

ADVANCE COPIES

15

MIDDLE EAST

PS

PS/MR RENTON

PS/PUS

MR DEREK THOMAS

MR FERGUSSON

MR EGERTON

HD/NENAD

HD/MED

NO. 10 DOWNING STREET

CABINET OFFICE DIO

PUSD (2)

NEWS DEPT

RESIDENT CLERK

1.10.85

IMMEDIATE

CONFIDENTIAL

FM WASHINGTON

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELNO 2759

OF 022245Z OCT 85

INFO IMMEDIATE AMMAN, TEL AVIV

INFO PRIORITY DAMASCUS, JERUSALEM, RIYADH, CAIRO, TUNIS,

ALGIERS, RABAT, UKMIS NEW YORK, PARIS, MOSCOW

ADVANCE COPY

MY TELNO 2738: KING HUSSEIN'S VISIT

SUMMARY

1. THE AMERICANS SEEM LITTLE NEARER TO AGREEMENT WITH THE JORDANIANS ON A SCENARIO LEADING TO DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS. THE ADMINISTRATION'S ATTENTION IS INCREASINGLY FOCUSED ON THE EFFORT TO SECURE CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL OF THE JORDAN ARMS PACKAGE. KING HUSSEIN HAD USEFUL MEETINGS ON THE HILL ON 1 OCTOBER, BUT THERE IS STILL A CLEAR MAJORITY IN BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS AGAINST THE SALE.

DETAIL

2. KIRBY (MURPHY'S DEPUTY FOR MIDDLE EAST NEGOTIATIONS) TOLD US TODAY THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO BREAKTHROUGH IN THIS WEEK'S US/JORDANIAN TALKS. KING HUSSEIN REMAINED COMMITTED TO AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AND CONTINUED TO SEE A MEETING BETWEEN MURPHY AND A JOINT JORDANIAN/PALESTINIAN DELEGATION AS THE BEST WAY OF SECURING THE NECESSARY PLO PARTICIPATION IN THE PROCESS. THE US OBJECTIVE REMAINED TO WORK OUT A SCENARIO LEADING AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE TO DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS WITH ISRAEL. THE EFFORT TO REACH AGREEMENT WOULD CONTINUE, BUT WAS LIKELY TO TAKE SOME TIME.

3. KIRBY DREW SOME ENCOURAGEMENT FROM STEPS TAKEN BY BOTH SIDES OVER THE PAST FEW DAYS. THE PRESIDENT'S SUBMISSION OF THE JORDAN ARMS PACKAGE TO CONGRESS WITHOUT WAITING FOR TANGIBLE PROGRESS ON THE PEACE PROCESS SHOULD REASSURE KING HUSSEIN OF US COMMITMENT TO JORDAN. (COVEY (NSC STAFF) ALSO SUGGESTED TO US THAT CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL OF THE PACKAGE MIGHT ENABLE THE KING TO MAKE CONCESSIONS

THE PEACE PROCESS SHOULD REASSURE KING HUSSEIN OF US COMMITMENT TO JORDAN. (COVEY (NSC STAFF) ALSO SUGGESTED TO US THAT CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL OF THE PACKAGE MIGHT ENABLE THE KING TO MAKE CONCESSIONS OVER HIS SCENARIO AND, SPECIFICALLY, TO MODIFY HIS REQUIREMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL BACKING.) BOTH KIRBY AND COVEY THOUGHT THAT KING HUSSEIN'S STATEMENTS IN NEW YORK AND WASHINGTON DEMONSTRATED HIS WILLINGNESS TO TRY TO ACCOMMODATE ISRAELI CONCERNS. COVEY ALSO NOTED WITH APPROVAL THE JORDANIAN EXPULSION OF ABU TAYER AND OF OFFICIALS FROM ABU JIHAD'S OFFICE IN AMMAN.

4. KING HUSSEIN MADE A GOOD IMPRESSION IN MEETINGS ON 1 OCTOBER WITH MEMBERS OF BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS. HIS STATEMENT THAT JORDAN RECOGNISED THE RIGHT OF ISRAEL TO EXIST AND THAT ACTS OF BELLIGERENCY WERE INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE PEACE PROCESS WERE WELL-RECEIVED AS WAS HIS RELATIVELY RESTRAINED REACTION TO THE ISRAELI RAID ON ARAFAT'S HEADQUARTERS. SENATOR LUGAR (CHAIRMAN OF THE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE) DESCRIBED THE MEETING AS VERY PRODUCTIVE. BUT, IN THE ABSENCE OF VISIBLE PROGRESS TOWARDS DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS WITH ISRAEL, KING HUSSEIN DOES NOT SEEM TO HAVE WON OVER ANY OPPONENTS OF THE JORDAN ARMS SALE.

5. THE ADMINISTRATION ARE ABOUT TO LAUNCH AN MAJOR EFFORT TO SECURE CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL OF THE ARMS PACKAGE. THEY FACE AN UPHILL STRUGGLE. ALL OUR CONTACTS AGREE THAT THERE IS AT PRESENT A CLEAR MAJORITY, PROBABLY THE TWO-THIRDS NECESSARY TO OVERRIDE A VETO, IN BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS AGAINST THE SALE. THE ADMINISTRATION WILL ARGUE THAT KING HUSSEIN'S COMMITMENT TO THE PEACE PROCESS DESERVES A CLEAR SIGNAL OF US SUPPORT: THAT, SINCE THE SALE WILL REQUIRE LARGE AMOUNTS OF US AID, CONGRESS WILL HAVE SUBSEQUENT OPPORTUNITIES TO BLOCK IT IF JORDAN ABANDONS THE SEARCH FOR PEACE WITH ISRAEL; AND THAT JORDAN NEEDS IMPROVED DEFENCE AGAINST THE SYRIAN THREAT (THOUGH THEY ARE INHIBITED IN ARGUING THIS LAST POINT BY THEIR NEED FOR SYRIAN HELP TO SECURE THE RELEASE OF US HOSTAGES IN LEBANON). BUT IT LOOKS AT PRESENT AS IF ONLY VISIBLE PROGRESS TOWARDS DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS WITH ISRAEL WILL SWING ENOUGH VOTES IN CONGRESS TO ALLOW THE SALE TO PROCEED.

WRIGHT

YYYY

ORWRAN 2701

NNNN

ORWRAN 2839 ORWRAN 2701
CONFIDENTIAL

3/10/21