



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

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16 May 1984

Dear John,

King Hussein's Call on the Prime Minister

King Hussein will call on the Prime Minister at 1700 on 17 May. I enclose briefing. As Sir Geoffrey Howe will be in Paris, Mr Luce will attend. General Zeid Bin Shaker, Commander-in-Chief of the Jordanian Armed Forces, who is also here on a short private visit and is one of the King's close advisers, and Mr Hani Tabbara, the Jordanian Ambassador, will accompany King Hussein.

King Hussein arrived in London with Queen Noor on 10 May for a private ten-day visit. One of his engagements was a "phone-in" on 13 May, organised by the BBC in which he answered questions from around the world about the Arab/Israel dispute.

King Hussein last called on the Prime Minister on 16 February on his way home from Washington. A record of that meeting is enclosed. He was pessimistic then about the prospects for restarting the peace process in the Middle East. The US had stumbled in Lebanon and lost sight of the wider Arab/Israel problem, doing nothing to halt the advance of Israeli settlements on the West Bank.

Developments since have given King Hussein no grounds for taking a more optimistic view. US policy in the region has suffered two more blows, with the final disappearance of the MNF at the end of March, and the abrogation of the Lebanon/Israel Agreement of 17 May 1983. There have been other irritants too, including King Hussein's attempts to win US support for a Jordanian draft of a Security Council Resolution on Israeli settlement policies, and his attempts to get the US to put pressure on Israel to allow moderate members of the Palestinian National Council (PNC) to leave the West Bank to attend a PNC plenary session. He was particularly angered when, in response to some plain talking on his part to the New York Times, President Reagan withdrew from Congress his proposal to sell Jordan the Stinger air-defence system.

/One



One bright feature has been the State Visit to Jordan at the end of March which was warmly welcomed as a timely gesture of our confidence in King Hussein and his moderate policies.

Arab/Israel, and the Jordan/PLO dialogue will be natural topics for conversation. It would be interesting to hear how the King sees the way forward with a re-elected President Reagan, or with a new Democratic President, and whether he believes that an Israeli Labour administration might bring new approaches on Arab/Israel.

A further visit to Amman by Yasir Arafat on 2 May appears to have added nothing of substance to the PLO/Jordan dialogue resumed at the end of February; but it would be useful to hear the King's own assessment. The Jordanian Information Minister has just returned from a visit to Cairo where she was President Mubarak. There is talk of the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Jordan and Egypt. This would be a very significant development for the moderate Arab camp, which we would warmly welcome. It would provide cover for others (e.g. Iraq) to follow suit. What time-scale does King Hussein envisage?

On Libya, King Hussein's own recent painful experiences with the Libyans, and his current low morale, may lead him to recommend a tough and even aggressive line with Qadhafi. This needs to be seen against the background that King Hussein's relationship with Qadhafi is quite different from ours: in particular he does not have a large community resident in Libya whose fate is of immediate concern at home.

The Prime Minister may also wish to discuss the latest developments in the Iran/Iraq war.

On bilateral relations, defence sales are the main item of immediate interest. The withdrawal of the US proposal to sell Stinger to the Jordanians opened the field for other suppliers. The Russians have already made an offer based on SAM7s. Jordanian dependence on Russian weapons systems would be a serious matter. I shall let you have further advice in the morning in the light of Nick Evans' letter of 16 May setting out the Defence Secretary's views, which I have just seen.

Yours ever,

(P F Ricketts)
Private Secretary

Peter Ricketts

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

CC PC



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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London SW1A 2AH

17 May, 1984

Dear John,

M/S
hKing Hussein's Call on the Prime Minister

In my letter of 16 May I undertook to let you have further advice this morning in the light of the letter from Nick Evans to you of 16 May about the possibility of Soviet arms sales to Jordan.

The point is already covered in the briefing I provided last night (which included a contribution from the MOD). I now enclose a copy of Mr Urwick's telegram on this subject to which reference is made in Nick Evans' letter. We share the Defence Secretary's concern about the implications of Jordanian dependence on Russian weapons systems. We suggest that the Prime Minister might probe King Hussein on his intentions and urge that all options should be carefully considered before a decision is taken.

