

# OUT TELEGRAM

	Classification <b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	Caveat	Precedence <b>FLASH</b>
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7 OF 141200Z OCT 85  
8 INFO IMMEDIATE OTHER MIDDLE EAST POSTS, EC POSTS, WASHINGTON,  
9 UKMIS NEW YORK

Prime Minister  
An account of the  
Jordanian meeting with  
Sir G. Howe. CDD 14/11.

10  
11  
12 CALL ON THE SECRETARY OF STATE BY JORDANIAN DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER  
13 AND FOREIGN MINISTER

14 Summary  
15 1. Jordanian disappointment at frankness of our press statement.  
16 But understood our reasons and blamed problems on lack of  
17 communication on Palestinian side. Anxious to know whether we  
18 would reinstate the visit if they could achieve PLO agreement to  
19 the original statement. I said we would need to reflect on that.  
20 I underlined our continuing firm support for the King's  
21 initiative. Jordanians have decided to cancel their visit to  
22 Luxembourg.

23 Detail  
24 2. I agreed to receive a courtesy call from the Jordanian Deputy  
25 Prime Minister Majali and Foreign Minister Masri this morning in  
26 place of the call by the joint delegation. The Jordanians were  
27 given a copy of our press statement as they entered the room.  
28 Their initial concern was to manage things so as to avoid damage  
29 to the peace process and the image of the Palestinians concerned.

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2 I made plain our great disappointment at these events. Like the  
 3 Jordanians we had taken risks for peace. We were more than ever  
 4 convinced that it was right to do so. The fact that the  
 5 delegation's visit could not take place would be seen as a major  
 6 setback to the King's initiative. This was of great concern to  
 7 us because we continued to believe that the King's approach was  
 8 the right one.

9 3. Masri said that he had spoken to the King in Scotland this  
 10 morning. The King had asked that his personal thanks be passed on  
 11 to the Prime Minister and me for what Britain had done. The King  
 12 was deeply sorry at the turn events had taken. The Jordanians were  
 13 clear that lack of communication on the Palestinian side was to  
 14 blame. They had been making frantic efforts to contact Arafat  
 15 and other PLO leaders. But Arafat had denied all knowledge of  
 16 the proposed joint statement and the two Palestinians had  
 17 decided that they could not accept it without endorsement from the  
 18 PLO Executive Committee.

19 4. In answer to a question from Masri I made clear that there  
 20 was no question of our accepting a call by the joint delegation  
 21 without any agreed press statement.

22 5. Having read our own statement to the press, Masri commented  
 23 that it was very strong and very honest. He did not dispute that  
 24 it was an accurate account of the position, but he was concerned  
 25 that it would destroy the credibility of Milhem and Khoury. In  
 26 the negotiations last night on the joint press statement,  
 27 agreement had been very close. The British and Jordanian  
 28 representatives had been united in trying to press the  
 29 Palestinians on the only outstanding point, a specific reference  
 30 to Israel. Now in the light of our statement the chance of  
 31 narrowing that remaining gap <sup>might have been</sup> ~~had~~ been lost.

32 6. Masri asked for advice on how to handle their proposed visit  
 33 to Luxembourg. They had already been thinking of cancelling it.  
 34 Having now read our press statement he was even more inclined to

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1 <<<< *in order*  
 2 do so, ~~so as~~ to preserve intact the possibility of mounting a  
 3 joint delegation to Britain and the EC Presidency in the future.  
 4 ~~The Secretary of State~~ agreed that in the circumstances  
 5 cancellation seemed the right course. The Jordanians appeared to  
 6 decide there and then that they would do so.  
 7 7. Looking to the future, ~~the Secretary of State~~ underlined  
 8 that we would make plain in public our admiration for all that  
 9 the King was trying to do and our determination to go on working  
 10 with him. Majali said that he was confident it would be possible  
 11 to sort things out with the PLO and get their agreement to an  
 12 acceptable statement. Masru pressed me on whether we would be  
 13 prepared to receive a delegation if the same joint statement could  
 14 be agreed in the future. I replied that I would need to talk this  
 15 over with the Prime Minister. Today's events themselves created  
 16 a new situation and any agreed statement would accordingly be  
 17 looked at even more critically.  
 18 8. In conclusion I said that I had spoken to the Prime Minister  
 19 before the meeting. We were both very disappointed that these  
 20 difficulties had arisen. I asked the Jordanians to pass on to the  
 21 King our deep regret at the set back to the desperately difficult  
 22 task he was engaged on, and our continuing support for him.  
 23 Masri commented that the Jordanians were more than ever certain  
 24 that the path they had mapped out was the right one. If they  
 25 failed the resulting explosion in the region would only benefit  
 26 the radicals.

27 *The Prime Minister will be sending the King a personal*  
 28 HOWE *message in Scotland later today.*  
 29  
 30

/// 31 YYYYY  
 // 32 MAIN  
 / 33 MIDDLE EAST STANDARD  
 34