

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T.172/81
SUBJECT



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10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

4 December 1981

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Thank you for your messages of 22 November about President Reagan's remarks on Jerusalem and of 27 November about the results of the Arab Summit in Fez. Douglas Hurd was in Washington when I received your first message and I therefore asked him to urge the Americans to do whatever they could to clarify their policy in a satisfactory way. I was glad to hear subsequently that the President had been able to give you reassurance about American policy on the future of Jerusalem. We are all aware of the sensitivity of this issue, and I know that President Reagan is determined to pursue a policy which can lead to justice and security for all concerned in the Middle East.

I was also very grateful to have your account of the Fez Summit. You will understand that, although we entertained no exaggerated expectations about what might come out of the Summit, we nevertheless hoped that the result would show clearly Arab determination to pursue a positive and constructive approach to the Palestinian issue. We were therefore disappointed at the news that the Summit had been so quickly suspended. The difficulties of your task and that of your colleagues are, however, well understood here. I am glad that you had in mind the position of Egypt, which has not yet totally

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recovered the Sinai, and the difficult problems of timing this causes. We ourselves have these same considerations very much in mind.

I am encouraged that despite these difficulties the majority of the Arab states felt able to offer support to what Crown Prince Fahd put forward in August. I hope that you will not be deterred from continuing to press for a united and positive Arab position on the basis of which negotiations with Israel might be able to start in earnest. I remain convinced that if the Arabs, in particular the Palestinians, can show convincingly that they are ready to live in peace with Israel as part of a negotiated settlement this will go a long way to breaking the present impasse.

I agree that in these difficult circumstances we must stay in very close touch and continue to co-operate in the interest of a just, honourable and lasting peace in the Middle East. I can assure you that for our part we remain resolutely committed to the principles set out in the Venice Declaration and to the pursuit of an active role in the Middle East, seeking the acceptance of these principles by all concerned. Whatever the discouragement we shall not give up our efforts. I know from our recent discussions at the European Council that my colleagues in Europe share this view, although we thought it right not to issue any new statement on the Middle East at this delicate stage.

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His Majesty King Hussein Bin Talal, G.C.V.O.