I am copying this to Nick Evans (MOD).

Yours ever,
P F Ricketts

(P F Ricketts)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

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- 9 MAY 1984

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CONFIDENTIAL UK EYES ALPHA
FM AMMAN 071630Z MAY 84
TO PRIORITY F C O
TELEGRAM NUMBER 467 OF 7 MAY 1984
REPEATED FOR INFO ROUTINE MOD (FOR PSO/CDS, PS/HDS AND DIA)
JEDDA, MOSCOW AND WASHINGTON.

MY TELNO 434: LOW LEVEL AIR DEFENCE FOR JORDAN

- (21)
1. THE HEAD OF DEFENCE SALES VISITED JORDAN FROM 2 - 4 MAY AND OFFERED THE JORDANIANS BOTH BLOWPIPE AND JAVELIN ON FAVOURABLE TERMS. IT WAS CLEAR FROM THE OUTSET OF MR BLYTH'S MEETING WITH THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF ON 3 MAY, WHICH I ALSO ATTENDED, THAT THE JORDANIANS WERE NOT INTERESTED IN BLOWPIPE. HOWEVER, GENERAL SHAKER WAS FAVOURABLY IMPRESSED BY OUR OFFER OF JAVELIN, WITH DELIVERY TO BEGIN 18 MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF ORDER AND PAYMENT FOR A SUBSTANTIAL PART OF IT TO BE MADE THROUGH OFFSET ARRANGEMENTS IN JORDANIAN PHOSPHATES.
 2. THE JORDANIANS HAD PREVIOUSLY UNDERSTOOD THAT WE MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO MAKE JAVELIN AVAILABLE UNTIL MUCH LATER AND WERE THEREFORE PLEASANTLY SURPRISED THAT WE COULD PRODUCE THEM SO SOON. SHAKER SAID HE WOULD HAVE TO DISCUSS THE MATTER WITH KING HUSSEIN, BUT WELCOMED THE PRESENTATION OF JAVELIN TO BE GIVEN BY SHORT BROTHERS IN JORDAN ON 21 MAY. UNFORTUNATELY, ARAFAT'S UNEXPECTED VISIT TO AMMAN PREVENTED KING HUSSEIN FROM SEEING HDS SEMI COLON HE WAS TO HAVE ATTENDED A DINNER GIVEN BY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF FOR MR BLYTH ON 2 MAY.
 3. SHAKER HAS SINCE TOLD MY US COLLEAGUE THAT HE IS VERY PLEASED OVER THE BRITISH OFFER. HOWEVER, THE AMERICANS BELIEVE THAT THE RUSSIANS HAVE PUT A PROPOSAL TO JORDAN WHICH GOES WELL BEYOND PROVIDING AN ALTERNATIVE TO STINGER AND THAT THEY MAY HAVE OFFERED AN INTEGRATED AIR DEFENCE SYSTEM, INCLUDING AIRCRAFT SEMI COLON VIETS HAS ALSO HEARD THAT THE JORDANIANS HAVE REQUESTED FROM THE RUSSIANS DETAILS OF TANKS AND ARMoured PERSONNEL CARRIERS WHICH MIGHT BE MADE AVAILABLE TO JORDAN. SHAKER TOLD VIETS TODAY THAT THE JORDANIANS ARE STILL WAITING FOR MORE DETAILS OF WHAT THE RUSSIANS COULD OFFER, ESPECIALLY PRICES. HOWEVER, VIETS REMARKED TO ME THAT THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR HAD SEEN KING HUSSEIN MORE FREQUENTLY IN THE LAST MONTH THAN OVER THE WHOLE OF THE LAST THREE YEARS AND HE HAD NO DOUBT THAT THE RUSSIANS WERE MAKING A MAJOR EFFORT TO PERSUADE THE JORDANIANS TO PURCHASE MORE SOVIET MILITARY EQUIPMENT.

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4. SHAKER HAS HAD AN INVITATION TO VISIT MOSCOW IN HIS PENDING TRAY FOR SOME MONTHS. ACCORDING TO VIETS, THE DECISION ON WHETHER AND WHEN HE GOES WILL DEPEND PARTLY AT LEAST ON WHAT THE RUSSIANS HAVE TO SAY ON THE COST AND AVAILABILITY OF SOVIET DEFENCE EQUIPMENT.

