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*Jordan*



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

21 January 1980

*Dear Michael,*

CALL BY KING HUSSEIN ON THE PRIME MINISTER  
ON 23 JANUARY

King Hussein is to call on the Prime Minister for tea on 23 January at 4.30 pm. Lord Carrington will also attend, together with John Moberly, if the Prime Minister agrees.

/ I enclose a brief for the occasion with personality notes on the King, the Minister of Court, and the Jordanian Ambassador (who can be expected to accompany him), and a copy of the record of the King's previous meeting with the Prime Minister in September.

*Yours etc*

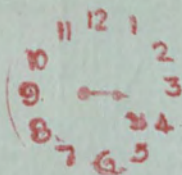
*Paul*

(P Lever)

M O'D B Alexander Esq  
10 Downing Street

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22 JAN 1980



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CALL BY KING HUSSEIN ON THE PRIME MINISTER ON 23 JANUARY

Points\_to\_Make

Regional\_Stability

1. Grateful for King's assessment of the Soviet threat in the region particularly after recent visit to Gulf and Saudi Arabia.
2. Hope Islamic Foreign Ministers' conference on 26 January will clearly condemn Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Need for sustained and effective action with Islamic and regional countries taking a lead. Would Jordan be prepared to join a concerted boycott of Olympics ?
3. Hope conference will provide an opportunity for helping over US hostages in Tehran.

Arab/Israel

4. Understand why Arab reaction to Afghanistan complicated by lack of confidence in US peace efforts on the basis of Camp David agreements and agree on need for urgent progress towards a comprehensive settlement. But Afghanistan is the immediate problem and risk of Soviet mischief-making if Arabs seek to exploit Afghanistan to pressure Americans: US policy not going to change overnight, particularly in an election year.
5. Too soon to write off autonomy talks, but agree prospects poor. Not easy to see way forward but ready to weigh in at the right moment. Attracted by a new Security Council Resolution but Arabs seem divided. Would PLO accept a resolution reaffirming 242 supplemented by a paragraph on Palestinian rights ?

PLO\_(Defensive)

6. Still await a commitment by them to a negotiated settlement. Can leadership deliver this ? Will not let political sensitivity of dealings with PLO stand in the way of peace efforts.

Sale\_of\_Tanks\_and\_Aircraft

7. Welcome signature of contracts for sale of tanks and Tristar aircraft. Neither without difficulty; glad to see successful

/resolution

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resolution of air services negotiations.

Rhodesia

8. Grateful for King's warm message of congratulations on success of Lancaster House talks.

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## ESSENTIAL FACTS

1. King Hussein arrived in London on 19 January and will stay for about ten days. This is a private visit to accompany his youngest daughter who acquires an urgent facial operation in London. Queen Noor who is pregnant was unable to accompany the child herself.

Regional Stability

2. Jordan voted for the General Assembly resolution on Afghanistan and was involved from an early stage in moves to set up the Islamic Foreign Ministers Conference now arranged for 26 January. Just before coming to London the King visited Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and Oman. In the king's conversations with HM Ambassador both before and after this trip it has been clear that his reactions to Afghanistan are influenced by his continued suspicions of US intentions (he has expressed scepticism at America's 'discovery of Islam') and his almost total preoccupation with the Arab/Israel conflict. He says that while he does not underestimate the very grave dangers which the Soviet action represented for Arab countries he is concerned at how the Arabs would react if the United States were compelled to take military action against Iran. He sees the Palestinian problem as central; so long as it remains unresolved the area would be divided within itself and ill-placed to withstand the Soviet threat. Recent events therefore make it more rather than less urgent to make progress in the Middle East. The Islamic Foreign Ministers conference would have to deal with Arab/Israel as well as Afghanistan if it were to carry conviction.

3. The King told HM Ambassador that although he had detected an underlying nervousness the Gulf rulers were facing up to the situation better than he had expected. He had spoken frankly to

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the Sultan of Oman of the need to put his house in order and had found the Sultan confident. He was more concerned at the prospects of the Saudis putting their own house in order and saw signs of differences between King Khalid and Prince Fahd. He was also worried by continued strains between Saudi Arabia and YAR. The Yemenis recently resumed arms purchases from the Soviet Union. King Hussein would prefer the Saudis to match the offer, but their talks with the YAR Prime Minister in Riyadh seemed disappointing.

