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TAPED TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN  
Morris Draper and Charlie Hill

July 3 , 1982

HILL: Hello, Morris, this is Charlie go ahead.

DRAPER: We can't transmit anything now because of the communications set up. I don't know if you have noticed but after about 8 o'clock our time it is impossible it is kind of hard in the last hour after sunset. But what I want to do is, and you might want to turn on the taperecorder, is just put the points across as regards to the Syrian sanctuary for those people and Nick ask me to but it across for him. Over.

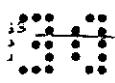
HILL: Okay I am reading you go ahead.

DRAPER: Well first of all we all know what the objections are and then we will go over them again. Let me just go through the on the other hand. Begin and Sharon are almost certainly to him that the Palestinians a place like Syria or a rejectionist state. One reason is that they would have far fewer compunctions about taking retaliatory military action against Palestinians located in Syria or in a rejectionist state. Certainly much they would have far fewer compunctions then if the Palestinians were concentrated in places like Egypt or other moderate states. In Syria they are within easy striking distance of Israeli power. Let's look at it from another angle. The Israelis rather know that the Syrians could, if they really wished to, exert really strict control over the Palestinians. The record is clearer there. The Syrians have exerted truly tight control over the Palestinian community which numbers about 200,000 and a regular Palestinian force is as I recall is something like 15,000 and the Syrian have not sanctioned independent Palestinian military adventures from Syria. Only those that they direct. The third or fourth the Syrians are going to in any event receive perhaps 3,000 Palestinians, if the Syrian controlled Palestinian forces in Beirut are evacuated to Syria under the package plan we are trying to put across at a minimum of 3,000. Now if we look at what the Israelis are prepared to do they have told us that

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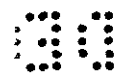
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they are ready to offer to the Syrians a lot of the Palestinian prisoners as well as the Syrian prisoners of war in exchange for the prisoners of war held by the Syrians and remains of Israeli dead. If in fact, the Syrians ever agree to a large scale of wholesale relief for the Syrian Jews, the Israelis might go a long ways and I don't think that is very likely but is is just what the Israelis are prepared to do. Now if you count what they reportedly have in their possession right now that would mean a minimum of 2,000 Palestinian fighters and up to 4,000 more people who are expected of collaboration of being actively engaged behind the scenes with the Palestinian fighters.

Next point is that Horser told Johnny Abdu two days ago many three that in the end the Syrians being the PLO leadership going into Syria. Some of the PLO really have strong tights with Syria and Jerusalem. Now when I think about this, we are thinking of trying to prevent 4 to 5,000 people from going to Syria but also we are prepared to accept the fact that the Syrian may be taking a minimum of 3,000 anyway and maybe up to 5,000 if the Israelis give in a lot in order to get back some of their prisoners of war. For all of these reasons I think we should take a good hard look at this. Phil has no objection to looking at it. He is still so burned up about the Egyptian thing going that he can't think straight about it but we just read the transcript that Atherton had of his meeting with Mubarak and it is pretty gloomy. I think that a really hard objective look might show that Syria isn't as bad an alternative as we might of thought. I am personally a little bit attracted to the idea of separating the leadership and sending them to Tunis for example and keeping the bulk of the Palestinians in a place such as Syria. Over.

HILL: One point I am not clear on. You said that at one point that you thought the leaders who had ties to Damascus and were interested in going there and then you said that you were attracted to the leadership being in Tunis. Could you clarify that? Over.