5. SHAKER WILL BE GOING TO WASHINGTON IN ABOUT TEN DAYS TIME FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE JOINT JORDAN/US MILITARY COMMISSION. SHAKER CATEGORICALLY ASSURED THE US AMBASSADOR (HE HAD PREVIOUSLY GIVEN ME A SIMILAR ASSURANCE: SEE MY TUR) THAT THE JORDANIANS WOULD NOT TAKE ANY PRECIPITATE DECISION ON ARMS PROCUREMENT AND THAT THEY WOULD FIRST LOOK VERY CAREFULLY AT ALL THE WEAPONS SYSTEMS ON OFFER SEMI COLON BUT HE ALSO REFERRED TO JORDAN'S FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES AND CONSEQUENTLY THE CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE OF PAYMENT TERMS.

6. WHILE THE JORDANIANS DO HAVE PRESSING REQUIREMENTS IN THE AIR DEFENCE FIELD, THEY WOULD APPEAR TO HAVE ENOUGH MODERN TANKS, ARMoured PERSONNEL CARRIERS AND SELF-PROPELLED ARTILLERY TO MEET THEIR IMMEDIATE NEEDS. IT IS ALSO DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE THAT THE JORDANIANS, WHO ALREADY HAVE US AND FRENCH AIRCRAFT IN THEIR AIRFORCE INVENTORY, WOULD WISH TO PURCHASE AIRCRAFT FROM THE RUSSIANS IF ONLY ON LOGISTIC GROUNDS. BUT IF THE PAYMENT TERMS ARE RIGHT, THEY WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE TEMPTED BY SOVIET AIR DEFENCE EQUIPMENT. OUR OFFER OF JAVELIN WAS THEREFORE MOST TIMELY.

URWICK

BT

(REPEATED 'AS REQUESTED')

LIMITED

NENAD

MED

DEFENCE DEPT

ACDD

TRED

PS/MR LUCE

MR WRIGHT

MR CARTLEDGE

SIR J LEAHY

MR EGERTON

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CONFIDENTIAL

~~cc.p.c.~~
16.



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1
Telephone 01-~~9207022~~ 218 2111/3

MO 11/10/4

16th May 1984

ALP
p.c.

Dear John,

I understand that arrangements have been made for King Hussein of Jordan to call on the Prime Minister at 1700 hours on Thursday 17th May. Defence Sales are producing a brief on items of major sales interest for inclusion in the FCO co-ordinated brief, but I thought I should draw your attention to one aspect on which my Secretary of State has expressed concern.

Following the refusal of the US Government to supply Stinger missiles the Jordanians have been looking for alternative sources of comparable ground to air weapons. Short Brothers are hoping to supply their Javelin system, but are facing fierce competition from Sweden, France and the USSR; it is the extent of the latter's involvement that concerns Mr Heseltine.

HMA Amman believes, on the basis of discussions with his US colleagues, that the Russians are making a major effort to persuade the Jordanians to purchase more Soviet military equipment. He understands that the Russians are putting together a proposal which goes well beyond providing an alternative to Stinger and that they have offered an integrated Air Defence System including aircraft. It is also believed that the Jordanians have requested details from the Russians on tanks and armoured personnel carriers. The Russian Ambassador is said to have seen King Hussein more frequently in the last 3 months than over the whole of the last 3 years.

While the Commander-in-Chief of the Jordanian Armed Forces has assured HMA Amman that the Jordanians would not take any precipitate decisions on arms procurement, Mr Heseltine believes that the Prime Minister should take the opportunity afforded by this meeting to impress on the King how seriously we would view major arms purchases from the Russians, and to seek clarification as to his intentions vis-a-vis arms procurement and the USSR.

I am copying this letter to Peter Ricketts and Richard Hatfield.

