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FROM AMMAN 131200Z JUNE 1982

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELNO 256 OF 13 JUNE 1982

AND TO INFO PRIORITY MODUK (D14) , UKMIS NEW YORK
AND WASHINGTON AND TO ROUTINE BAGHDAD, BEIRUT, CAIRO, DAMASCUS
JEDDA, PARIS AND TEL AVIV.

YOUR TELNO 140: JORDAN MIDDLE EAST.

1. I SAW KING HUSSEIN AT HIS HOME ON THE AFTERNOON OF 12 JUNE AND DELIVERED THE PRIME MINISTER'S MESSAGE, FOR WHICH HE EXPRESSED HIS GRATITUDE. HE MADE NO REFERENCE TO THE LETTER HE WAS SENDING TO THE HEADS OF STATE OF THE FIVE PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (MIFT) ABOUT LEBANON, PERHAPS BECAUSE AT THE TIME HE HAD NOT YET FINALLY DECIDED TO SEND IT.

2. THE KING SAID HE HAD NOT ASKED TO SEE ME SINCE THE ISRAELIS HAD ATTACKED LEBANON, BECAUSE IT WAS SOMETHING " YOU AND WE HAD LONG FORESEEN" . NONETHELESS HE HAD BEEN APPALLED BY THE EVENTS OF RECENT DAYS AND FOUND IT IMPOSSIBLE TO ACCEPT THE HUMAN SUFFERING INVOLVED. MANY PEOPLE WERE GOING TO LOSE FROM WHAT HAD HAPPENED BUT THE PRINCIPAL LOSERS WOULD BE THE AMERICANS, AND THE ONLY COUNTRIES WHICH STOOD TO GAIN WERE THE SOVIET UNION AND ISRAEL. THE DOUBLE STANDARDS BEING APPLIED BY THE AMERICAN AND ISRAELI CONDUCT DESERVED THE STRONGEST CONDEMNATION. HE WAS PROFOUNDLY UNHAPPY BOTH WITH THE US VETO AT THE UNITED NATIONS AND WITH SUBSEQUENT US ACTIONS: IT WAS CLEAR TO EVERYONE IN THE AREA THAT THE AMERICANS WERE PLAYING ISRAEL'S GAME AND IN THE EARLY STAGES OF THE ISRAELI ATTACK HAD TRIED TO GAIN TIME FOR HER. IT WAS ALSO OBVIOUS THAT THE ATTEMPT ON ARGOV'S LIFE HAD BEEN AN EXCUSE RATHER THAN A REASON FOR THE ISRAELI ATTACK, WHICH HAS BEEN PREPARED OVER A LONG PERIOD. US POLICY WAS MAKING THE POSITION OF THE MODERATE ARAB COUNTRIES UNTENABLE (OF THE JORDANIAN FOREIGN MINISTERS COMMENTS TO SIR ANTHONY PARSONS QUOTED IN PARA 5 OF HIS TELNO 983).

3. THE KING SAID HE DID NOT EXPECT THE ISRAELIS TO WITHDRAW QUICKLY FROM THE PARTS OF LEBANON THEY WERE NOW OCCUPYING. THE MAIN PRESSURE WOULD NOW BE ON THE PALESTINIANS , AND HE EXPECTED THE ISRAELIS TO TRY IN THE COMING MONTHS TO DRIVE AS MANY PALESTINIANS AS THEY COULD BOTH FROM LEBANON AND FROM THE OCCUPIED WEST BANK INTO JORDAN. ALL THIS FORMED PART OF THEIR LONG TERM THINKING, UNDER WHICH JORDAN WOULD BECOME A PALESTINIAN STATE AND THE ARAB INHABITANTS ON THE WEST BANK WOULD GRADUALLY BE REDUCED TO A MINORITY, AT WHICH POINT THE ISRAELIS WOULD CALL FOR SELF-DETERMINATION ON THE WEST BANK.