Arab/Israel

4. President Sadat and Mr Begin had a fourth summit meeting in Aswan from 7 - 10 January, intended to give the autonomy talks political direction. In the event, there was a wide measure of agreement over the dangers of Soviet influence in the wake of Afghanistan but no progress or understanding on autonomy. There was disagreement in particular over East Jerusalem, which President Sadat regards as part of the area to be granted autonomy, and Mr Begin as a non-negotiable part of Israel. Nevertheless President Sadat did not block measures to begin normalization of relations, as the treaty requires. He also revived the idea of implementing autonomy first in Gaza (which lacks the sensitivity of the West Bank for Israel) as a possible means of allowing further progress. The Israeli Government reaction is not yet clear, but they will not risk making concessions for Gaza which they would not be prepared to extend to the West Bank. The anti-Sadat Arabs are likely to regard the scheme as further evidence that President Sadat is betraying the Palestinians, particularly since Gaza was under Egyptian administration from 1948-67.

5. Following the summit, there was a further round of talks at working level. This resulted in public rejection by each side of

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the other's concept of autonomy. In particular the Israelis rejected the idea of legislative powers for the self-governing authority. This was inevitable at a certain stage, when the issues of substance were addressed, and the subsequent angry exchanges are unlikely to presage an imminent breakdown of the talks. The principal result is to increase the pressure on the Americans to put forward proposals of their own to try to bridge the gap. The Americans have been expecting this; their chief negotiator, Sol Linowitz, is visiting the area at the end of January, (he calls on Lord Carrington on 25 January). The Americans have indicated that they believe events in Afghanistan increase the need for progress soon on Palestinian autonomy. US views are much closer to Egypt's than to Israel's.

6. There is meanwhile no sign of Arab opposition to Sadat relenting. Relations between Saudi Arabia and Egypt remain very poor. Nevertheless there are no new alternative Arab ideas with any wide measure of support. Most are vaguely in favour of action under UN auspices, but there is little sign of pressure to resume the Security Council debate on the Palestinian issue which was adjourned without a vote in August 1978. Jordan's advocacy of a new positive Arab strategy appeared to fall on deaf ears at the Tunis Summit last November. King Hussein looks to others, particularly Europe, for new efforts. The Arabs are aware of our general support for a new Security Council resolution which goes further than 242 in dealing with Palestinian political rights; but there is a gap between their view of what it should contain ie unequivocal endorsement of PLO demands, and our own, which is that while the Palestinian right to determine their own future in the context of a negotiated settlement could be included, 242 must be strongly reaffirmed and accepted by the PLO.

7. Developments in the occupied territories have tended to confirm Arab/Jordanian fears of Israeli intentions. Mr Begin's government are committed to intensify further the settlement process (despite lack of funds). There is also continuing talk in Israel of the desirability

of changing the legal status of the occupied territories.

#### New Jordanian Government

8. King Hussein appointed a new government on 19 December. The new Prime Minister Sherif Abdul Hamid Sharaf, formerly Head of the Royal Court, has been the King's closest adviser for some years. He accompanied the King when he called on the Prime Minister in September. Such a change had been widely forecast; the previous government of Mudar Badran has served a record term of over 3 years. No fundamental change is apparent or expected in Jordan's external policies. The new government had however committed itself to a number of internal reforms; improved public participation in policy making, educational reform, more equal distribution of wealth, greater decentralisation of local government, elimination of corruption etc etc. These are areas in which the government has been criticised in the past and is clearly an attempt to ensure internal stability. The new Cabinet is younger and in many cases technically well qualified (it also includes the first woman minister in Jordan in charge of a new Ministry of Social Development) but sweeping change will be difficult to achieve.

#### Sale of Tanks and Military Training

9. The Prime Minister discussed these subjects with King Hussein at their meeting in September. Good progress has been made on both. The contract for sale of 274 Shir tanks to Jordan was signed on 28 November. The total value of this contract is £266 million. Negotiations for the sale of £100 - £150 million worth of support equipment spares and ammunition are now under way. On military training exploratory visits were exchanged late last year and the Director of Military Assistance Overseas, General Fursdon, is now in Jordan to advise on Jordanian requirements in greater detail. The new Jordanian government has committed itself to strengthening the armed forces. But no further Jordanian requests for substantial arms purchases are current and we believe they will wish to digest the tanks



purchase first before possibly approaching us for further supplies.

