

Before the king's return the crown prince had already moved to disassociate the monarchy from the Rifai government. He announced that an economic dialogue would be introduced to explain the country's predicament and to seek a consensus on how to solve the crisis. Soon after his return from the USA, the king accepted the resignation of the Rifai government. The fact that it took King Hussain three days to appoint a new cabinet led to speculation that there had been some difficulty in putting together an acceptable team. The king also announced that parliamentary elections would be speeded up, although no new timetable was set.

Ex army man is chosen to head new cabinet —

Jordan's new prime minister is Sharif Zaid bin Shaker, a distant cousin of the king and, until last December, the commander-in-chief of the armed forces. In the first four months of 1989 Sharif Zaid had served as King Hussain's chief of the Royal Court, an important advisory position close to the monarch, and the traditional training ground for future premiers. It had been expected that the Rifai government would remain in office until the unpopular