

SUBJECT



T 27/81

PRIME MINISTER'S

PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T. 27/81

February 18, 1981
Amman

Dear Prime Minister,

Just upon my departure to the Islamic Summit I received your message on the subject of TORNADO.

A group of countries in our area including in addition to Jordan, Iraq, Kuwait, the Gulf States, Oman and Saudi Arabia (we have also talked to Morocco and advised Pakistan of our thoughts) have been talking for a while of the need to gradually standardize our military equipment upon the most modern systems that meet our future requirements. We have felt a growing urgency to move in this direction to enhance our capabilities individually and collectively in the face of common threats, by having compatible systems and the universal training and abilities to use them, together with establishing within the area all facilities to service and modify when necessary, and improve upon them through sending our people, in relevant cases, to work with their manufacturers so that they can then represent the nucleus of a technologically able and qualified element within this area which can change us, in time, from being pure consumers of manufactured systems, to countries that are able to depend growingly on their own human resources to service, modify and improve manufactured systems leading to an ability to handle modern technology.

We have been looking for a new air superiority fighter with advanced armaments and electronics which can adequately meet the challenge until the end of the century and possibly beyond, and we have been looking for an aircraft that can meet our requirements for a long-range fighter bomber that can deal with a variety of ground targets, together with electronic packages and equipment tailored to meet out every requirement. Our tendency has been to move away from the Superpowers and particularly towards the members of the European community. We feel that for members of the community to be able to keep abreast of modern development in advanced technology, such a move would be mutually beneficial and obviously when collectively we approach possible suppliers, the material costs would also be considerably more acceptable



due to the size of the orders. The vital questions are:

- a. where can we get or help develop and then receive the most suitable range of equipment?
- b. equally as important if not more so based on previous experience, is what satisfactory guarantees can we all receive that equipment will be forthcoming - both contracted for or any improved equipment which could be used by us on our aircraft yet to be developed at later stages - without any political considerations arising that might cause the manufacturers to stop or temporarily halt the implementation of an original agreement which is, after all, one reason why we are moving towards the European community and away from the monopolies of the Superpowers. A promising aircraft not yet fully developed is the D. Mirage 4000 and a dialogue has been ongoing between us and both the French Government and the manufacturers on this issue. We have gone a long way in defining our technical requirements as against the present and foreseen threats. We did not consider TORNADO due to -

1. the German Federal Republic's reluctance to sell arms to our area.
2. our uncertainty of Her Majesty's Government's attitude towards guaranteeing the fulfillment of an agreement until "a" is resolved and also in view of previous embargoes which we, for example, were affected by from time to time due to political considerations imposed upon us by Her Majesty's Government.
3. TORNADO is a developed aircraft which appears excellent in its original role, however, the A.D.V. variant seems more suited to intercept and destroy long-range enemy bombers from great distances, rather than being also a superiority fighter.



Obviously all of these impressions are inconclusive since we have as yet never had the chance to look seriously at TORNADO prior to the arrival of your message and also since TORNADO is an unknown aircraft to us technically beyond what is available in publications.

I have relayed your message to all concerned and sensed an interest to look at TORNADO based on the answers we all receive from you over the questions I am now raising. However, I must emphasize that time is pressing and that talks on the D. Mirage 4000 aircraft are fairly well advanced and it is thus most important that we receive from you dear Prime Minister, at the earliest opportunity your kind responses which would either give us the chance to look at TORNADO in both variants as well as D. Mirage 4000 or to continue on our original course.

With my warmest personal regards and sincerest wishes,

Your Sincere friend,
[Signature]