Yours ever
Nick Evans

(N H R EVANS)

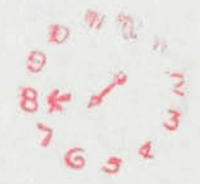
A J Coles Esq



Telephone No. 011 200

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALI, LONDON SW1

16 MAY 1984



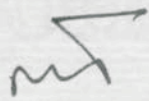
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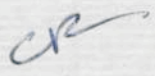
PRIME MINISTER

King Hussein

He is in Britain this week and would
much like to call on you.

May we offer 1700 hours on Thursday
(you have a meeting with the 1922 Executive
at 1545).


Yes  A.F.C.

No. 1922. 

To note. I have asked the
F./C.O. to arrange.

John Coles

11 May 1984

A.F.C. 

KING HUSSEIN

Queen's Visit

Prince Faisal (son)

Glad he is to train at Cranwell as jet pilot.

Iran/Iraq War

Attacks on shipping very worrying.

What can be done?

Arab/Israel

Will see President Reagan in early June.

Israeli elections - would Labour Party victory help?

Jordan/PLO dialogue - is Arafat really committed?

Libya

You will understand difficulties.

Concerned about British community.

Ground-to-air weapons

US refusal to supply STINGER.

Short's proposal to supply JAVELIN.

/ Russian arms

Russian arms - hope you will consider
options very carefully. Major Russian
supply would give us concern.

KING HUSSEIN'S CALL ON THE PRIME MINISTER: 17 MAY

Points to Make

ARAB/ISRAEL

1. Understand King's disappointment with US policy. US failure to intercede with Israel to allow West Bank delegates to attend PNC particularly disappointing. Jordanian draft SCR on Israeli settlements should also have been acceptable to the US, since it did not describe the settlements as illegal.
2. US however remains crucial. Clearly not realistic to expect active US role until after the elections. But President Reagan seems personally committed to his 1982 plan, despite its rejection by Israel. Israeli Labour party, which may form next government, welcomed 'positive elements' in the Reagan plan. We impress on the Americans the importance of resuming active and genuine mediation urgently after the elections, and look forward to a revamped Reagan plan. Will be seeing President Reagan in London next month.
3. Important in the meantime to take no steps which might damage the prospects for a constructive US role in 1985. Arab side must also lay groundwork so as to be ready to respond quickly to post-election US initiatives. Must also be ready to respond to a possible initiative from a new Israeli Government while the US is still preoccupied with elections.
4. Jordan/PLO dialogue? Is Arafat really committed to this? Does he mean it when he says he is ready for reconciliation with Syria? Not realistic to call on US to deal with him if he is mending his fences with radical groups opposed to negotiation.

5. Prospects for restoration of diplomatic relations with Egypt? We would welcome this. Timing? Would Iraqis, Moroccans, Saudis, others follow?

LEBANON

6. Encouraging that Karame has managed to form new Government of National Unity. But will it be able to agree on internal security arrangements, let alone tackle fundamental issues of constitutional/administrative reform?

7. Will continue to give public support to new Government. Security arrangements on the Southern frontier will have to be negotiated with Israel before Israeli forces will leave. Will Syria then live up to her promise to withdraw?

LIBYA

8. No need to explain to King Hussein the nature of our difficulties with Libya. Although diplomatic relations are now broken we are under no illusions that our difficulties are over. There are three ways in which Col Qadhafi may make difficulties: by attacking British targets in other countries: by providing support for the IRA, or by action against the British community in Libya.

9. We are seriously concerned about Britons living and working in Libya who face risk of detentions in (false) retaliation for the detention of 5 Libyans in the United Kingdom.

10. Some signs of unrest and dissatisfaction in Libya. But reports of a terrorist attack against Col Qadhafi's headquarters on 8 May were exaggerated. How does the King see Qadhafi's future?

IRAN/IRAQ

The War

11. UK anxious to see an early end to conflict. But, at present, negotiated settlement unlikely. Mediation by UN Secretary-General perhaps remains the best hope. Immediate aim must be to prevent escalation.

Attacks on Shipping in the Gulf

12. Concerned by recent spate of attacks on shipping - Iranian retaliation could affect third countries and thereby widen the conflict. Such attacks harm Iraq's friends without doing great damage to the Iranian war effort.

UK response to escalation (if raised)

13 Initial UK response would be diplomatic and political. But the necessity for military action could not be ruled out. We are keeping in close touch with our friends in the Gulf.

