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SUBJECT: RECORD OF CONVERSATION BETWEEN HIS MAJESTY KING HUSSEIN BIN TALAL AND THE FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY BEFORE AND DURING LUNCH AT 1 CARLTON GARDENS AT 1300 ON 12 MAY 1983

.....In Confidence

CAVEAT.....

Present:

Rt. Hon. F Pym

King Hussein

S J Egerton

Mr Ibrahim Izziddin
Jordanian Ambassador

R O Miles

J E Holmes

Lebanon

The Secretary of State said that he had seen Mr Shultz in Paris at the beginning of the week. He had had 'flu, but otherwise seemed in good spirits. The agreement in principle between Israel and Lebanon was certainly progress, although he found it somewhat surprising that no-one outside the ~~principle~~ parties ^{themselves} seemed to have seen the text of what had been agreed. This obviously gave rise to some suspicions of what it contained. The ~~obvious~~ difficulty now was to get the

Enclosures—flag(s).....

Syrians to agree to withdraw. He had also pressed Mr Shultz about where PLO fighters withdrawing from Lebanon were supposed to go. ^{about} Shultz had had no answer to this. He also wondered what ~~was~~ the real price which the Israelis had extracted from the Americans in return for their agreement to withdraw. King Hussein said that he, too, had not seen any text, although Mr Shultz had outlined ^{to him} the key elements of the agreement. Mr Shultz had stressed that there would be a complete Israeli withdrawal from all Lebanese territory within 8 to 10 weeks. President Reagan had since sent him a message to say the same thing. He agreed that the destination of PLO fighters was a problem to which Mr Shultz did not have any clear answer. He had told Mr Shultz that Jordan could not take them all although she would take all Jordanian nationals whatever their background and would consider others on their merits. Egypt might also take some Palestinians. ^{in Amman} ~~the~~ ^{in Amman} while the Syrians were taking a very hard line about the Israel/Lebanon agreement. ^{Soviet pressure} ~~In his view,~~ ^a this was a reflection of a ~~hard line Soviet attitude.~~ He was not sure whether the Syrians were playing along with ^{Russians} this for tactical reasons, ^{eg} because they wanted extra money from the Saudis. But in any case, there was no doubt that negative Soviet influence was having its effect. //

King Hussein continued that, ~~in his view,~~ while the Israel/Lebanon agreement had obvious defects, it nevertheless represented progress. No-one had come up with any realistic alternative, ~~to it.~~ He agreed with the ^{acknowledged} ~~the~~

Secretary of State that a number of earlier Israeli demands had been dropped ^{in the} ~~about~~ final agreement, although he commented that some of these might have been put forward specifically to be dropped later, with the object of giving the Israelis a negotiating margin. He asked for the Secretary of State's views ~~on~~ whether the mood in Washington had now changed? ^{Was} ~~Did we think that~~ Lebanon was ^{now the} limit of US concern? He had put this question to Mr Shultz in Amman, who had denied this and said that President Reagan remained very determined to make progress on the wider dispute. The Secretary of State said that he could not realistically be optimistic about US commitment in the future. The Americans had not yet sewn up the Lebanon withdrawal. ^{Meanwhile} ~~The~~ West Bank was of course a much more difficult problem than Lebanon and the pre-election period in the US was fast approaching. It would have been much better if the Americans had exerted ~~the~~ ^{pressure} over Lebanon a good deal earlier, say in November. King Hussein agreed. He was not a great believer in ^(while the agreement in principle was agreed to) shuttle diplomacy in general. ~~The~~ Shultz shuttle had ended in vagueness and the Israelis remained in Lebanon. He could not regard this as very helpful. He did not know whether Mr Shultz would make another visit to the area. The Secretary of State asked for the King's impressions of the Saudi attitude at present. King Hussein said ~~that this~~ ^{it} was the usual story. The Saudis were in favour of withdrawal but took refuge in vague talk of the need for a reliable mechanism to bring this about. He did not think that they could contribute very much to the present

situation. In response to a question, the King said that the opportunity for a general withdrawal had not disappeared. He agreed that an effort should be made to persuade the Syrians to move. Mr Egerton said that the Americans thought that the Syrians did not in fact want to be isolated in preventing Israeli withdrawal. What remained unknown was the price the Syrians would demand ^(in return for agreeing to) for withdrawal. The wording of the recent Soviet statement had suggested that they might want to see the MNF out as part of the general withdrawal. This might be a possible ^{lever to} incentive ^{for} the Russians to acquiesce in what had been achieved by the Americans with Israel and Lebanon. King Hussein said that he too had heard that the Russians were worried about the MNF and particularly the US contingent but he doubted whether the Lebanese army was really capable of taking over the responsibilities of the MNF in the near future. He agreed, however, that it might be possible to devise a withdrawal timetable according to which the MNF would ^{be withdrawn} disappear in one or two ^{weeks}. The King went on to speculate about the Soviet position in the area generally. He wondered what lay behind Iran's actions in taking action against the Soviet Embassy in Tehran. He had heard separately that the Algerians had been arranging meetings between the US and Iran. He wondered whether there was a connection and how this would fit into the overall picture. The Soviet Union might ^{now} become ^{more} involved in Iran but this would be difficult to square with their position in Syria, ^{given continuing Syrian/Iraqi} hostility. //

