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THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

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Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS
Date: SEP 20 2019

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: US - Jordanian Joint Military Commission (JMC) and King Hussein Visit

407 We have just concluded with Jordan's Chief of Staff, General bin Shaker, the JMC as a prelude to your meeting with Hussein. Bin Shaker is Hussein's closest and most trusted security adviser (and second cousin). Your offer of special funding for Jordan, plus DoD standard equipment, and continuing military to military exchanges and exercises create a basis for trust and confidence which Hussein never had for Carter.

407 Just as important, the JMC reflected the extraordinary development of our military to military relationships. In the last year we have created and exercised a capability for Jordan forces to be used with us as an intervention force in crises in the Gulf and elsewhere. The Jordanian forces are highly professional, and a potential buttress of moderate regime elsewhere in the area.

[REDACTED]

You should have a fruitful discussion with Hussein about events and trends in the Yemens, Sudan, Iraq and Syria.

407 Finally, Jordan continues to perform in other vital ways in consonance with our security interests. It stands up to radical threats from Syrians -- including invasion threats by those much better armed northern neighbors.

[REDACTED]

407 The King has large military requirements and expectations. We can hardly meet all his financial needs, although we will seek an increase in FMS credits next year. He wants - above all - agreement to sell the F-16. Hussein has asked for two years. He is a fighter pilot; and the F-16 is the world's second-best fighter (after the

CIA 3.3(b)(1)
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F-15). It also has a political symbolism, because Israel has both F-16s and F-15s, Egypt has F-16s and Saudi Arabia has F-15s. The Jordanians - rightly - believe they are the best Arab pilots and very proud of their US training and the praise of US fighter pilots who annually train with them. I believe at this time you do have to decide about an F-16 sale (with Israeli opposition). Hussein will probably be too polite to raise it. But a year or two or three from now we may well agree to such a sale.

~~407~~ We have agreed to sell an air superiority fighter, and have agreed to brief his Air Force on the F-16 without making a commitment to sell. We earlier briefed Jordanians on the F-5G and F-16 (J-79). He would like a specific commitment from you to sell the F-16. The Congressional reaction, however, and the Israeli reaction is likely to be strong. We would have to reserve our position on the timing of any notifications to Congress. Funding problems might, however, put the decision off into the future. On the basis of all the above, I would recommend a commitment by you to sell, if the King in your judgment seems genuinely hurt. He would not divulge your private conversation. But on balance, I believe you can avoid the F-16 issue.

~~407~~ We want to use this and our other sales to persuade Hussein to back off from a fetching Soviet offer of air defense missiles.

~~407~~ However, the real pay-off of all this should come in the peace process. We should, of course, reaffirm our commitment not just to Camp David but also to Security Council Regulation 242, which specifically provides for Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank in the context of a negotiated peace. But it will be necessary to search for specific ways in which Hussein can help push the process forward. He may be able to help as a spokesman for and with the Palestinians. He can certainly guarantee the peacefulness, stability and safety of any autonomous regime which emerges from the Camp David talks. He must make a contractual peace with Israel. The Israelis, especially Defense Minister Sharon, have not been helpful with statements that, without Hussein, Jordan could become the Palestinian homeland. Whatever the formula, that process is critical to area security.

~~407~~ In the meantime, we have a strong ally in Hussein. He and his military actively seek and very much value American warmth and friendship. These basics of human relations have been denied them at the White House level for the past four years. Hussein and the Jordanian Arab Legion are security assets to the United States in a regional context.

Office of the Secretary of Defense

Chief, RDD, ESD, WHS

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Declassify in Part: X

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