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OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

THE WHITE HOUSE

EXCHANGE OF TOASTS
BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT
AND
HIS MAJESTY HUSSEIN I
OF THE
HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN

THE STATE DINING ROOM

10:13 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Your Majesties and honored guests:

It was in 1959 that President Eisenhower had the honor of welcoming you, Your Majesty, to the White House on your first visit to Washington, D. C., and to our country. Fifteen years later it was my great privilege to greet you as the first Chief of State that I had the honor of having at the White House in my Administration.

In that time span the world political scene has changed very profoundly. Yet throughout this process of change there have been reassuring elements of stability and constancy in the relationship between countries and the peoples of the world.

A particularly noteworthy example is the friendship and the very great mutual trust between the United States and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Your Majesties, our people share many, many goals. Together we aspire to economic as well as overall well-being of our fellow countrymen, to the universal betterment of human kindness and conditioning and to closer cooperation between States.

We aspire to the ideals of freedom and dignity for the individual. But there is one very special particular goal which we look upon, we both deeply wish to attain -- it is a just and a very lasting peace for all nations and for all peoples in the Middle East. Our two countries are determined to work together to overcome all obstacles that stand between us and that end.

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I believe that Americans are most fortunate to have you as a very staunch and steadfast friend. I know that you share our hopes for peace as well as freedom. You have demonstrated outstandingly your willingness to join us in facing very squarely the great challenges of our time, not only in the Middle East but elsewhere.

I was extremely pleased to discuss at length some of the most complicated and controversial issues which both our countries face in the Middle East. His Majesty and I agreed that in addition to the progress that peace-making efforts have achieved so far, much, much more remains to be done.

We are both very conscious of the many difficult problems that must be overcome to secure a just and a lasting peace. These problems will not be solved tonight or even tomorrow in our meeting in the morning, but we know that they must be solved and we will double and re-double our efforts in that regard.

We are jointly committed to persevere in the pursuit of peace. We are more than ever determined that the negotiating process must continue.

A settlement must be obtained that will fulfill the aspiration of all States and all peoples of the Middle East for peace, stability and human progress. Certainly the United States could not hope for a more able and honored associate in this historic task than His Majesty King Hussein.

Your Majesty, your determination, your courage, your dedication to the cause of peace in the Middle East are so well-known to all of us that any repetition on my part of your distinguished accomplishments is totally unnecessary.

You are no less famed for your personal courage, your forthrightness, your dedication to the welfare of your people and for your loyalty to your friends. I am proud to salute you tonight not only as a statesman and a leader, but also as a close, personal friend and as a friend of our country.

I must say that I take very special pleasure in welcoming another outstanding representative of Jordan, Her Majesty the Queen. She was once in our country as a student and we are delighted to welcome her as a gracious queen whose charm captivates us as it does the Jordanian people.

Ladies and gentlemen, I ask you to rise and join me in a toast to His Majesty King Hussein of Jordan, a partner in the search for peace, a distinguished leader and a true friend of the United States and to Her Majesty Queen Alia.

KING HUSSEIN: Mr. President, Mrs. Ford, distinguished guests:

Thank you, Mr. President, for the thoughts you have expressed so eloquently. The welcome and hospitality you and Mrs. Ford have so graciously extended to me and my wife are deeply appreciated.

We feel very much at home, which is fitting for friends. The friendship between Jordan and the United States is indeed unique. It stems from common values which we both hold dearer than life -- freedom, equality, honor and human dignity.

It has grown during a most difficult period in the lives of both countries. Friendship deserves a more serious consideration of those who enjoy it. When there is joy, you call upon friends to celebrate. When there is sorrow, friends come to comfort you. When there is a task to be done, friends join together in common effort. There is honor and pride and true friendship, as is evident here tonight.

Mr. President, our visit with you comes at a time of both joy and sorrow -- joy in being here to celebrate the 200th Anniversary of this great nation, sorrow in the knowledge that difficulties in our part of the world have multiplied and intensified.

Friends share, as we do with you, most of the same goals and aspirations, the same principles and values. Friends share their expectations, too.

I bring with me on this journey the expectations of the people of Jordan and the entire area that steps can be initiated and quickened to achieve the goal which has alluded us for many more years than one would wish to remember -- peace in the Middle East. We who enjoy the common bond of friendship must make every effort to reach this goal while it is still attainable.

We also share with you an unusual fact, the names of our founding capitals. Philadelphia was the birthplace of your independence. Philadelphia was as well the ancient name of our capital, Amman. The meaning of both was the same -- brotherly love.

It is a custom among Arabs to call their closest friends brothers. We would like to share this custom with you and to convey the best wishes and warmest greetings, from the people of Jordan and to you, Mr. President, and Mrs. Ford, and to all of your fellow citizens.

Ladies and gentlemen, may I ask you to join with me in a toast to the President of the United States and Mrs. Ford.

END (AT 10:25 P.M. EST)