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FM AMMAN

TO DESKBY 040945Z JEDDAH

TELNO 005

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INFO IMMEDIATE FCO, DOHA, ABU DHABI, MUSCAT, SANAA

INFO IMMEDIATE TEL AVIV, CAIRO, BAGHDAD, ODA

INFO PRIORITY WASHINGTON, PARIS, UKMIS NEW YORK, MOSCOW

JEDDAH: FOR SECRETARY OF STATE'S PARTY

SUMMARY

1. KING HUSSEIN MAY NOW REALISE MEDIATION WILL GET NOWHERE. SANCTIONS ARE BEING APPLIED. THE EVACUEE PROBLEM IS DAUNTING. ECONOMIC SITUATION WILL DETERIORATE RAPIDLY. PUBLIC MOOD REMAINS ALMOST TOTALLY PRO-SADDAM. SUGGESTIONS FOR POINTS TO EMPHASISE DURING YOUR VISIT.

DETAIL

2. YOU WILL NO DOUBT HAVE SEEN MY TELNO 480 TO FCO SETTING THE SCENE FOR THE PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH KING HUSSEIN. I HOPE THAT THE KING WILL BE BACK IN AMMAN BY THE EVENING OF 4 SEPTEMBER THOUGH THIS HAS STILL BEEN CONFIRMED. IT IS DIFFICULT TO BE CERTAIN WHAT HIS VIEWS AND MOOD WILL BE FOLLOWING HIS NORTH AFRICAN TOUR AND HIS MEETING WITH MRS THATCHER. HE SHOULD BY NOW HAVE A BETTER IDEA OF THE FUTILITY IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES OF PURSUING THE SORT OF COMPROMISE PACKAGE HE OUTLINED IN LONDON. NEVERTHELESS, HE MAY BE RELUCTANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE THIS IN PUBLIC SINCE, AS I HAVE PREVIOUSLY COMMENTED, IT IS IMPORTANT TO HIM IN TERMS OF PUBLIC OPINION HERE TO BE SEEN TO BE PURSUING A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT.

3. TWO POINTS ARE WORTH MENTIONING:

- 1) THE EVIDENCE SUGGESTS THAT SANCTIONS ARE NOW BEING APPLIED. AQABA IS VIRTUALLY WITHOUT SHIPS: TRAFFIC INTO IRAQ HAS DIMINISHED VERY SHARPLY: EXPORT AND IMPORT LICENCES TO AND FROM IRAQ HAVE BEEN SUSPENDED, THOUGH THE JORDANIANS ARE EXEMPTING MEDICAL PRODUCTS AND "FOODSTUFFS FOR HUMANITARIAN PURPOSES".

II) THE EVACUEE PROBLEM IS ALMOST OVERWHELMING IN ITS PROPORTIONS. SEE MY SEPARATE TELEGRAM (NO 503) FOR DETAILS. THE JORDANIANS ARE IN NEED OF CONSIDERABLE ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE. BUT THERE IS MUCH CONFUSION ABOUT PRIORITIES. THE ICRC AND THE UN ARE BEGINNING TO ASSERT THEMSELVES. BY THE TIME OF YOUR ARRIVAL, REQUIREMENTS MAY BE CLEARER. YOU MAY IN ANY CASE WISH TO CONSIDER WHETHER FURTHER ASSISTANCE (THROUGH THE ICRC) SHOULD BE OFFERED.

4. JORDAN IS NOW IN SEVERE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DIFFICULTY. THE KING'S FAILURE TO GIVE A CLEAR SIGNAL OF HIS OPPOSITION TO THE INVASION IN THE FIRST FEW DAYS HAS DAMAGED HIS LINKS WITH THE WEST, PARTICULARLY THE US AND BRITAIN. AT THE SAME TIME, TO JUDGE BY THE REPORTS COMING FROM THE CAPITALS YOU HAVE JUST VISITED, HIS RELATIONS WITH THE ARAB DONOR STATES HAVE NEVER BEEN WORSE. HIS PROSPECTS OF RECEIVING ANY FURTHER SUPPORT FROM THEM MUST BE POOR. THIS, COMBINED WITH THE LOSS OF EXPATRIATE REMITTANCES (SOME 40 PER CENT OF WHICH CAME FROM JORDANIANS IN KUWAIT) MEANS THAT A RAPID ECONOMIC DETERIORATION MUST BE EXPECTED WHETHER OR NOT THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY PROVIDES COMPENSATION FOR THE APPLICATION OF SANCTIONS. POLITICALLY, THE KING HAS NOWHERE TO GO UNLESS HE CAN REPAIR HIS RELATIONS WITH THE WEST AND THE ARAB STATES.