Aircraft Sales

10. A contract for the sale of 5 Tristar aircraft powered by Rolls Royce RB 211 engines was also signed on 21 December. The Jordanians attach importance to the provision in the contract for the establishment of a central servicing facility for Rolls Royce engines in Amman. The Jordanians linked this contact with successful renegotiation of air service arrangements. Their original demands were excessive and it was only with considerable difficulty that agreement was reached whereby passenger capacity would be increased by mutual agreement as increased traffic generated by fare reductions justified it.

Rhodesia

11. The King sent a warm message of congratulations to the Prime Minister on the conclusion of the Lancaster House negotiations (copy attached). The Prime Minister will wish to take this opportunity to thank the King.

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00 IMMEDIATE FCO

TELNO 513 OF 23 DEC 79

T175/797

FOR RESIDENT CLERK

1. THE HEAD OF THE ROYAL COURT TODAY GIVES ME THE FOLLOWING PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM KING HUSSEIN TO THE PRIME MINISTER.

BEGINS

DEAR PRIME MINISTER

WE WERE DEEPLY GRATIFIED TO HEAR OF THE REMARKABLE BREAKTHROUGH IN THE PEACE TALKS ON THE ZIMBABWE-RHODESIA PROBLEM.

YOUR PERSISTENCE, REMARKABLE STATESMANSHIP, AND DEEP COMMITMENT TO A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM WERE DECISIVE FACTORS IN BRINGING ABOUT A SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION TO THE NEGOTIATIONS.

WE SINCERELY HOPE THE PARTIES CONCERNED WOULD ADHERE TO THE CONDITIONS OF THE CEASE-FIRE TO ENABLE A PEACEFUL TRANSITION TO LEGALITY AND EVENTUAL INDEPENDENCE WHICH THE PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE-RHODESIA COULD ACCEPT.

WE ALSO HOPE YOUR ENERGIES WOULD CONTINUE IN THE SAME SPIRIT TO HELP BRING ABOUT PEACE TO OTHER TROUBLED AREAS OF THE WORLD ESPECIALLY IN THE MIDDLE EAST WHERE A COMPREHENSIVE, JUST, AND PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF THE CONFLICT IS URGENTLY NEEDED NOT ONLY BY THE PEOPLE OF THE AREA BUT THE WORLD OVER.

WITH MY BEST WISHES AND REGARDS.

MOST SINCERELY

YOUR FRIEND

HUSSEIN

1. ORIGINAL FOLLOWS BY NEXT DAY.

## HUSSEIN BIN TALAL, HM KING

King of Jordan since 11 August 1952.

Born Amman 1935. Educated Bishops School, Amman, Victoria College, Alexandria, Harrow; shortened course at Sandhurst 1952/53. He was present when his grandfather, the Amir Abdullah, was assassinated in Jerusalem in 1952. He himself has survived unscathed many attempts on his life. Acceded to the throne in the following year on the deposition of his father, Talal, a schizophrenic. The major events of his reign have been: March 1956, dismissal of Glubb Pasha; 1956-58, a series of threats to his throne: Sulaiman Nabulsi's National Socialist Government, the Ali Abu Nuwar (qv) plot, and the overthrow and massacre of the Hashemites in Iraq; 1960, assassination of his Prime Minister, Hazza Majali; 1965, Prince Hassan proclaimed Crown Prince; 1963-7 period of considerable economic growth in Jordan; 1967, six-days war with Israel; 1970-1, civil war leading to the expulsion of the Fedayeen from Jordan; 1971, assassination of his Prime Minister, Wasfi al-Tell, in Cairo; 1972, announcement of plan for United Arab Kingdom (East and West Banks); 1973, October war with Israel; 1974, Rabat Conference ended King Hussein's isolation in the Arab world and opened the way for the establishment of his close personal understanding with President Asad. 1976, the Development Conference to launch Jordan's 5-year plan symbolised the recovery of the Hashemite Kingdom from the effects of the 6-days war and of the disorders which followed it.