Arms Sales to Iran (if raised)

14. We are neutral in the conflict and supply no lethal items to either side. We scrutinise carefully all applications for Iran and Iraq to ensure no lethal items get through. Our position was made clear to, and apparently accepted by, the Arab League Delegation during their visit to London on 30 April. HM Ambassador also explained our position on the outstanding military contracts with Iran to King Hussein in some detail at the end of April.

Anglo/Jordanian Relations

15. The State Visit was a great success. Delighted to be able to thank King Hussein in person for his and Queen Noor's warm welcome and hospitality.

16. Prince Feisal (King Hussein's 2nd eldest son by Muna). Very glad that he will be coming to Cranwell to train as a jet pilot (at expense of HMG).

Defence Sales

17. Welcome close collaboration between our countries on defence equipment. We would like to extend its scope and are ready to supply a wide range of combat proven equipment.

Blowpipe/Javelin

18. Pleased that proposal to supply Javelin missile system was welcomed. Hope Short's presentation in Jordan (end-May) will be well received.

120mm APFSDS Ammunition (defensive)

19. Aware of your interest in this ammunition which will be available for supply after British Army needs are satisfied and completion of hot weather trials.

ESSENTIAL FACTS

Arab/Israel

1. Little movement is expected in the Arab/Israel peace process until after the Israeli elections in July and the US Presidential elections. The Jordanian/PLO dialogue, resumed in February after a break of 10 months, has made imperceptible progress. Arafat has visited Amman three times this year, most recently on 2 May. At the same time his representatives have conducted talks with the PFLP and DFLP, small but ideologically important factions of the PLO, in an attempt to mend fences before convening a Palestine National Council ('parliament') to consolidate his position. If he fails to rally these factions behind him Arafat may consider trying to set up a new PNC. But this would split the PLO, which Arafat still seems reluctant to do in spite of the determination he expressed to President Mubarak in December to 'polarise' the movement.
2. King Hussein called on the Prime Minister on 16 February. Since then he has written to President Reagan (and copied the letter to the Prime Minister - attached B) asking him to intercede with Israel to allow West Bank delegates, who are predominantly moderate, to attend the PNC. President Reagan refused this request and declined to support a moderate Jordanian draft SCR on Israeli settlements the text of which the King gave to the Prime Minister at their last meeting. (The King told HMA Amman that he would copy the rest of the correspondence with President Reagan to the Prime Minister, but he has not yet done so). In a New York Times interview on 15 March King Hussein lambasted the US for one-sided support of Israel and loss of credibility as a Middle East mediator. He has subsequently reaffirmed his personal respect for the President, but remains deeply critical of US policy. Dealings between the US and Jordan are likely to remain difficult at least

until after the US election.

3. The King is also critical of Arafat's dithering between dialogue with Jordan on the one hand and the pursuit of PLO unity on the other. Arafat has even said publicly that he is ready for reconciliation with Syria. The King believes that Arafat must identify with his real constituency in the Occupied Territories, whose inhabitants look to him to make urgent progress towards negotiations. The King has commented privately that he sees one of the main purposes of the current Jordanian/Palestinian dialogue as allowing the Jordanians to get to know and assess a cross section of the Palestinian leadership including middle-ranking officials, against the day when Arafat is replaced. For the moment however there is no clear successor.
4. King Hussein has told HMA Amman that he intends to resume full diplomatic relations with Egypt. His Minister for Information visited Cairo 8-12 May and saw President Mubarak. An invitation to Mubarak to visit Jordan is under consideration. Restoration of diplomatic relations could help promote a moderate Arab consensus and might encourage other Arab states to follow suit.
5. The Likud Government has repeatedly called on King Hussein to negotiate. But Likud's refusal to freeze settlements, rejection of the Reagan plan, and their concept of autonomy of people but not land do not persuade Hussein of their sincerity. A Labour government in Israel might take a more flexible line. Labour welcomed 'positive elements' in the Reagan plan, and Peres has offered to negotiate with Hussein on the basis of SCR 242. He has recently been in contact with both Jordan and Egypt, apparently offering the return of some territory, but retaining some for defence purposes. Labour may also envisage a modification, if not a freeze, of settlement activity. Peres has even met Palestinians who he knows speak with Arafat's blessing. According to their account he said that Labour would be prepared to talk to Hussein on the basis of SCRs 242 and 338, Camp David or the Reagan plan, would not object to PLO representation in the King's delegation and could accept a Jordanian/Palestinian confederation. It remains to be seen whether Labour, if they win, will take this line in office,
/but



but there must be doubts, especially since the next government will almost certainly be another coalition.

