

Jerusalem, May 24, 1982

Dear Mr. President, Dear Friend,

Thank you from the heart for your letter dated May 22nd, 1982.

I gratefully accept your kind invitation to visit you - hopefully together with Alisa - at the White House on June 21st. I look forward to a detailed discussion on the problems we face in the world, in our region, in our bilateral relations, etc. I am positive that it will be a most friendly and fruitful discussion, as befits the relationship between our two nations and between ourselves.

However, as my visit with you is going to take place exactly four weeks from today, it is my duty to tell you, dear friend, that I cannot foresee what may happen until our meeting in our permanent struggle of self-defence against the Arafatian terrorists.

Our considerations concerning the United States are twofold:

- a) We do not want to take you by surprise;
- b) We do not want the United States to get involved in our decision about ^amilitary operation, which may become absolutely inevitable, lest some countries accuse you of what they usually term "collusion" with Israel.

So we indeed sit on the horns of a dilemma, which I have to describe to you with complete candour.

How long can a nation live with a permanent threat of violence; not a potential threat neither a theoretical one (like that of intercontinental missiles with atomic warheads which are produced in order not to be used), but an activated, almost daily threat, accompanied with mines, bombs, explosives, incursions and so forth. How long can a nation live with its civilian population exposed day and night to a possible flare-up of artillery barrage? Our case will be presented to you and to your advisors by our Defence Minister, Mr. Sharon, and, of course, we shall wait until after he meets with the Secretaries of State and Defence and perhaps with you, if you kindly decide to receive my friend and colleague. I do not know what may be done by the terrorists ~~xxxxx~~

President Ronald Reagan
The White House
Washington, D.C.

to our people during the next three days, until he returns here, namely on Thursday night. But surely nobody can foresee the developments during the following three weeks.

This is our grave problem. I do hope that the next four weeks will be a period of calm, but surely nobody can guarantee. We may be compelled to act in our self-defence. In this connection I will always remember the masterful saying: "Hot pursuit? Up to the ~~hangers!~~"

Good news, dear friend: Alisa came home in the morning back from hospital. The doctors have yet taken a final decision. We both hope to come together and enjoy your wonderful hospitality and of the gracious First Lady.

Yours respectfully and sincerely,

Menachem