In his early years King Hussein was often regarded as something of a playboy, but with the passage of time he has acquired a formidable skill in steering his small country through the treacherous currents of Middle East war and politics. He now appears to be wholly serious and dedicated in his efforts to preserve the Hashemite Kingdom and to protect the interests of his people, both East Bank Jordanians and the Palestinians. Allied to a measure of luck, he has shown the ability to take sensible decisions in times of crises.

At the Rabat Conference in October 1974 King Hussein recognised the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and implicitly, therefore, renounced his claim to the West Bank. Nevertheless, moved as he is by a belief in the historic mission of the Hashemites, King Hussein has not in reality abandoned his belief that his family will have an important role to play with regard to the West Bank if there is ever to be an Arab/Israel settlement.

By natural inclination, as well as a result of a conscious assessment of the best interests of the Hashemites, King Hussein has always been strongly pro-Western. He has faltered in this general alignment only for brief periods, eg when reacting against the political tutelage of General Glubb, in his frustration over the catastrophic results of the 6-days war for Jordan, or when faced in 1976 with initial Western reluctance to supply Jordan with a suitable air defence system.

For most of his reign King Hussein has exercised a tight control over all major foreign and defence policy issues. He is less interested in economic questions and has devolved responsibility for planning in this field on Crown Prince Hassan. In pursuing his very personalised style of government King Hussein's biggest asset has been his very warm, friendly and outgoing personality. He has

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used this to good effect in maintaining by personal contact the loyalty of the Armed Forces, the supreme importance of which he has always recognised.

In relation to Israel King Hussein recognises the futility of extreme policies. His willingness to contemplate full peace with Israel is genuine but his freedom of manoeuvre has always been limited by the need to keep in step with his Arab neighbours and to take account of the views of the Palestinian half of Jordan's population, and by his dependence on the United States' continued economic and military assistance. In the light of the re-armament of Israel since 1973 he recognises how far the Arabs have to go before they have a credible military option but he is well aware that Jordan could be compelled by circumstances to enter a further Arab/Israel war.

Despite the King's increasingly mature political judgement born of long experience, he remains essentially practical and non-intellectual in his approach to his country's problems. To his warm friendliness he adds an undoubted courage without which he could have hardly survived in the face of military defeat, the frequent hostility of his Arab neighbours and the resentment of his Palestinian subjects.

In his personal life the tragic death in a helicopter crash in 1977 of his third wife, Queen Alia, affected him more deeply than any of the other disasters to which he has been exposed in his reign. His marriage (in June 1978) to his fourth wife, Noor (née Elizabeth, or Lisa) Halaby, is nevertheless to all appearances one of genuine affection. It may also help to provide a stable family life for the King's two young children by Alia. Despite complaints at the King's choice of another non-Arab, non-Muslim girl to marry, the marriage has not attracted the considerable public criticism aroused by the King's wedding to Princess Muna. Shortly before the marriage the King announced that Prince Ali, his infant son by Alia, would become next in the line of succession to Prince Hassan, cutting out any sons of the King's fourth marriage as well as his two sons by Muna (and presumably any sons born to the Crown Prince and Princess Sarvath, who have young daughters). By this means King Hussein sought to avoid later argument and to strengthen the Hashemite throne for the future by underlining its pure Arab character.

King Hussein has recently suffered on more than one occasion from slight heart trouble. Provided, however, that he continues to be able to avoid assassination attempts and accidents and that his health remains good, there seems no reason short of an all-out Arab/Israel war with all the uncertainties that this would bring, why he should not remain King of Jordan for some time to come. For the time being his neighbours, other than Iraq, and his financial backers are likely to conclude that their interests will continue to be best served by the maintenance of the Hashemite regime in Jordan and by King Hussein remaining at the head of it.

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58 ● HAMMASH, AMER, LIEUTENANT-GENERAL (RETD)

● Court Minister since 1976.

Born 1924 at Salt of a family of Turkish origin previously settled in Nablus for many years. No formal education after the age of 18. An original member of the Arab Legion Artillery. ADC to several different Prime Ministers 1955-7; Commander, Royal Jordanian Artillery 1957-62; Director of Planning and Organisation, JAA 1962-5; Chief of Staff, promoted Major-General 1965; promoted Lt-General 1968; removed from his position when Sharif Nasser (qv) became Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces; Minister of Defence and Transport for a short period, after which he retired from public life, to re-emerge in 1972 as King Hussein's Special Adviser on Gulf affairs. He also held a watching brief for the King on purchase and sales of military equipment.

