have said, no State Department official has had contact with him.

Clearance: NEA - Mr. Atherton

NEA/P:GFSherman:rgb

PLO - INFORMATION OFFICE

Q: There are reports that the PLO intends to open an information office here in Washington. What is the Administration's reaction to this and does this reflect a change in U. S. policy towards the PLO?

A: United States policy with respect to the PLO on the fundamental issues of the Arab-Israeli conflict has not changed. The U. S. Government has had no political contacts with the PLO. Our policy has been and remains that there is no role for the PLO as long as they do not recognize Israel's right to exist and United Nations Resolutions 242 and 338.

Q: Well, is the PLO, in fact, establishing an information office in Washington?

A: I understand that the activities of PLO representatives in the United States are proceeding in accordance with procedures set forth in U. S. law. I would refer you to the Justice Department for any further details on this.

Q: What sort of visas are the PLO representatives operating on?

A: I would refer you to the State Department for an answer on that.

Q: Given the increased presence of the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) in Lebanon and Syrian backing of the PLA, are we seeing a new Syrian move to assert dominance of Lebanon and other countries in the Middle East?

A: In this very explosive area of the world we were relieved to see the fighting in Lebanon stop as a result of an agreement worked out by Syria. This agreement also established a set of principles for a political solution acceptable to all parties. It would not be useful to comment further on Lebanon's internal difficulties except to repeat our hopes that they will be resolved peacefully and unity and cohesion restored.

NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE PLO

Q: There have been conflicting reports about our position on the PLO, and whether we think Israel should negotiate with it, in light of the decision at the Arab summit conference in Rabat and after the recent United Nations General Assembly which affirmed the right of Palestinians to return to Palestine and which gave the PLO observer status in the UN. What is our position on the PLO and on its role in Middle East peace negotiations? Have we been in contact with the PLO?

A: Israel has made clear it is not prepared to talk with the PLO, and its inclusion in negotiations is therefore not a live issue. Our own policy has not changed with respect to any of the issues in the Middle East, including the question of the Palestinians, whose legitimate interests must be a factor in any settlement.

We have no contacts at the political level with the PLO. There have been infrequent working level contacts in New York in the United Nations context to discuss very minor operational matters, such as the security of Palestinian representatives, transportation and visa questions.



Rabat Decision on PLO

Question:

What is your reaction to the decision of the Arab summit to recognize the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people? How will this affect U. S. effort to negotiate a peace settlement for the West Bank? Will this affect Secretary Kissinger's plans to visit the Middle East again next week?

Answer:

We do not know the details of what has been decided thus far at the Rabat conference, which is still going on. We are of course following developments at the conference and I would not want to express any judgment at this time.

If appropriate, you may wish to add:

The question of the future of the Palestinian people is an important aspect of the Middle East problem and the United States has always recognized that full consideration must be given the legitimate interests of the Palestinian people if there is to be a just and durable settlement in the Middle East.

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM FOR: RON NESSEN
FROM: Margi Vanderhye *ngw*
SUBJECT: Memorandum of Correction

Wednesday, June 30, 1976 at your briefing, a reporter made an incorrect assumption in asking a question about travel restrictions of the PLO delegation at the U.N.

He implied that Al-Hout, Saleh, and Rahman had on separate occasions violated the regulations governing travel beyond the twenty five mile area around New York City.

The fact is that Abdul Rahman, the Deputy Permanent Observer of the PLO is a permanent resident of the United States, and as such is not subject to restricted travel in the United States.

AMERICAN POSITION ON PALISTINIAN STATE

The United States position is that we believe that the legitimate ~~of~~ ^{interest} of the Palestinians should be taken into account in any Middle East peace settlement. But because these negotiations are now going on, I think it would be premature to discuss the role of the Palistinians in the negotiations themselves or what ~~is~~ ultimately will be included in a settlement.

⊕

~~rights~~

interests



4. In his press conference yesterday the President referred to the possibility of negotiations between Israel and Jordan or the PLO. Does the President's reference to Israeli-PLO negotiations represent a change in U. S. policy? Will the US accept the PLO at the Geneva talks? Will you force Israel to negotiate with the PLO?

Guidance: (The following should apply to all questions resulting from the Rabat conference and the President's remarks thereon): The President was making a general statement yesterday and it does not represent a change in our policy which has been stated by Secretary Kissinger on a number of occasions. The President was responding on the basis of preliminary and ~~incompleted~~ reports of the Arab summit and stated clearly that we could not draw any conclusions at this stage. (If asked about our position on the PLO you should refer questioners to the record of Secretary Kissinger's remarks and to the Department of State for any elucidation.)

FYI: State Department has extensive guidance on this subject based on previous public statements including Secretary Kissinger's on-the-record statements to his travelling press corps: "I do not believe that the door to all negotiations in the Middle East is closed but in what framework there can be negotiations -- that will have to be seen. Probably I will go to the Middle East but that decision will be made only in the next 72 hours."

If asked about our reaction to the ~~Arabs setting up a major financial aid program to permit Arab countries to buy arms~~ you should have no comment on the basis that this is a matter between the Arab countries and that we have not had an opportunity to review the details of the results of the Rabat Conference.



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