5. YOU WILL FIND THE PUBLIC MOOD STILL OVERWHELMINGLY IN SUPPORT OF SADDAM HUSSAIN. BRITAIN IS SINGLED OUT IN THE MEDIA, ALMOST MORE THAN THE US, AS AN ALLEGED RINGLEADER IN THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST SADDAM. THIS WILL ADD A CERTAIN ZEST TO YOUR PRESS CONFERENCE WHICH IS LIKELY TO ATTRACT A PACKED HOUSE. YOU MAY FIND IT HELPFUL TO HAVE FOREWARNING OF THE PRINCIPAL LINES OF ATTACK, VIZ:-

- THE DOUBLE STANDARD (24 HOURS TO IMPLEMENT SCR 660, 23 YEARS FAILURE TO IMPLEMENT SCR 242). MANY ARE BITTERLY OPPOSED TO THE US INVOLVEMENT NOT BECAUSE THEY APPROVE OF SADDAM'S INVASION BUT BECAUSE THE AMERICANS FAILED OVER SUCH A LONG PERIOD TO TAKE ANY REMOTELY COMPARABLE ACTION AGAINST ISRAEL.
- SUSPICIONS THAT THE AMERICANS ARE IN SAUDI ARABIA TO STAY.

- ALLEGATIONS OF A REVIVAL OF SUEZ/COLONIAL ATTITUDES. MRS THATCHER IS PERCEIVED AS HAVING EGGED ON PRESIDENT BUSH OVER MILITARY INTERVENTION.
- A BELIEF THAT THE WHOLE CRISIS CAN BE TRACED TO BRITAIN'S COLONIAL LEGACY AND ITS CREATION OF AN ARTIFICIAL AND INEQUITABLE STATE (EQUALLY APPLICABLE, OF COURSE, TO BOTH IRAQ AND JORDAN EXCLAM).

6. I SUGGEST THAT OUR AIM DURING YOUR VISIT SHOULD BE TO GET ACROSS THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

- I) THE IMPORTANCE OF RIGOROUS APPLICATION OF SANCTIONS AS THE ONLY REALISTIC ALTERNATIVE TO MILITARY ACTION.
- II) OUR READINESS TO HELP JORDAN TO SUSTAIN THE IMPACT OF SANCTIONS. IN THIS CONTEXT, THE KING MAY AGAIN RAISE THE SUPPLY OF DEFENCE EQUIPMENT TO JORDAN. IF SO, I ASSUME THAT FOLLOWING HIS ASSURANCE TO THE PRIME MINISTER ON THIS POINT, YOU WILL WISH TO CONFIRM TO HIM THAT DEFENCE EQUIPMENT INTENDED FOR JORDAN'S SOLE USE WILL NOT BE WITHHELD.
- III) THAT THE KING SHOULD SEEK TO MEND HIS FENCES WITH THE ARAB DONOR STATES. CLEARLY THIS IS A MAJOR TASK. YOU MAY HAVE IDEAS TO PUT TO HIM, FOLLOWING YOUR MEETINGS WITH THE OTHER HEADS OF STATE, ABOUT HOW THIS MIGHT BE ACHIEVED.
- IV) OUR CONTINUING COMMITMENT TO HELP RESOLVE THE PALESTININE PROBLEM, DESPITE THE SETBACK CAUSED BY THE INVASION AND ARAFAT'S REACTION TO IT (THE ALMOST EXCLUSIVE PREOCCUPATION OF PEOPLE HERE WITH PALESTINE IS THE MAJOR REASON FOR THEIR ANTI-WESTERN VIEWS ON THE GULF CRISIS).
- V) OUR CONCERN OVER THE EVACUEE PROBLEM. YOU MAY WISH TO CONSIDER OFFERING FURTHER EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE.

7. WHATEVER WE MAY THINK OF THE KING'S PERFORMANCE AND PRESENT POLICIES, I STILL FIND IT HARD TO IMAGINE ANY SUCCESSOR REGIME WHICH WOULD BE ANY BETTER FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF WESTERN

INTERESTS. THE PROBABILITY IS THAT IT WOULD BE A GOOD DEAL WORSE. THE COLLAPSE OF THE HASHEMITE REGIME AT THIS PARTICULAR JUNCTURE COULD OF ITSELF TRIGGER OFF A SERIES OF UNCONTROLLABLE EVENTS. IF THE KING'S THINKING CONTINUES TO BE AS PERVERSE AS IT HAS BEEN SINCE THE CRISIS BEGAN, WE MAY BE FORCED TO CONCLUDE THAT WE CANNOT HELP HIM. BUT AS I AM REASONABLY OPTIMISTIC THAT HE IS BEGINNING TO RECOGNISE WHERE HIS TRUE INTERESTS LIE.

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