

COVERING SECRET



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

28 May 1980

Dear Michael,

The Prime Minister has agreed to see
/ King Hussein today at 5pm. I enclose a brief.

We do not yet know whether the King will
be accompanied at this meeting. The Jordanian
Ambassador and the Commander-in-Chief may do so.
Personality notes on them are included.

Yours WTA

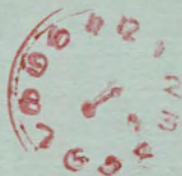
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COVERING SECRET

28 MAY 1950



PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH KING HUSSEIN AT 5.00PM ON 28 MAY

Points to Make

Arab/Israel

1. European concern to maintain momentum of peace process. No decisions yet taken. Need for consensus of all involved including US. Ideas to be considered at European Council in June.
2. Need to bring in the Palestinians. Security Council resolution one possible means. Has the King any other ideas? What is his advice on timing?
3. Any possibility of Jordanian involvement in a renewed peace process?
4. Accept political importance of PLO, but problem of their acceptance of Israel's right to exist. Can Jordan help bring this home to them?

UK/Saudi Arabia

5. Grateful for Jordanian willingness to help. Preparing proposals to improve links with the media on both sides. Hope Ministerial statements (eg Lord Carrington's on 22 May) will improve atmosphere.

Afghanistan

6. Essential to keep pressure on the Soviet Union. Pleased Conference reiterated strong condemnation of Soviet presence and call for withdrawal. How does King see the outcome?

ESSENTIAL FACTS

1. King Hussein is making a brief private visit to London, arriving on 28 May and leaving probably on 3 June, to attend a reunion of former students of Queen Victoria College in Alexandria. He also expects to spend one or two days in London in mid-June on his way to the United States having just accepted an invitation from President Carter to Washington on 16 and 17 June. He withdrew his acceptance of an earlier invitation to Washington in April when it turned out this would clash embarrassingly (for him) with the visits of President Sadat and Mr Begin. King Hussein was last here privately in January. A record of his conversation with the Prime Minister and Lord Carrington on that occasion is attached. (REMOVED AT REVIEW)

Arab/Israel

2. The King's views on the centrality of this issue have not changed. The failure of the autonomy talks to make real progress have done no more than confirm his judgement of Israeli intentions. With his failure at the Tunis summit last November to gain Arab approval of his own proposals for an alternative approach to Camp David (the details of which are not clear) he has continued to press for a European initiative. He sees the dangers of a vacuum over the next 6-8 months and the need for some contingency plan to pre-empt the Russians filling this vacuum. His preference remains for a UN resolution which would endorse Palestinian rights; if the Russians were not to sabotage any initiative some such forum which included them would have to be found. He told HM Ambassador last week that, in his view, the need for an EC initiative was consequently greater than ever. And he was intending when answering questions about his US visit (which will not be announced until next month) to reaffirm this view.

3. King Hussein remains deeply opposed to any Jordanian involvement in the peace process which could either be construed as

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acceptance of Camp David or would cut across the PLO's role as representatives of the Palestinians. He has consistently said that, if Israel withdraws from the occupied territories, it would be for the Palestinians to decide what links, if any, they wished to have with Jordan.

4. The Jordanians have lobbied for effective Security Council action to ensure the return of the three West Bank leaders deported by Israel after the terrorist attack in Hebron. We have voted for both Security Council resolutions calling for the return of the three.

5. It is too early to judge the full implications of Mr Weizman's resignation as Israeli Defence Minister. Our preliminary view is that this is a coalition rather than Government crisis which Mr Begin should survive. But Mr Begin is already having difficulty in filling the vacant post. His preferred candidate yesterday was Mr Shamir but the Democratic Movement opposed the consequent proposed appointment of a liberal, Mr Moda'i, to the Foreign Ministry. Mr Sharon (Agriculture) has threatened to resign if he does not get the job. Another candidate mentioned is Moshe Arens (Chairman of the Knesset Defence and Foreign Affairs Committee). All those mentioned are hardliners and with Mr Weizman's departure a relatively moderate voice in the Cabinet has gone. Although the occasion of his resignation was proposed new cuts in the Defence Budget his differences with Mr Begin over eg conduct of the autonomy talks and settlement policy in the West Bank go deeper. The Defence Minister is responsible for the Administration of the occupied territories.

Regional Security

6. King Hussein might be asked for his views on the Islamic Foreign Ministers Conference at Islamabad. Jordanians had beforehand been pessimistic as to the outcome. They feared that attention might be concentrated on the abortive US rescue attempt in Iran at the expense of condemnation of the Soviet Union and had been lobbying

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for a moderate initiative to forestall attempts to this end by in particular Syria, Algeria, South Yemen and the PLO. While sympathetic to our proposals for a neutral Afghanistan the Jordanians have doubted whether the time was yet ripe for launching such an initiative with any hope of success.

UK/Saudi Arabia

7. The Jordanian Prime Minister told HM Ambassador in April that the Jordanians would do what they could to repair the damage done by 'Death of a Princess'. The Minister of State, Marwan Qasem, discussed it with Prince Saud when he visited Saudi Arabia with his Prime Minister in mid-April. Qasem reported that he had done his best to explain our difficulties in dealing with an independent media but that the Saudis flatly disbelieved that we could not have done more. King Hussein himself visited Saudi Arabia in late April. He reported that the Saudis said little on the subject apart from suggesting a conspiracy in Europe and the United States to defame the Saudi regime. He appears not to have pleaded our cause himself but commented that the Saudis had played their hand in such a way as to attract publicity for a film which was of little intrinsic worth.