The Secretary of State wondered whether the present levels

of violence in and around Beirut was likely to continue. King Hussein said that the situation was very curious. The Druse positions from which Beirut was being shelled lay in an Israeli-occupied area. The Druse were supplied with arms by both the Israelis and Syrians. It was very difficult to make sense ^{out of all this} of but he feared that attempts were being made to fragment the area. In response to a question, he said that the departure of Soviet dependents from Beirut was certainly nothing to do with school holidays. He was inclined to agree that the Russians were exploiting the obvious parallel ^{everyone saw with} between 1973 in order to stir things up. // The Secretary of State said that there would be an informal meeting of the Ten on 14/15 May. He was inclined to doubt whether they would want to make any statement ^{about} current events. Did the King ^{think} have any view of whether a statement would be helpful? King Hussein did not ^{express a particular} ~~press for a~~ ^{view} statement but said that he thought any statement should contain two elements:

- i) Continued support for Lebanese sovereignty from and freedom, outside interference;
- ii) Efforts to achieve a withdrawal from Lebanon should not preclude efforts to achieve a comprehensive peace.

Arabs/Israel

The Secretary of State asked whether there had been any recent developments within the PLO. The leadership, by missing the golden opportunity ^{given to them by the} ~~they had had, thanks to~~

King Hussein, had set back the prospects of achieving their aspirations. Would they ever be able to agree or make any positive move, or did they remain too attached to their style of living to take the decisive step? King Hussein said that Arafat and others had ^{recently} been in Damascus. They did not seem to have had a very happy time there. While in London, he (the King) had had a meeting with some Palestinians. They wanted his approval for a Palestinian meeting in Tunisia, ~~what they wanted was~~ to include as many West Bank mayors, intellectuals and others ~~who took~~ ^{with} a different view from the leadership as possible. The aim was to reverse the present trend of thinking in the PLO. He thought this might be an idea, but had told those who had met him frankly once again that time was not on the Palestinian side and that the opportunity which had been missed would not ~~re-occur~~ ^{recur}. ~~The King continued that,~~ ^{The King continued that} otherwise, ~~nothing very much had happened.~~ The Moroccans had made an attempt to mediate, in particular by suggesting to the Americans that they should accept self-determination for the Palestinians. The PLO had since ruined this by making clear that in their version of things two independent states, one Jordanian and one Palestinian, had to be in existence before any legitimate act of self-determination could take place. ^{For his part,} He was concerned to keep any arrangement between the Jordanians and the Palestinians out of peace negotiations. The Israelis should not be given any kind of say in this or in how self-determination was exercised. He was keen to restrict the scope of negotiations to the implementation of Resolution 242, as

he had constantly stressed to the Americans. Meanwhile, pressures on the people in the West Bank and Gaza were immense. There was a considerable possibility of a new influx into Jordan, ^{This needed} ~~or Moroccans.~~ Jordan had to think very carefully ^{handling.} ~~how to deal with this.~~

Iran/Iraq

King Hussein said that the Iraqis were now ^{more} ~~very~~ confident about their military position and in particular were content ^{with the} ~~with the~~ results of the last Iranian defensive. He referred briefly to the continuing difficulties the Iraqis were having about the proposed oil pipeline across Saudi Arabia. These ^{problems} ~~difficulties~~ were political and not financial.

Detainees in Iraq

The Secretary of State ^{raised} ~~said that he wanted to mention~~ to the King the two British detainees in Iraq, Messrs Smith and Hagger. The circumstances in which they were held had deteriorated in recent months and their treatment was ^{now} ~~very~~ ^{poor.} ~~important.~~ We had not been able to make any impact ourselves on the Iraqis about this. It was a matter of considerable concern. The families of the two men were close to despair. King Hussein had been kind enough to help in the past with President Saddam Hussein. If he saw any chance of raising ^{these issues} ~~it~~ with the President we would be very grateful, ~~indeed.~~ King Hussein, having asked about the background, particularly in the case of Mr Hagger, said that he would certainly raise it with Saddam Hussein.

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

12 May, 1983

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12/5

Dear John,

Call by King Hussein, 1000 13 May

I enclose, in case this is helpful, a copy of the draft record of the conversation between Mr Pym and King Hussein before and over lunch today.

Yours ever

[Handwritten signature]

(J E Holmes)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

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