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## Margaret Thatcher

### Press Conference after NATO Summit (1600Z) (NATO Summit) [*"It is not just a programme for peace, it is a programme for peace with freedom"*]

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The best way of viewing these summits is as part of a series. We had the Versailles summit, on economic matters mainly, but of course we also discussed urgent political matters. We are also most of us going to the disarmament session in New York. This one I would describe in two ways: first it's a reaffirmation of the values we all share, very much along the lines which President Reagan did in his speech to the joint Houses of Parliament, but he set out the case for liberty and justice in a way which hasn't been done for some time. So you have got the reaffirmation of values and then you've got the defence structure designed to defend those values and you will see the key to that in a section in the communique which is entitled "a programme for peace in freedom". It was a very cohesive conference. We were conscious that since this meeting was proposed—and it was proposed of course because at the time there was the crisis in Poland and we were having to react to that—since this meeting was proposed there have been a number of other initiatives, most notably again the American initiative for arms control both at strategic levels and at theatre nuclear levels, and at conventional levels. So again we have got both sides of the equation: first our duty is to defend our freedoms but if possible, we would like to do that at a lower level of armament that we have now, if we can be certain that there is a balance and that that balance is enforceable. And therefore I think the whole thing hangs together, with this NATO summit having two sides to it: the great political philosophy and our way of life and the structure to defend it, a very much greater consciousness now of the need for unity and cohesion and a demonstration of that consciousness in the programme for peace in freedom. Please note we do not just talk about a programme for peace. You probably noted what Joe Luns said this morning: it is not just a programme for peace, it is a programme for peace with freedom, because peace without freedom, I think he said words to the effect, would be peace with slavery. So it is peace with freedom. So often I hear people talking about peace at any price, it isn't, it's peace with freedom and you have a *words missing* [end p1]

Just one other point, the summit came at a particularly appropriate time. Naturally I am most concerned about the Falklands because it is our immediate responsibility and we are thinking about it every hour of every day and shall be until the repossession of the islands is complete and the developments of rehabilitation are begun. But we also of course have the tragedy of the Lebanon situation as you know, Mr. Habib is trying to do his best to get a ceasefire. We would of course stand by the United Nations resolution 508 and 509 and we hope that those who can perhaps bring most influence to bear on Israel will do so. We hope with beneficial results because the whole situation is a tragedy for the Lebanese people, who are of course not a party to the hostilities.

#### **John Palmer (The Guardian)**

Has the Lebanese situation deteriorated qualitatively since we last met you at Versailles? Does it in any sense begin to pose a threat to the wider peace of the region and, indeed, the world, and when you speak about pressure being brought to bear on Israel, presumably only the United States is in a position to begin to do that?

#### **PM**

Well, with regard to the latter part of the question, yes, the United States is in a position to bring more pressure to bear on Israel than anyone else. We are always alarmed for reasons you will understand when you get any hostilities flaring up in the Middle East because they could extend so rapidly, particularly when you have also got the problem with Iran/Iraq so close and a fairly close relationship now between Syria and Iran. Yes there is potential danger and the first thing we try to think of when these terrible events occur in a region like that is to try to contain it so that it does not spread. Yes the situation has physically deteriorated since we were at Versailles—indeed you have probably been more in touch with any news which has come in during the afternoon—but the first objective obviously will be to try to contain it and to stop it from spreading and the second, we have to look at it in the context of the whole wider problem in that area, which of course is that there will be trouble until the future of the Palestinian people is very much clearer than it is at present, and as you know, we stand for self-determination. [end p2]

#### **John Palmer**

Would it help if the United States now condemned Israel's actions?

**PM**

The United States did stand very firmly behind resolutions 508 and 509 and you remember part of that was not only ceasefire but to say that Israel must withdraw from the Lebanon and the territorial integrity of the Lebanon must be respected and she stood very very firmly by that.

**John Dickie (Daily Mail)**

Prime Minister, are you satisfied with the support you have got from the rest of the alliance, particularly with the circumstances in the Falklands? I was thinking of the strange views of the Spanish Prime Minister.

**PM**

We were aware naturally that our Spanish friends had different views. Within the summit meeting itself, as distinct from the opening of it, every person who spoke up spoke up in support of the Falklands. I am not saying that every person referred to the Falklands. I am not saying that every person referred to the Falklands, but everyone who spoke in support of Britain. and as you know, there has been a previous statement from NATO on Britain in the Falklands, very, very supportive indeed.

**David Mason (AP)**

Prime Minister, do you see a difference in the perception and appreciation of the Lebanon situation between Europe (and the US?)—last night the ten condemned very strongly Israel and panned the attitude of the United States?