8. The King also visited Iraq earlier this month and took the opportunity to suggest that Iraq normalise her relations with the US and put her relations with ourselves on a better footing. Saddam Hussein replied that in principle he was willing to do so, but that the time was not yet ripe. The King believes Saddam had in mind Iraq's forthcoming hosting of the Non-Aligned Conference.

King Hussein's visit to Moscow

9. Following reports in April that King Hussein was planning to visit Moscow in mid-May, the Americans asked for our support for their efforts to seek to persuade him to postpone his visit to a more propitious time and particularly to avoid a visit coinciding with the Islamic Foreign Ministers Conference. HM Ambassador raised this with the Jordanian Prime Minister who confirmed that

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the King had been considering when to respond to a longstanding Soviet invitation and that limited purchases of Soviet military equipment were likely to be considered. HM Ambassador suggested that the visit might be postponed until at least later this year. The King's acceptance of the Soviet invitation has since been announced but no date fixed. The Russians have produced dates which conflict with the King's visit to the US in June and the King has regretted.

Military Cooperation with Jordan

10. The contract for the sale of 274 advanced Chieftain tanks was signed last November. The contract for the support package (spares, ammunition etc) was signed in April. The latter caused last minute problems. The Jordanian Armed Forces found that they had over-committed the Baghdad Funds available for arms purchases and asked for credit on the support package and, retrospectively, for an element of credit on the main tanks contract already concluded on cash terms. This we were able to agree (not without difficulty).

11. Following King Hussein's request to the Prime Minister last September for assistance in training the Jordanian Army the Director of the Military Assistance Office, General Fursdon, visited Jordan in January and produced a comprehensive report of the Army's training requirements. King Hussein is reported to be well pleased with the result and MOD are currently following up consequent Jordanian requests for specific training assistance.

12. A personality note on King Hussein is attached, with notes on Sharif Zeid Bin Shaker and the Jordanian Ambassador both of whom may accompany the King at this meeting.

1 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

to 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.

10 ZEID BIN SHAKER, SHARIF, LIEUTENANT-GENERAL

Commander-in-Chief, Jordan Armed Forces since January 1976.

Born Amman 4th September 1935, son of the Amir Shaker who migrated to Jordan with the late King Abdullah. Educated at Victoria College, Alexandria, and Sandhurst in 1954/55. Appointed ADC to the King after the dismissal of Glubb Pasha. Involved in the 1957 plot; posted as Assistant Military Attaché to London in April 1957. Recalled and dismissed from the army November 1957. Reinstated as a Captain in 1960. Attended the Long Armour Course in the United States in 1962. As a Major in 1963 he commanded First Armoured Infantry Regiment and was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in the same appointment. In 1964 he attended the US Command and General Staff College and then took command of the important 60 Armoured Brigade. Given accelerated promotion to Colonel in November 1965 and appointed Military Assistant to the King. Acquitted himself well in the 1967 war. Promoted Brigadier July 1968 as Commander Royal Armoured Corps, and in late 1969 took command of 3 Armoured Division; as the 3rd was then Jordan's only Armoured Division this was a key appointment. He became unpopular with the Fedayeen, who suspected him of fomenting plots "to liquidate the revolution", and along with Sharif Nasser, was dismissed in June 1970. His eclipse did not last for long however, as in August 1970 he was appointed Assistant Chief of Staff (Operations) 1970-1972. He played a considerable part in the negotiations with the Fedayeen following the fighting in September 1970 and won grudging praise from some of them for his ability. Promoted to Major General in April 1971, appointed Chief of Staff, 5 March 1972, and promoted Lieutenant General in November 1974. Appointed Commander-in-Chief in January 1976.

Despite his chequered career and his lack of military field experience he is firmly established at the head of the Armed Forces where he has been either ACOS Operations, Chief of Staff or C-in-C since 1970. He mixes very little with the officers and soldiers and is therefore not well known by them. In February 1974, following the military disturbances at Zarqa, the discontented soldiery, whom he had let down, called for his replacement as Chief of Staff. At that time he was distrusted.

In the absence of any obvious successor he is likely to remain in his present position for some years yet. He is competent and has been responsible for many of the improvements in the Armed Forces since holding the top three posts in the Army.

He was married on 4 September 1957 to Miss Nawzad Sati who was at that time the niece of Dr Shawkat Sati, King Abdullah's doctor. Sharifa (Nawzad) Zeid is also the niece of Mr Iklil Sati (qv), a prominent Amman businessman and undeclared agent for Marconi.

He is goodlooking, ambitious, socially polished, and close to the King. He has considerable private means. He and his wife speak excellent English. He lives in a large and luxurious villa, paid for by the King, on the exclusive and heavily-guarded Hummar ridge outside Amman. His son, Shaker, (b. 1961) entered a Preparatory School at Seaford in 1972, and is now at Eastbourne College. He has a daughter Nesrine (b. 1959) who was at school in England and is now at Santa Clara University, USA.

51 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 Beme 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.

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*Briefing to follow
AJ 28.5*



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

27 May 1980

Dear Michael,

Visit by King Hussein to London

King Hussein is proposing to visit London next week. The timing is not entirely certain but he is expecting to arrive on the afternoon of 28 May and stay here for about three or four days. He may also be passing through London for a day or two in mid-June on his way to the United States.

He has told HM Ambassador that he would warmly welcome the opportunity to meet the Prime Minister and Lord Carrington on one or other of these visits. The Prime Minister has had useful meetings with King Hussein on both his previous visits and the Secretary of State recommends that she should, if possible, see him on this occasion. In view of the uncertainty of the King's programme some time on 29 or 30 May would appear best.

Yours *ASV*

Paul

(P Lever)
Private Secretary

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LONDON

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27 MAY 1950

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