Although Khammash has described himself as "only a simple soldier", he is in fact one of the best brains in Jordan, well able to handle a complex of military, economic, commercial, technological, political and diplomatic problems. In the period 1967-9 he was one of the three key men upon whom the security of the King and of Jordan depended. His recent job involved him in frequent visits, as the King's personal emissary, to Oman, the UAE and Saudi Arabia, where he handled such subjects as Jordanian military assistance to the Gulf States and since his appointment as Court Minister, he has continued to undertake such missions, as well as fulfilling the other tasks that go with the job. He favours continued Jordanian alignment with the West, and has a deep personal affinity for Britain, though he does not allow this to cloud his view of where Jordan's best interests lie.

In conversation he prefers the light touch even when seriously discussing important subjects, though he has little time for people not properly informed on the details of the subject under discussion. He has no hobbies outside his work, though he is an avid newspaper reader. Speaks excellent English. Married. Two sons and one daughter, of whom the elder boy (expelled from Wellington) and the daughter are being educated in the UK.

IZZIDDIN, IBRAHIM

Ambassador to London.

Born 1934, Amman. A graduate of the American University of Beirut (BA Political Science). A career civil servant, he has filled a remarkably wide variety of posts in the public service, in the Ministry of Communications, the Prime Minister's office, the Department of Press and Publications, the Press Section at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Alia, the then Ministry of Culture and Information, and the Royal Hashemite Diwan (Court) where he was Press Secretary to the King. Has served as Ambassador in Berne and Bonn before his present posting. He had a very good reputation with the Germans in Bonn and expresses the intention of keeping actively in touch with the FCO and more widely with moulders of opinion in London.

Married, but with no children. He is regarded as intelligent, honest and straightforward. His wife comes from a rich Circassian family. They are both friendly and enjoy Western social life. Reputedly keen on sports.

52 JOUDEH, DR SAMI

Businessman.

Born near Ramallah (West Bank) about 1930. Educated in the USA; PhD in International Relations.

He started as a civil servant in the Department of Civil Aviation. He entered parliament and has been Minister of National Economy. In 1973 he joined the Jordan Economic Development Trading Co. as a partner. The other partner is Khaled Rifai (his brother-in-law; his wife is a step-sister of Zeid al-Rifa'i; qv).

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*Mr Tenthams (NEV40)*  
*EE PS*  
*PS/CPJ*  
*S. J. M. Howard*  
*PS/PJS*  
*Mr Burtwell*  
*2. J. Moberly*

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

20 September 1979

*Dear Paul,*

*Mr Tenthams  
for act. 2  
WSD/24/4.*

King Hussein's Call on the Prime Minister

King Hussein of Jordan called on the Prime Minister at 1800 this evening as planned. I enclose a copy of the record of the discussion.

I am sending a copy of this letter and its enclosure to Martin Vile (Cabinet Office).

*Yours ever*

*Michael Alexander*

Paul Lever, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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RECORD OF A DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER AND KING HUSSEIN  
JORDAN AT 10 DOWNING STREET ON 20 SEPTEMBER 1979 AT 1800 HOURS

Present:

Prime Minister .

Mr. J.C. Moberly

Mr. Michael Alexander

King Hussein of Jordan

Sherif Abdul Hamid Sharaf

Sherif Zeid bin Shaker

H.E. Ibrahim Izziddin

\* \* \* \* \*

The Middle East Situation

King Hussein said that he thought there was a growing understanding of the need to take another look at the situation in the Middle East. The Camp David process had reached the limits of its possibilities. Mr. Strauss would get no further. Egypt had already exceeded all the limits of what might have been expected. The prestige of the United States had suffered greatly. What was required was a different approach. It would need to involve other nations and the Palestinians themselves. In this way a means of extricating the United States from its present position might be found. The Jordanian Government was in direct touch with the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO).

