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OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

THE WHITE HOUSE

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

THE SOUTH GROUNDS

10:38 A.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Your Majesty, our warm personal relationship is but one example of the closeness and continuity that are so evident in the long friendship between Jordan and the United States.

I recall with very great pleasure my first official meeting with Your Majesty when I was Vice President. Shortly after I became President you were the first head of State that I received in the White House.

Today it is again my pleasure to welcome you to Washington. I reaffirm my greetings of two years ago again with a wonderful Arabic saying, our home is your home and you.

Your Majesty and your gracious and lovely Queen are indeed welcome and honored guests. On behalf of the American people, I offer our hospitality and our affection. You are sincere friends of our country.

Since the beginning of your reign in 1952, you have known and shared the confidence of every American President beginning with Dwight David Eisenhower. Despite the tensions in the Middle East, our friendship has withstood every test and met every challenge in every crisis. We continue to understand and appreciate each other's concerns and motivations. We share a profound interest in peace and stability of the Middle East. We must continue to work together to achieve this mutual goal.

During a period covering five American Administrations, Your Majesty's leadership has provided continuity in the special association of our two nations. As a symbol of Hashemite Jordan's courage, honor and steadfastness, Your Majesty is widely admired and respected by the American people.

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For more than two decades you have demonstrated your determination to do what is right for your own people. You have shunned the line of least resistance and stood firm in the face of adversity. You have proven yourself a loyal friend of America, and Americans admire loyalty.

Americans also admire wisdom and courageous leadership. . We value your role as a force for reason and moderation in pursuit of a just and durable peace in the Middle East. We value your counsel.

During your stay in Washington, Your Majesty, we shall have an opportunity to discuss a wide range of bilateral and regional concerns. We shall discuss our cooperation in strengthening and developing the Kingdom of Jordan and we shall consider how, as friends, we can advance the cause of peace in the Middle East.

Relations between the United States and Jordan have been so close they have become a real tradition. Our common endeavor is so firmly rooted that I welcome you not only as a statesman and leader of a very proud nation, but also as a sincere friend who has come to visit among friends.

We are pleased to have Your Majesties with us again. I hope that your stay in the United States will reinforce the bonds between our two nations in the cause of peace.

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HIS MAJESTY KING HUSSEIN: Thank you, Mr. President, for your warm and generous words of welcome.

We have looked forward with great pleasure to this visit, remembering how cordially you and Mrs. Ford welcomed my wife and me on our last visit a year ago, and what a happy occasion it was for both of us.

You already know, Mr. President, how much Jordan values the friendship of the United States. It is a friendship that has grown steadily warmer and deeper during each of the 17 years since I paid my first visit to the United States.

At the time the United States was founded, your forefathers proclaimed to the entire world and to future generations that all men are created equal and that there exists for each of them certain inalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Noble, inspiring thoughts, but even more inspiring are 200 years of continued effort to remain true to your founding principles -- 200 years that form a heritage of which you may be justly proud.

Within my lifetime your words and deeds have been a great inspiration to me and the rest of the world. Your sacrifice and dedication in World War II saved the world from tyranny by turning from the weapons of war to the tools of peace under the Marshall Plan. Your magnanimity rebuilt a Europe that had been devastated by war.

I share with Winston Churchill the belief that this was the most unsordid act in the history of the world. The spirit that moved you to bind up the wounds of a stricken world has continued in your assistance to the developing nations of the earth to better their lives. We are a grateful recipient of your valuable assistance.

On this anniversary you are celebrating your achievements of the past 200 years. The world is celebrating with you for the inspiration and the help you have given to all of us.

Your Nation is unique. It was created by people from all over the world. You are repaying the world for the contributions made to you and, because of this, we all have a stake in your greatness and destiny.

With the problems that still face the world, the wisdom and fortitude that have marked your past is needed now more than ever. I think there is no place in the world that this is more true than in the Middle East. Once again, we are at a crossroads between war and peace. If we are to achieve peace it will depend to a large measure on your enlightened leadership, Mr. President, in upholding the principles of justice which have prevailed during your 200 years of statehood.

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Thank you, Mr. President, for the warm welcome. I am looking forward to cordial and productive discussions with you on subjects of mutual interest and concern during our forthcoming meetings and to the strengthening of the long-established bonds of friendship between our two countries.

Thank you, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Your Majesty.

END (AT 11:51 A.M. EST)