

MR COLES - o.r.

A.J.C. 5/11.

LORD CARRINGTON'S VISIT

Lord Carrington called on the Prime Minister today to report on his final hearing before the Franks Committee, and I have recorded that conversation separately. He made two other points which it is worth recording:

(i) He said that King Hassan had an interesting theory about the Israelis. It was that the Israeli policy on the West Bank was part of a deliberate plan to drive the Arabs from there into Jordan and create a Lebanon-type situation in Jordan, which would give the Israelis a pretext for going into Jordan. King Hassan believed that the Israelis ultimate aim was a border with the Saudis with whom they thought they could get on with. Lord Carrington said that he found the last proposition plausible, if not the easier part.

Lord Carrington also said that there was much feeling in the Arab world that the Americans had been very feeble with the Israelis in not urging them to withdraw from Lebanon: if they could not even do that, what hope was there for the Reagan peace plan. Lord Carrington remarked, and the Prime Minister agreed, that the Americans clout with the Israelis was very slight because the only instruments at their disposal - cutting off money or cutting off weapons - could not be used without endangering the whole State of Israel.

(ii) Lord Carrington said that he had paid a visit on Mr Saddam Hussein, whom he had found "less of a thug than he had previously thought". There was an astonishing lack of any guilt or even recognition that he had started the war with Iran, and Lord Carrington's impression was that the war would continue in much like its present state for some time, in a form of stalemate.