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20. Sep 1985

' 'DEAR RON,

I AM JUST COMPLETING A VISIT TO EGYPT AND JORDAN AND WANTED TO LET YOU KNOW PERSONALLY STRAIGHT WAY HOW WORRIED I AM BY THE ABSENCE OF PROGRESS IN FOLLOWING UP KING HUSSEIN'S PEACE INITIATIVE. I FOUND THE KING VERY DISPIRITED ABOUT THIS. I AM SURE YOU REALISE HOW MUCH HE RISKED PERSONALLY IN PUTTING FORWARD THE PROPOSALS AND HOW MUCH STANDING HE WOULD LOSE IF HIS INITIATIVE FAILS.

ALL SEEMED TO BE ON COURSE UNTIL YOUR PEOPLE STIPULATED THAT THERE MUST BE DIRECT, VISIBLE CONTACT BETWEEN ISRAEL AND JORDAN AS A CONDITION FOR A MEETING WITH THE JOINT JORDANIAN/PALESTINIAN DELEGATION. I AM SURE YOU WILL RECALL THE CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH KING HUSSEIN'S GRANDFATHER, KING ABDULLAH, WAS ASSINATED IN 1951. IF KING HUSSEIN UNDERTAKES DIRECT VISIBLE CONTACTS WITH ISRAEL WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF MODERATE ARAB GOVERNMENTS, IT COULD SO AGAIN PROVE FATAL FOR THIS COURAGEOUS AND STEADFAST FAMILY.

KING HUSSEIN TOLD ME THAT THEY HAD ' 'COME TO THE END' '. HIS MEETING WITH YOU ON 30 SEPTEMBER WOULD BE DECISIVE. HE HAD GONE TO GREAT LENGTHS WITH ARAFAT TO PERSUADE HIM TO JOIN IN HIS INITIATIVE. HE HAD GOT ARAFAT TO ACCEPT TWO PALESTINIANS FROM THE WEST BANK AND GAZA FOR THE JOINT DELEGATION AT THE UNITED STATES INSISTENCE. HE NATURALLY FEELS NOW THAT IT IS NOT TOO MUCH TO ASK THE UNITED STATES TO ACCEPT TWO OTHERS FROM THE REMAINING FIVE. INDEED I UNDERSTAND THAT YHOU WOULD BE PREPARED TO ACCEPT THE FURTHER TWO IF YOUR NEW PRECONDITION WAS MET.

I REALLY FEEL THAT IF THIS OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE PROGRESS IS MISSED, IT WILL NOT OCCUR AGAIN. FAILURE WOULD BE A GREAT BLOW TO WESTERN DIPLOMACY, ESPECIALLY WHEN WE NEED A SUCCEES AHEAD OF YOUR NOVEMBER MEETING WITH MR. GORBACHEV. MOREOVER THE RISK OF CONTINUINTG GROWTH OF MUSLIM FUNDAMENTALISM AND SHI' ITE EXTERMISM



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IN THE MIDDLE EAST MAKES IT MORE VITAL THAN EVER THAT WE ARE SEEN TO BE MAKING PROGRESS TOWARDS SOLVING THE (NEXT WORK UNDERLINED) PALESTINIAN PROBLEM. IT IS A QUESTION OF KEEPING HOPE ALIVE.

I DO NOT SEE THAT ANYTHING IS TO BE LOST BY A MEETING WITH A JOINT DELEGATION. UNDER KING HUSSEIN'S PROPOSED SEQUENCE OF EVENTS, AS I UNDERSTAND IT, RECOGNITION OF THE PLO WOULD COME ONLY IF AND AFTER THE PLO THEMSELVES HAD PUBLICLY ACCEPTED RESOLUTION 242 AND RENOUNCED VIOLENCE. DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS COULD THEN TAKE PLACE SO LONG AS WE CAN PROVIDE THE KING WITH SOME KIND OF INTERNATIONAL COVER. I KNOW THAT BOTH PRESIDENT MUBARAK AND KING HUSSEIN REMAIN ATTACHED TO A FULL SCALE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE BUT I THINK I MADE SOME HEADWAY IN POINTING OUT THE RISKS THAT THE SOVIET UNION WOULD PROBABLY TRY TO FRUSTRATE A CONFERENCE AND WRECK THE KING'S INITIATIVE. IT MAYH BE THAT GORBACHEV WILL RAISE THIS WITH YOU IN NOVEMBER. BOTH MUBARAK AND KING HUSSEIN ARE CERTAINLY EXPECTING THE MIDDLE EAST TO FEATURE AS ONE OF THE REGIONAL PROBLEMS YOU WILL DISCUSS WITH GORBACHEV.

I WANT TO DO ALL I CAN TO HELP KING HUSSEIN IN HIS PRESENT DIFFICULT POSITION. I HAVE THEREFORE TOLD HIM THAT WE SHALL BE READY TO SEE A JOINT JORDANIAN/PALESTINIAN DELEGATION IN LONDON. THE PALESTINIAN MEMBERS WILL BE TWO WELL-KNOWN MODERATES WHO PERSONALLY SUPPORT A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT, ACCEPT ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO EXIST WITHIN SECURE AND RECOGNISED BORDERS AND OPPOSE VIOLENCE AND TERRORISM. THEY WILL STATE THIS PUBLICLY WHEN THEY COME TO LONDON. I SHALL PROBABLY BE ANNOUNCING THIS TOMORROW BEFORE I LEAVE JORDAN. I HAVE ALSO SENT A MESSAGE TO MR. PERES ABOUT THIS AS I FEEL SURE HE WILL WISH TO KNOW.

I DO MOST EARNESTLY HOPE THAT YOUR TALKS WITH KING HUSSEIN WILL BE SUCCESSFUL AND WILL TAKE THE PEACE PROCESS A FURTHER STAGE FORWARDS.

YOURS SINCERELY.

MARGARET