Lebanon

6. Despite heavy exchanges of fire in Beirut on 12/13 May, the new Government of National Unity under Rashid Karame (a Sunni Muslim heavily under Syrian influence) is still in business. Its immediate tasks are consolidating the ceasefire, re-opening the airport/ports and reuniting the Lebanese Army - the last point a precondition of any lasting improvement in security. Prospects are uncertain, especially with the powerful Lebanese Forces (Christian militias) refusing to cooperate.

7. Syria will ensure that ending the Israeli occupation is a high priority for the new government. The Israelis have confirmed to us that adequate security arrangements in South Lebanon are now the only pre-condition for their withdrawal and that, despite abrogation of the Israel/Lebanon agreement, they are ready for negotiations with the new Lebanese government. But until the Lebanese Army is capable of re-establishing its authority in the south - a distant prospect - Israel is concentrating on building up the 'South Lebanon Army'. a 2,000 strong mixed Christian/Shia militia under General Lahad. Despite rumours to the contrary, an Israeli withdrawal before the July elections looks unlikely. The Syrians have said that they will only withdraw after an unconditional Israeli withdrawal, and that they have no objection to the negotiation of Israel/Lebanon security arrangements

8. There is little scope at present for help by outsiders, beyond public expressions of support, such as the Prime Minister's messages of congratulations to President Gemayel and Mr Karame. The French have provided 80 observers to help supervise the ceasefire. The Ten's statement on 27 March reiterated support for Lebanese independence and unity and for the withdrawal of all foreign forces. We have also publicly endorsed the need for security arrangements for the Israel/Lebanon border, in which we think UNIFIL could play a useful part,



if all concerned can agree to the expansion of UNIFIL's mandate, as suggested in the UN Secretary-General's recent report to the Security Council.

LIBYA

9. In a meeting with HM Ambassador on 22 April, King Hussein expressed his deep concern over our problems with Libya and his sympathy over the death of WPC Fletcher. He thought Libyan behaviour outrageous and fully understood and sympathised with our decision to break diplomatic relations. He recalled that Jordan had been obliged to sever relations with Libya following the burning of their embassy in Tripoli in February. (The Jordanians announced at the time that they held the Libyan authorities responsible for the attack).

10. The Libyan authorities have stated publicly that following the break in diplomatic relations British subjects in Libya have nothing to fear. But an article in the Libyan journal 'Green March' has threatened violent action against British subjects in retaliation for the detention of 5 Libyans held on charges arising from the bombing incidents in London on 10-11 March. These threats may be for local consumption, but could also reflect indecision in Qadhafi's mind about further action against us to secure the release without trial of 5 Libyans currently awaiting trial in this country.

11. Two British residents have been detained in Tripoli without charge since 17 April (British Caledonian's manager, Mr Ledingham and Mr Campbell, employed by the US firm Intairdrill). We have heard that 3 more British residents were detained on 13, 14 and 15 May, one for a minor traffic violation and a second apparently for visa irregularities. We are making urgent enquiries through the Italians.

12. Reports from Tripoli residents discount media reports of 8 May of an attack on Colonel Qadhafi's headquarters in the Azizia barracks. There was heavy firing during the morning of 8 May around an apartment block in the centre of Tripoli. There are indications that the Libyan authorities were expecting some trouble. It is probable that the incident was a preemptive strike against dissidents, all of whom appear to have been killed, possibly to show domestic opinion that there were enemies within Libya and so to justify the scale of the crisis with Britain.

IRAN/IRAQ

The War

13. No major fighting since March, although the Iranians may still be preparing for a further large scale offensive in southern sector. Not clear why this offensive has not yet been launched, but logistic difficulties and flooding of strategic areas are most probable explanations.