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4. IN THE COURSE OF OUR DISCUSSION I REFERRED TO THE STATEMENT BY THE KING, WHICH THE KING SAID HE HAD NOTED WITH APPROVAL, AND ALSO TO YOUR RECENT TALKS WITH THE EGYPTIAN AND SAUDI FOREIGN MINISTERS (YOUR TELNOS 204 TO CAIRO AND 168 TO JEDDA). I BRIEFED HIM IN DETAIL ON THE POINTS MADE BY PRINCE SAUD AND HOW THE PRIME MINISTER AND YOURSELF RESPONDED.

5. KING HUSSEIN SAID THAT HE FOUND SYRIAN CONDUCT BAFFLING. HE UNDERSTOOD THAT INITIALLY THE RIGHT FLANK OF THE ISRAELI ADVANCE HAD BEEN CONDUCTED BY ONLY ONE BATTALION, AND THAT IT WAS NOT UNTIL THE SYRIANS HAD REINFORCED THEIR OWN TROOPS THAT THE ISRAELIS HAD ENLARGED THE SCALE OF THEIR ATTACK ON SYRIAN POSITIONS IN LEBANON. SYRIAN AIR LOSSES WERE ALSO INCOMPREHENSIBLE SEMICOLON IN ANY OTHER COUNTRY A DISASTER OF THIS MAGNITUDE WOULD HAVE BEEN FOLLOWED BY AN IMMEDIATE ENQUIRY INTO WHY SUCH LARGE LOSSES HAD BEEN INCURRED. ACCORDING TO INFORMATION REACHING THE JORDANIANS, THE PLO HAD ASKED THE SYRIANS FOR HELP FROM THE BEGINNING, BUT THE SYRIAN RESPONSE HAD BEEN SLOW AND UNIMPRESSIVE. THE SYRIANS HAD TURNED BACK VOLUNTEERS FROM JORDAN AT THE JORDANIAN/SYRIAN BORDER SEMICOLON UNITS FROM THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ARMY FROM JORDAN HAD REACHED LEBANON, BUT HAD BEEN PREVENTED BY THE SYRIANS FROM GOING TO THE FRONT LINE. THE KING UNDERSTOOD THAT AN IRANIAN BRIGADE HAD BEEN TRANSPORTED BY AIR FROM IRAN TO SYRIA.

6. KING HUSSEIN SAID HE HAD BEEN IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH PRESIDENT MUBARAK OVER THE LAST FEW DAYS, AND THAT THE EGYPTIANS WERE NOW SENDING EMISSARIES TO JORDAN, SAUDI ARABIA, AND IRAQ. HE WAS HELPING WITH THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THIS AND HAD SPOKEN TO PRINCE FAHD ON THE EVENING OF 11 JUNE AND WAS IN TOUCH WITH THE IRAQIS. THE KING SAID MUBARAK WAS PROFOUNDLY UPSET AND DISAPPOINTED BY US POLICY.

7. AS I WAS LEAVING, THE KING SAID HE WAS TAKING NO CHANCES AS FAR AS JORDAN WAS CONCERNED AND WAS KEEPING A PARTICULARLY SHARP WATCH ON THE AREA OF JORDAN ADJACENT TO SOUTHERN GOLAN, JUST IN CASE THE ISRAELIS WERE TEMPTED TO TRY SOMETHING THERE.

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8. IN A BRIEF REFERENCE TO HIS RECENT VISIT TO BAGHDAD, THE KING CONFIRMED THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED THE LATEST IRAQI OFFER OF WITHDRAWAL AND CEASEFIRE FULLY WITH THE IRAQI LEADERSHIP BEFORE IT WAS MADE. HE DISMISSED LORD GEORGE BROWNS ASSERTION THAT PRESIDENT SADDAM WAS LOSING HIS GRIP AS WIDE OF THE MARK AND CLAIMED THAT ON THE CONTRARY THE IRAQI LEADERSHIP HAD SEEMED TO HIM UNITED IN THEIR RESPONSE TO RECENT MILITARY SETBACKS.

9. THE KING WAS IN A THOROUGHLY GLOOMY MOOD AND SEEMED COMPLETELY DISOLLUSIONED WITH THE AMERICANS. OUR CONVERSATION OF COURSE TOOK PLACE BEFORE THE NEWS OF A CEASEFIRE BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE PLO WAS KNOWN.

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