**PM**

We are all united in saying the territorial integrity of the Lebanon has been infringed and the Israeli troops must withdraw and territorial integrity respected. You always have to get—don't we know it as we have dealt with the Falklands—coupled with a ceasefire, you have to get a withdrawal and as you know the difficulty is, exactly how do you arrange for that withdrawal, and of course in the Falklands we were not able to secure the withdrawal. But there is not the slightest difference about those two very important things. And it is a tragedy for the Lebanon. [end p3]

**Keith Richardson (Sunday Times)**

Are we saying, Prime Minister, that the other members of the alliance today would have liked the United States to condemn Israel in the same terms as the ten did and if you like in the same terms as other members of other meetings ...?

**PM**

No we are not saying that at all and therefore I can't accept those words at all in my mouth. We are all very concerned indeed about the Lebanon. We realise that United States has most influence on the Israelis, we all stand by those Security Council resolutions. NATO itself is not a grouping which in itself can deal with the Middle Eastern problem. We in the EEC as you know have had previous declarations on the Middle Eastern problem and therefore were likely to follow that up with the declaration that we did. Though there was very great concern obviously expressed, we were not forcing a statement from the NATO chair, we were standing on the Security Council resolutions.

**Nick Bray (Reuters)**

Could you envisage a situation where the European Community might impose sanctions against Israel if it refuses to withdraw its troops?

**PM**

If you impose sanctions as you know on that scale you really have to go to a wider forum but sanctions were not mentioned in any way and many many people are very sceptical about their result in the longer term.

**Nick Bray**

Will you be meeting Prince Saud tomorrow?

**PM**

I am hoping to meet Prince Saud tomorrow in London. I understand he is visiting a number of capitals and I am hoping very much to meet him.

**Unidentified questioner**

Do you condemn the Japanese vote in the Security Council?

**PM**

Do I condemn it? We were very disappointed that they switched their vote at the last moment but I understand that they thought that by voting that way they were going to secure, helping to secure, an Argentine withdrawal. [end p4]

**Unidentified**

Do you still believe in a military solution of the Falklands?

**PM**

I believe in repossessing the Falkland islands. They are British sovereign territory. You just look around you in Europe and see if anyone marched in to some territory, wouldn't you believe in repossessing it?

**BBC World Service**

Prime Minister, I think you have said that if we cannot get a multi-national force going within the Falklands, we may have to defend the islands ourselves. If we do have to do that, isn't that going to leave a very nasty gap in the NATO?

**PM**

No I do not necessarily think so. I understand that there are many exercises out of the North Atlantic Treaty area and we are already thinking of having exercises in the South Atlantic. Of course most of the ships that are now down there were allocated to NATO but they have come off the 48-hours' notice onto the 30-days' notice.

**David Adamson (Daily Telegraph)**

Prime Minister, to return to the Middle East, when you say sanctions were not discussed, what are the possibilities for future action if the ten could consider them?

**PM**

Well I am not in the forum of the ten at the moment, most of our activities have been declarations—they do bring influence to bear. I think this is one of the things one learns from the summit meetings, that the declarations that are issued do generally influence opinion and therefore do have some bearing on what happens. And they influence opinion far beyond the forum from which they are issued.

**John Palmer**

Prime Minister, we will of course not have had access to Mr Nott 's statement in the House of Commons. Are you in a position to say whether the losses sustained by British forces in the last few days are as serious as the unofficial reports seem to indicate? [end p5]

**PM**

I am not in a position to tell you precisely how many because you will know that when that kind of incident happens where you have not got all the facilities, you naturally take the wounded immediately to get the quickest treatment that they can get and it does take you some time to find out just precisely how many they are, and also of course there are limited communications from the Falklands. And this is the real difficulty, we think there must have been quite a considerable number of casualties and we do not know precisely how many because you have to locate every single person before you can be absolutely certain. I'm sure you'll understand the practical difficulties but that is the only reason why we can't say.

**John Dickie**

Can we talk about casualties in three-figure numbers?

**PM**

Well, if I don't know, I can't say. I'm not talking about casualties in three-figure numbers, I do not know, you will remember that in the early days, in the Sheffield, we gave what we thought was an accurate figure and then it had to be increased so we are very very wary now of giving numbers until we are much more sure and so we do not know.

**John Dickie**

But it is a serious incident?

**PM**

Oh yes.

**Robert Stevens (Observer)**

Prime Minister, you spoke of the broader context of the Lebanese crisis, and also of Palestinian self-determination. Do you see the crisis moving on eventually to a broader sort of (rest of question inaudible)

**PM**

We are trying all the time as I say—at a crisis you try first in that area to contain it. We have made statements in the ten before about the future of the Arab/Israeli negotiations, but of course the next main negotiation one would expect, would be that under the auspices of the United States and Egypt and Israel, under the Camp David auspices. And I cannot forecast or foretell what will happen. [end p6]

**Robert Stevens**

You don't see the Camp David process extending into the Lebanon?

**PM**

I can only say that there is a grave situation in the Lebanon now which obviously has to be cleared up. I wouldn't necessarily say that's part of the Camp David process. If your country is occupied and you are not a party to the hostilities, you obviously have a very great problem indeed and we are all of us aware of that.