



PRIME MINISTER

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PRIME MINISTER'S ADDRESS AT THE PARLIAMENTARY LUNCHEON FOR THE KING OF JORDAN

I have great pleasure in welcoming His Majesty, the King of Jordan, to Australia.

It is also a great honour that His Majesty could be accompanied by Her Majesty Queen Alia and their Royal Highnesses Princess Alia and Princess Basma.

Australians, indeed most people have admired King Hussein's determination and personal courage, a courage and determination that he has demonstrated since he came to the throne at the age of seventeen.

Few men could have surmounted with such ability and grace the problems which have faced the King throughout his career.

Even fewer men could have combined the King's capacity to deal so effectively with political and military issues while pursuing a multiplicity of other activities - flying, racing Mercedes 300 SL, fencing, horse riding - at all, let alone with the King's consummate skill.

King Hussein has ruled Jordan during a time of great turbulence in the Middle East. A time marked not only by high tension and open conflict between the Middle East States but also the superpowers open involvement and competition in the region.

Through these conflicts, the King of Jordan has acted as a force for responsibility and moderation in the relations between Middle East States.

His attempts to render Middle Eastern conflicts more amenable to resolution, give him a great claim to international respect and understanding.

They also give the world a right to be optimistic about the future of peace, and mutual accommodation in the area.

As well as his record in international affairs, the King's astute planning has made a great contribution to Jordan's economic advancement and its recovery from the damage brought by war.

Australia is concerned that there should be a just and lasting settlement in the Middle East, a settlement which accords with the international accepted principles established by the U.N. Security Council and which takes account of the legitimate interests of all the groups concerned.

The just recognition and realisation of the legitimate claims of all groups in the Middle East constitutes the touchstone of our policy in the area.

King Hussein is the first Arab Head of State to visit Australia.

The Australian Government looks forward to the opportunity provided by his visit to gain the deeper appreciation of the Middle East's problems, and the possibilities of their resolution that personal discussions with a man of his knowledge and stature can bring.

We hope that the King will not only be able to have productive discussions with the Australian Government but also see and enjoy the continent of Australia and meet the Australian people.

Perhaps he will also have the opportunity to pursue some of the other activities in which he has gained such a formidable expertise despite his onerous duties as Head of State.