14. Iraqi Army's performance has been good, and they should be able to contain further Iranian offensives provided their morale holds.

Attacks on Shipping in the Gulf

15. Iraq continues to attack neutral shipping in the Gulf. On 13 May Iraq claimed to have attacked 2 ships en route to or from Kharg: the Iranian-registered Tabriz; and the Greek-registered Esperenza. A Kuwaiti-owned tanker, the Umm Casbah, was also hit on 13 May by an unidentified aircraft well south of the Iraqi declared Maritime exclusion zone (MEZ). It was well en route to the UK with a cargo of Kuwaiti crude destined for Shell. The aircraft reportedly made several passes before releasing a bomb or short range rocket, which failed to explode and did little damage. Such close range attacks have not been an Iraqi tactic recently, and this may have been an Iranian aircraft; if so this is a worrying development. There were

reports on 14 May of an attack (probably Iraqi) on another Kuwaiti-owned tanker, the Bahra bound for Kuwait and apparently hit by an Exocet). Two crew members were injured, but damage to the ship was only moderate. A Saudi tanker was attacked on 16 May.

Mediation

16. Prospects for peace remain bleak. Egyptian sponsored peace plan (through NAM) was rejected by the Iranians on 2 May. Iranian determination to bring down Saddam Hussein as a precondition for peace seems unaltered. No other mediation effort in train at present.

Contingency Planning (not for use)

17. We remain in close touch with the Americans (most recently on 24 April) and the Gulf States over action in the event of further escalation in the war. We have made clear to them our view that the first reaction to any deepening of the crisis in the Gulf should be diplomatic, although military action could not be ruled out if Western interests were threatened.

Straits of Hormuz

18. Iran has threatened to close the Straits if Iraq is successful in preventing all Iranian oil exports from Kharg Island. (Not for use) Our assessment is that Iraq is incapable of completely halting such exports. Retaliatory Iranian attacks on shipping with cargo destined for Iraq and strikes against Iraq's supporters in the Gulf are more probable Iranian responses to serious Iraqi interference with oil exports from Kharg Island.

Chemical Weapons

19. UK controls on exports to Iran and Iraq, covering 8 chemicals which could be diverted to manufacture CW of the type used in the Gulf war, will now be extended to all destinations. Our EC partners are currently discussing similar measures.

Jordanian View of the Conflict

20. The Jordanians have been consistent supporters of the Iraqi war effort and have assisted in the procurement and delivery of military supplies. A Jordanian volunteer force spent a short time in Iraq and took some part in the fighting.

21. The Jordanians blame Iran for the continuation of the conflict, stressing Iraqi willingness to end it. All attempts at mediation have foundered on Iranian intransigence. The Jordanians consider the best way to bring the Iranians to negotiate is to prevent Iran acquiring any military equipment at all, whether lethal or non-lethal. Their support for Iraq is probably based on a fear of the consequences of an Iranian victory.

Arms for Iran

22. The Jordanians have been concerned by false allegations that the UK is supplying arms to Iran. On 30 April an Arab League Delegation headed by the Jordanian and YAR Foreign Ministers called on the Secretary of State to discuss alleged British arms sales. They were satisfied with our assurances that we are not supplying lethal arms to Iran. HM Ambassador Amman has also explained to King Hussein our position on the supply ships: and on the military spares in the other outstanding contracts with Iran, which are still under consideration.

Anglo/Jordanian Relations

23. Bilateral relations. Our relations with Jordan are excellent and free of problems. King Hussein, a regular visitor to the UK, as are other members of the Royal Household, is a useful sounding board for Arab thinking. He called on the Prime Minister for talks during private visits to London in December 1983 and February 1984. The State Visit of March 1984 set the seal on the close ties of friendship between our two countries and the two Royal Families. A

Ministry of Defence offer to train Prince Feisal free of charge to RAF "Wings" standard has been well received by King Hussein.

24. Mr Luce has paid two visits to Jordan - in November 1983 and as Minister in attendance on The Queen for the State Visit. The Chief of Defence Staff visited Jordan from 14-18 January.