The Prime Minister asked whether there were any signs that the PLO were prepared to place less reliance on terrorism and more on negotiation. She was one of those who recoiled somewhat from the idea that the PLO should be accepted as the sole representative of the Palestinians. Were there no spokesmen who were not terrorists? King Hussein said that he had been trying to distance the PLO from some Arab states and also to make them more representative of the Palestinians as a whole. He had recently been pleasantly surprised by the attitude being adopted by the PLO. Their approach was more mature than in the past. They had raised specific issues with him, particularly in relation to the future relationship between a West Bank controlled by the Palestinians and Jordan. King Hussein said that he was unwilling to take the lead in the discussion of future options. He was for Palestinian self-determination. Whatever the Palestinians decided the Jordanian Government would accept. He was

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was very ready to pursue the dialogue with the Palestinians and had told them he awaited their proposals about the future. Mr. Arafat had said the previous day that he intended to resume discussion of this subject as soon as King Hussein returned from the General Assembly. The Prime Minister asked whether King Hussein would accept a loose federal relationship between the West Bank and Jordan. King Hussein said that the relationship would certainly pose problems for Jordan but that his people felt very close to the Palestinians. They had a duty to them, as members of one family, to aid them in seeking the recovery of their land. Sherif Abdul Hamid Sharaf said that the Jordanian Government was willing to consider any relationship with whatever entity resulted from the free choice of the Palestinian people. The King was prepared to give this message to everyone.

The Prime Minister asked how progress could be made in the immediate future. King Hussein said that he was trying to formulate the new Arab position. He hoped that a cross-section of Arab representatives would soon be able to discuss together how far Resolution 242 was still valid; what changes should be made in it; and what principles a new settlement should incorporate. He thought this work could be done reasonably quickly. He intended to bring forward in New York the outline of a new Resolution or at least the principles on which it might be based. He did not wish to push ahead too rapidly. Indeed, he had been urging on the PLO for some time the need to go slowly in order to avoid a confrontation with the United States and a possible veto on a Resolution incorporating moderate Arab views. The Prime Minister agreed about the need not to make matters too difficult for the United States.

The Prime Minister asked whether the PLO still had difficulty in recognising publicly the right of Israel to exist. King Hussein said that there had to be a balanced approach to the problem. On the one side the Israelis had to recognise the rights of the Palestinians to self-determination and agree to withdraw from the occupied territories; on the other side, the Palestinians would have to recognise the right of Israel to exist. Sherif Abdul Hamid Sharaf said that King Hussein had been focussing on moderating the position of the PLO. The Palestinians had for many years asserted their rights to all the territory of Israel. The acceptance of an Israeli

state, eg through an amended Resolution 242, presented major psychological and political difficulties for them. However, they were moving in that direction. So was Arab opinion in general as could be seen by the contrast between the present position and that at the time of the rejectionist Arab summit a year ago.

Sherif Abdul Hamid Sharaf went on to say that there was, however, another side to the question where European Governments, and in particular the United Kingdom, could help. The necessity for Israel to accept the right of the Palestinians to self-determination had not been sufficiently stressed. If Western Governments did not try now to break the deadlock there was a risk that the opportunity would be lost. The present powerlessness of the United States increased the significance of Europe's position. The United Kingdom had been lagging behind some of its partners. If the United Kingdom were to push in the direction of a more explicit recognition of Palestinian rights and of the need for Israel to move, this would be of great assistance. If Israel came to realise that the position of her principal supporters in Western Europe and North America was shifting, this would make an enormous difference.

The Prime Minister said that she had told Mr. Begin during his visit to London that political autonomy on the West Bank was meaningless unless it meant autonomy over the territory as well. However, it was very hard for the Israelis, after generations of suspicion, to adjust to a new situation. It was difficult for them to believe that the Arabs genuinely accepted their right to exist. But a stable solution to the problems of the Middle East was of the greatest importance both for the West and for Israel itself. Jordan's doubts about the Camp David process appeared to have been justified and another approach might have to be found. If there were to be mutual assurances about self-determination for the Palestinians and Israel's right to exist they would have to be given simultaneously.

The Prime Minister asked King Hussein about the American position and his Government's contacts with the United States. King Hussein said that, as a result of Camp David, the United States was no longer able to play its proper role in the Middle East.

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Their political and material commitment to Israel was too great to enable them to be neutral. It would be a service to them to find a new approach. Sherif Abdul Hamid Sharaf said that the Jordanian Government had been promised by President Johnson that the United States would throw its weight behind the implementation of Resolution 242 but nothing had happened. They were now therefore less interested in formulations than in intentions. What was needed were binding commitments. Recent contacts between the United States and Jordan had been difficult and unsatisfactory. There had been a good deal of confusion.

