

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T193/83



10 DOWNING STREET

file

SUBJECT

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cc. Nester
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THE PRIME MINISTER

21 November 1983

Your Majesty,

I am grateful to you for your letter of 26 October with which you enclosed copies of your recent letters to President Reagan about the situation in Lebanon and the future of the Middle East. Richard Luce has subsequently given me an account of his discussions with you in Amman. It is most useful to have your ideas about the dangers threatening the region.

When the Foreign Ministers of the four contributors to the multi-national force met in Paris on 27 October, they reaffirmed their commitment to the MNF and stressed the urgent need for all the parties involved in the Geneva talks to take the steps necessary to achieve national reconciliation. The task is a difficult one. The first results from Geneva are not discouraging, but the news of further violence in Lebanon in recent days shows how urgent it is that a lasting political solution be reached. We shall do what we can to help the reconciliation process along and so create conditions in which the presence of the MNF is no longer necessary. I see the advantages of your idea of a framework for the withdrawal of Israeli, Syrian (and indeed PLO) forces linked to a timetable. Indeed we have been developing some thoughts of our own along similar lines.

I share your concern that the pressure of events in Lebanon has diverted attention from the need to make progress towards a wider peace in the region. Richard Luce has reported to me the

/ feelings

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feelings of despair and frustration which he found on his recent tour, especially in the Occupied Territories, as a result of the lack of progress towards an overall settlement. The tragic fighting now taking place in Northern Lebanon underlines the urgent need for renewed efforts to solve the Palestinian problem, and highlights the difficulties facing those who would like to make faster progress. Under the circumstances I can understand Your Majesty's wish to consider whether there are steps which Jordan might take to this end. I realise that the recall of the Jordanian Parliament would have far reaching implications. Your Majesty will no doubt be looking to other Arab countries to provide backing for such an important step.

As for Britain, you can count on our support for any move which helps to break the current deadlock. We stand ready to do all we can to help promote peace in the region.

With my warmest and deepest regards
and respects for Your Majesty at this
most difficult time;

Yours sincerely

Raymond Shalita

His Majesty King Hussein Bin Talal



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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

21 November 1983

Prime Minister's reply to King Hussein's letter
of 26 October

We spoke on Friday.

I now enclose a slightly revised version
of the draft reply which you submitted earlier.
I should be grateful if you would arrange for
the signed version to be delivered.

A. J. COLES

Peter Ricketts, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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PRIME MINISTER

Letter to King Hussein

I attach a version which is slightly different to the one you saw this morning. He could no longer take your remarks about the recall of the Jordanian Parliament as an encouragement to go ahead with this step.

The Foreign Office have considered whether they could recommend a more substantial reply, but do not think there is really anything more that you can say.

A.J.C.

amb

18 November, 1983.

CONFIDENTIAL



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

18 November 1983

Dear Edm,

Jordan: Letter from King Hussein

We spoke about this. I enclose a draft paragraph to replace paragraph 3 of the attachment to my letter of 17 November.

with
Edm

Yours
we,

Peter Ricketts

(P F Ricketts)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

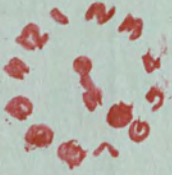
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'I share your concern that the pressure of events in Lebanon has diverted attention from the need to make progress towards a wider peace in the region. Richard Luce has reported to me the feelings of despair and frustration which he found on his recent tour, especially in the Occupied Territories, as a result of the lack of progress towards an overall settlement. The tragic fighting now taking place in Northern Lebanon underlines the urgent need for renewed efforts to solve the Palestinian problem, and highlights the difficulties facing those who would like to make faster progress. Under the circumstances I can understand Your Majesty's wish to consider whether there are steps which Jordan might take to this end. I realise that the recall of the Jordanian Parliament would have far reaching implications. Your Majesty will no doubt be looking to other Arab countries to provide backing for such an important step.'

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18 NOV 1983



ROYAL MAIL



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

17 November 1983

Dear John,

Typ letter p.

AR 12/11

Jordan: Letter from King Hussein

On 26 October King Hussein wrote to the Prime Minister enclosing 2 letters which he had written to President Reagan about Lebanon and the wider Middle East situation.