DRAPER: There are some people within the PLO movement who have always been Syrian stoogies. A substantial number of the top PLO leadership falls in that category. Some of them also came out of the old Muslim Brotherhood rank too and have links at least indirectly with the Brotherhood in Syria. Some of them might want to go to Syria. The only thing I said there was told Johnny Abdu that he thought most of the leaders would prefer to go to Syria in the end. In



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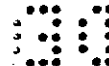
other words, you have a lot of things that would tend to satisfy PLO and Israeli objectives anyway. Lets not ignore it. When I said my personal idea is that I am attracted to it but I would not recommend it just yet but I am attracted to the idea of having the bulk of the PLO/Palestinian fighting men in one country and the leadership more or less permanently stationed in another. I think that this idea of letting them sit around in Tunis near the Arab League could satisfy a lot of the political objectives of the Palestinians not to speak of the easy living that they all seem to prefer. Maybe there would be a separation in leadership with Arafat becoming the top in a place like Tunis carrying on the old fight and maybe changing the nature of the organization that I think ought to be done anyway while the bulk of the fighting men are somewhat insulated and somewhat distant. Now just let me reach a topping point here for a minute.

The real point I want to get across in this is that if we could see some or see no other choice but to think of Syria, I don't think that we should just sit passively by and let it happen or agree to it passively. I think we should think about going in and talking to the Syrians seriously about control over the Palestinians. Specifically I would suggest that we try to think of arrangements to the Syrians where by the bulk of the Palestinians would be relocated in northeast Syria. They should be in areas where they could be relatively far distance from the Lebanese border and the Jordanian border and there would be a certain resistance involved. Moreover from the Syrian prospective, they would not pose it at such an internal security risk as if they were located closer to Damascus. I think we could go on to tell the Syrians that they would have to face a possibility of Israeli military action and that situating the Palestinian forces in areas distant from Damascus and the borders of Israel and Jordan would be one way of forestalling just problems. I think that we could also consider talking things over with the Soviets. The Soviets might like to have the Syrians take control of the Palestinians more firmly and there by the Soviets would gain some added influence over the Palestinian movement but at the same time they don't want to see any further humiliation by the Israelis of the Syrians forces and the Soviet weapons that the Syrians can take hold and use. Over.

HILL: That is all very interesting. I will feed it in. Larry and I are here. Nick has gone home again. I think that you make a lot of very good points. Let me ask a couple of questions. We are sending you a cable which essentially asks

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the questions which you are answering in many ways. Do you think that there is any value in having the Lebanese put this to the PLO now? Over.

DRAPER: I have a strong suspicion that is coming out tonight. Did you get an earlier report that Wazzan had called Phil? He told Phil that he had a hell of a day today and he was waiting at that moment for the PLO to deliver the document which the PLO was drafting which was to confirm the understanding. Did you get all that? Over.

HILL: Yes I did Morrie. Do you think that if it gets to Wazzan from Salam that you will see it tonight or will you see it tomorrow morning? Over.

DRAPER: In my judgement there is no way we will see it tonight. I think that Wazzan will take it up to Sarkis and as usual we will have an hour with Sarkis and talk things over before he brings up Phil and we go over it and that will probably be about 10:30 or 11:00 a.m. in the morning. There maybe another problem because of the Israelis creeping upward. Maybe you have been told, but passage between West and East Beirut is really a problem. The Phalange is not letting anyone back into West Beirut once they have left. There is a lot of hanky panky at the roadblocks and so forth but we expect that Wazzan can somehow get through up to the presidential palace tomorrow morning and we will see him maybe as early as 10, more like 11 at in my judgement. At that time, we will pass on to you whatever it is. Over.

HILL: Okay. Well, whenever you have it, give me a call and I will come down. I will be home, but I can get down here within 20 to 25 minutes. It don't matter how early it is, just call here and have the working group call me at home and I will come right down. Let me ask you on this Syrian dimension. Your views about let's say if they were going to go to Syria and let me put two options to you. How would you view the Abdu idea of they all just join together at the time of the ADF and PLA and go down the road to Damascus or secondly put them on boats in Beirut port and perhaps take them to Latakia? Over.