The Prime Minister asked whether the Jordanian Government had given any thought to the details of the self-determination process. What question would be put to the Palestinians; would the process be in one or more stages? Many Western Governments would, for instance, be happier if they knew that the results of self-determination would be a federal relationship between the Palestinian West Bank and Jordan. King Hussein said that this would be a question for negotiation. The Jordanians had written a paper on the subject. They had discussed this with the United States before Camp David. They had come to the conclusion that there were dangers in being too specific. The King did not dissent when the Prime Minister said that she had the impression the Jordanian Government were thinking in terms of a two-stage process ie agreement on withdrawal and self-determination followed by a decision about the nature of the Palestinian administration. Sherif Abdul Hamid Sharaf said that agreement on the basic issue would create a new climate. But he said that if Jordan were to be asked to take responsibility for the Palestinians, Jordan would need to be strengthened. He did not see any difficulty, however, in principle about developing a programme to absorb the Arab labour at present being employed on Israeli construction projects.

Sherif Abdul Hamid Sharaf concluded the discussion of the Middle East problem by reiterating that Jordan hoped for the help of the United Kingdom in pushing for an alternative approach to the problem. This approach should have concern for the Palestinians at its heart. The PLO had agreed not to force the issue. They were willing to accept co-existence with Israel but now they wanted to know what to do next. A special effort was needed.

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Tanks

The Prime Minister referred to the discussion which Sherif Zeid bin Shaker would be having at the Ministry of Defence the following day about the sale of British tanks to Jordan. She said she was anxious to see the negotiation successfully completed. HMG were prepared to supply the tanks at cost price. The Prime Minister said she was advised that an agreement could be concluded. It was her wish that it should be concluded. She wished to see the historic ties between the United Kingdom and Jordan in this field restored. She intended to ask later the next day about the progress that had been made. Sherif Zeid bin Shaker said that he hoped it would prove possible to complete the negotiations at his meeting.

He said that his Government were also looking for political agreement on the despatch of a number of British training missions to Jordan. He envisaged the training teams spending six months to a year in Jordan. The details could be worked out after the decision of principle had been taken. The Prime Minister said she favoured the idea and would take an interest in the progress of the discussions about it.

The discussion ended at 1910.

*Ans*

20 September 1979

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B/F 22.1.80.

Jar  
Jordan

18 January 1980

Dear Mr. Pringle,

Further to my conversation with you this afternoon, I am writing to confirm that King Hussein is paying a call on the Prime Minister at 1630 hours on Wednesday, 23 January and he will be accompanied by the Foreign Secretary. Could you please send us a brief to reach us not later than Tuesday, 22 January.

Yours sincerely,

Jar

pp

CAROLINE STEPHENS

R.E. Pringle, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.



WITH  
THE COMPLIMENTS OF THE  
PRIVATE SECRETARY

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE, WHITEHALL

LONDON, S.W.1A 2HB

Jordan

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Prime Minister:

I have told the FCO, that I thought you would be prepared to see King Hussein if he comes to London (as he probably will) & if mutually convenient dates can be found.

*Need not*

*Am*

GR 70  
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FM MUSCAT 111300Z JANUARY 1980  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELNO 26 OF 11 JANUARY  
AND TO IMMEDIATE AMMAN  
INFO ANKARA JEDDA ISLAMABAD NEW DELHI WASHINGTON UKDEL NATO  
UKMIS NEW YORK BONN PARIS AND SANAA.

YOUR TELNO 14 TO FCO: POSSIBLE MEETING WITH KING HUSSEIN.

1. I SHALL BE HAPPY TO CALL ON KING HUSSEIN ON MY WAY BACK FROM DELHI. ON PRESENT PLANS I COULD ARRIVE IN AMMAN AT APPROXIMATELY 1300 HOURS LOCAL ON 18 JANUARY AND REMAIN FOR A COUPLE OF HOURS. WOULD HM AMBASSADOR AMMAN PLEASE FIND OUT WHETHER THIS WOULD BE CONVENIENT FOR THE KING. IF IT IS NOT, I SHALL OF COURSE BE GLAD TO CALL ON HIM WHEN HE IS IN LONDON.

LUCAS

*ms*

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