On Lebanon King Hussein's suggestion that the MNF partners should set a timetable for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon is on similar lines to our own tentative thinking of a package involving the phased withdrawal of all foreign forces. But this thinking is at an early stage, and the Foreign Secretary considers that it would therefore be appropriate for the Prime Minister to refer only in general terms to the similarity of our thinking.

In his second letter to President Reagan, King Hussein's main concern is the Syrian government's increasing control over the PLO. Following the decision of the Rabat summit of 1974 to recognise the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people King Hussein suspended the constitutional and democratic functions of the Jordanian Parliament. On 5 November in an interview with a Kuwaiti newspaper King Hussein publicly floated the possibility mentioned in his letter to President Reagan of recalling Parliament.

The recall of Parliament would amount to a formal reassertion of Jordanian authority over the West Bank, since half the seats in the former Parliament represented West Bank constituencies. Only the UK and Pakistan have formally recognised Jordanian sovereignty over the West Bank. In convening a Parliament with West Bank (Palestinian) representation, the King would be breaking ranks from the Rabat Summit agreement of 1974. For King Hussein to do so without the endorsement of a new Arab summit or at least the open support of other Arab moderates would carry high risks. Syria would be certain to oppose the move, rightly seeing it as directed against Syrian control of the PLO and would put strong pressure on other Arab countries to do the same. King Hussein is conscious of this risk and told Mr Luce on 6 November that before taking such a step he would need to

/be sure

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be sure that the Americans remained committed to the principle of Israeli withdrawal from the Occupied Territories as prescribed in Security Council Resolution 242. In his letter to President Reagan, he seeks a US assurance not only on that point but also that the US will act to help Jordan meet "all challenges" (ie from Syria). It seems unlikely that King Hussein will receive the unequivocal assurances he is seeking, although the Americans will no doubt encourage him to pursue a policy which they might hope would produce an alternative Palestinian leadership. While the American response is unknown, Sir Geoffrey Howe does not think that the Prime Minister should make more than a passing reference to these issues in her reply.

I enclose a draft reply from the Prime Minister to King Hussein.

Yours ever,

P F Ricketts

(P F Ricketts)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

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DRAFT: ~~XXXXX~~ minute/letter/teletype/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:
Prime Minister

Reference

DEPARTMENT: TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:
King Hussein

Your Reference

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

CAVEAT.....

I am grateful to you for your letter of 26 October with which you enclosed copies of your recent letters to President Reagan about the situation in Lebanon, and the future of the Middle East. Richard Luce has subsequently given me an account of his discussions with you in Amman. It is most useful to have your ideas about the dangers threatening the region, ~~and to know that our own thinking is very much in line with yours.~~

When the Foreign Ministers of the four contributors to the Multinational Force met in Paris on 27 October, they reaffirmed their commitment to the MNF and stressed the urgent need for all the parties involved in the Geneva talks to ~~make the sacrifices~~ ^{take the steps} necessary to achieve national reconciliation. The task is a difficult one. The first results from Geneva are not discouraging, ^{but} ~~although~~ the news of further violence in Lebanon in recent days shows how urgent it is that a lasting political solution be reached. We shall do what we can to help the reconciliation process along and so create

/conditions

Enclosures—flag(s).....

Lebanon
Int. Sit. p. 5

conditions in which the presence of the MNF is no longer necessary. I see the advantages of your idea of a framework for the withdrawal of Israeli, Syrian (and indeed PLO) forces linked to a timetable. Indeed we have been developing some thoughts of our own along similar lines

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I share your concern that the pressure of events in Lebanon has diverted attention from the need to make progress towards a wider peace in the region. Richard Luce has reported to me the feelings of despair and frustration which he found on his recent tour, especially in the Occupied Territories, as a result of the lack of progress towards an overall settlement. Under the circumstances I can understand Your Majesty's wish to consider the possibility of recalling the Jordanian Parliament. The tragic fighting now taking place in Northern Lebanon underlines the urgent need for renewed efforts to solve the Palestinian problem, and highlights the difficulties facing those who would like to make faster progress. Your Majesty will no doubt be looking to other Arab countries to provide backing for such an important step.

As for Britain, you can count on our support for any move which helps to break the current deadlock. We stand ready to do all we can to help promote peace in the region.

A. S. C. 17/11