DRAPER: I do not in anyway like the idea of fusing the Syrian controlled Palestinians and the Syrian forces with the PLO-- Fatah forces. For two reasons: 1) We have to let the Syrian forces and the Syrian controlled Palestinian forces take their weapons with them as an organized unit and still undefeated, you might say with their honor in tact, and having being withdrawn

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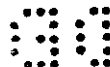
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more or less voluntarily by Syrians certainly with Syrian agreement. That cosmetic will have to be preserved. In the case of the PLO itself, the non-Syrian controlled PLO Fatah, we cannot in my opinion let them take more than their side weapons. Now Phil is really bothered by this and is having a hard time with the Lebanese government, but you know that we also talked over these things with David Kimche today and he said in no way would the Israelis go along with the PLO Palestinians taking their heavy weapons with them. In fact, he didn't balk quite so much at the idea of the Syrian forces and the Syrian controlled Palestinian forces taking their weapons with them. He assigns a distinction as to why and as does Phil. So that is why this afternoon when we talked to David we immediately surfaced the idea of somehow neutralizing the heavy weapons by putting them on separate ships and thinking about what we would do. In other words, some of the ideas you had in the Department independent of us which we have had all along too. So we have to treat those two groups of forces distinctively and differently. I think that the retreat of the regular Syrian forces over the Damascus highway is the easiest and the most convenient way and probably would be more satisfactory to the Syrians as long as we moved the Israelis off the checkpoints which David says can be done while keeping the road under artillery fire. The movement of the PLO forces over that same highway is too risky for them. I am not sure that we could guarantee the good behavior of the Phalange. That road is in artillery range of Phalange forces. It is going to be very hard as it is with some of the Phalange desperate to get their revenge, but anyway, we have to treat them differently for military reasons. Secondly, we have to treat them differently for political reasons. The Syrians and Syrian controlled forces are going to be taken out as a result of some Arab League acquiescence, Syrian acquiescence and Saudi support for the Syrian withdrawal and a Lebanese government decision for the first time. The other evacuation is going to be arranged under a different political scenario. Over to you.

HILL: Okay. All of that makes sense to me. But because of the way that we are moving now rapidly with a lot of complications on logistics and given your reasons why we shouldn't move the PLO down the road. Do you see any problems with moving them in boats and taking them to a Syrian port by sea? Over.

DRAPER: Basically, no! I am not against sending them over the road to Damascus if they will go along with it at all. But it has to be a different day and a different stage in the case of

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the evacuation of the Syrians and the Syrian controlled forces. As far as taking them by sea to Latakia — there is no problem in principle except that we have to have our French and American forces take control of the port for at least the period of time when they are being evacuated. We have to take control from the Phalange. I think that we could probably do that. Alternatively, we could take them off the beaches with landing craft but there again I will have to get a special waiver from the Navy if we use naval landing craft because I can't see any average naval officer allowing any group of those armed characters on board his vessel even if it is a landing craft. So, we will have to work out a lot of practical problems on the spots. Over.

HILL: Well, the working concept now is, although it is not agreed, because the Pentagon has a lot of problems. Not so many ideas but just problems with anything we want to do. The working concept is that the international force would come in to the Beirut port conceivably on the beach but I think that is not going to be the case. But the Beirut port and would link up with some LAF presence up there on the northern part of the city at the port and that the embarkation would also be at Beirut port. Do you see anything that gets in the way of that if Beirut port Phalange control not Junieyh but Beirut port? Over.

DRAPER: No baby. That is a hell of a lot more complicated than that. Part of the port is controlled by the Phalange and part of the port is controlled by the Syrians and part is in shared control with the Syrians and certain other groups. The western side of the port is sort of the dividing line is literally controlled by the Syrians right now. Backed up by some of the armed Lebanese gangs. And then as you leave the western end of the port you go through the hotel district which is Palestinian fighting territory before you get to the Embassy further on in Corniche. I mean there would have to be a lot of things that would have to be done in advance to clear out that area. It is not by any means easy, but of course by the time our people come in we would expect to have a lot of time all negotiated and with the Palestinians on board on the basis of the agreement we hope will develop but we still have that one Syrian angle to take of. The short answer to your question is that the Phalange does not control all of the port. Over.

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