General Shaker, Commander-in-Chief, Jordan Armed Forces was in London from 4-8 April on a private visit. He called on Mr Heseltine and invited him to visit Jordan, but no dates have yet been fixed.

25. The new Jordanian Ambassador, Mr Hani Tabbara presented his credentials on 23 March.

26. Defence Sales. Following the withdrawal of the US Administration's proposal to sell them Stinger missiles, the Jordanians are looking for another source of comparable ground-to-air weapons. Competition is from Sweden, France and USSR. Shorts of Belfast are keen to sell Blowpipe and/or Javelin: the Jordanians are interested only in the latter. Mr Blyth, Head of Defence Sales, visited Amman on 2 May to make firm proposals: Shorts plan to make a formal presentation in late May/early June.

27. The Jordanians are short of money, so financing will be crucial. Short's proposals therefore include an offset agreement for the purchase of Jordanian phosphates. There is considerable concern that Jordan might be tempted to opt for a Soviet system. The Russian offer is certain to be financially competitive and could comprise a comprehensive air defence system.

HM KING HUSSEIN BIN TALAL

King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan since 1952.

Born Amman 1935.

Educated Bishop's School, Amman; Victoria College, Alexandria; Harrow; shortened course at Sandhurst 1952/53. He was present when his grandfather, the Emir Abdullah, was assassinated in Jerusalem in 1951 and acceded to the throne in the following year on the abdication of his father, King Talal, owing to ill-health. He has been in power longer than any other Arab leader and has survived numerous assassination attempts and threats to his throne including the overthrow of the Hashemite monarchy in Iraq in 1958, the loss of the West Bank to Israel in 1967, the civil war against the Palestinian groups in 1970/71 and periods of bad relations with Egypt, Iraq and, most recently, Syria.

King Hussein has married four times: to Princess Dina 1956-57; Princess Muna (née Toni Gardiner and of British origin) 1961-72; Queen Alia 1972-77 and Queen Noor since 1978. His marriages to Queen Dina and Princess Muna ended in divorce; Queen Alia died tragically in a helicopter crash. He has ten children in all (see attached family trees for their names and ages).

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SHARIF ZEID BIN SHAKER

Commander-in-Chief, Jordan Armed Forces, since 1976.

Born Amman 1935, son of the Emir Shaker who came to Jordan from the Hejaz with the King's grandfather, Emir Abdullah. Educated at Victoria College, Alexandria, and Sandhurst in 1954-55. Appointed ADC to the King after the dismissal of Glubb Pasha. Posted as Assistant Military Attaché to London in April 1957. Attended the Long Armour Course in the United States in 1962. As a Major in 1963 he commanded First Armoured Infantry Regiment and was promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel in the same appointment. In 1964 he attended the US Command and General Staff College and then took command of the 60 Armoured Brigade. Given accelerated promotion to Colonel in November 1965 and appointed Military Assistant to the King. Acquitted himself well in the 1967 war. Promoted Brigadier July 1968 as Commander Royal Armoured Corps. Assistant Chief of Staff (Operations) 1970-72, Major General 1971, Chief of Staff 1974 until his appointment as Commander-in-Chief in 1976.

He and his wife speak excellent English. Their son, Shaker, (b. 1961) entered a preparatory school at Seaford and was at Eastbourne College. They have a daughter, Nesrine, (b. 1959) who was at school in England and at Santa Clara University, USA, before joining the Jordanian Diplomatic Service; she is engaged to be married to an Iraqi.

MR HANI TABBARA

Mr Tabbara was born in 1939. He has a degree from London University.

He joined the Jordanian police force in 1963 with the rank of lieutenant and in 1966 was promoted to major and appointed military prosecutor at the Court of State Security.

In 1971, he was appointed assistant military attache at the Jordanian Embassy in London. He spent six years here, during which time he was appointed Minister Plenipotentiary en poste. He returned to Amman in 1977 where he worked briefly in the Prime Minister's Office.

From May 1977 to December 1979, he served as Jordanian Ambassador to Morocco. Thereafter he was Jordanian Ambassador in Romania (1980) and Saudi Arabia (1982).

Mr Tabbara is married and speaks excellent English. His wife is Moroccan and is a fluent French speaker. There are two young sons.