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Noted



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

23 December, 1983

Prime Minister

For information.

Dear John,

Middle East: US Policy

DMS
23/12

We had hoped to arrange a meeting with President Reagan's Special Middle East Envoy, Mr Donald Rumsfeld when he was in London on the morning of 21 December after a tour of some Middle East capitals. This unfortunately did not prove possible, but Mr Luce spoke to him on the telephone, and the US Embassy subsequently arranged for Mr Viets, US Ambassador in Amman who had been present at the Rumsfeld's talk with King Hussein, to brief us.

There was one point of particular interest in the account given us by Viets. According to Viets, the King had told Rumsfeld that General Zaid bin Shaker had just returned from Washington after signing on 15 December a far-reaching contingency planning agreement with the US Administration. Mr Viets said that this agreement had emerged from his own recommendation some ten months ago that it was now necessary to 'stitch some more safety nets' for King Hussein, mainly in the form of contingency planning against a Syrian attack. The result, signed on 15 December, was without precedent in US foreign relations. It provided in the event of implementation for the drawing down of US war stocks worth \$8-10 billion, and the use of American servicemen on a graduated basis to man air defences in Jordan. Mr Viets commented that it was a far-reaching and air-tight instrument, which had been carefully drafted so as not to need to be laid before Congress.

John - he might have told us.

Mr Viets commented that unfortunately the Jordanians did not fully realise the merits of this agreement, whose negotiation they had seen initially as a back-door way to get American arms supplies.

I am copying this letter to Richard Mottram (MOD).

Yours ever,
Peter Ricketts

(P F Ricketts)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

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