

CONFIDENTIAL

FM AMMAN

TO DESKBY 221830Z FCO

TELNO 453

OF 221715Z AUGUST 90

INFO IMMEDIATE TEL AVIV, CAIRO, KUWAIT, BAGHDAD, RIYADH, TRIPOLI

INFO IMMEDIATE ALGIERS, RABAT, WASHINGTON, UKMIS NEW YORK

INFO IMMEDIATE SANAA, ACTOR

YOUR TELNO 548 TO PARIS:

MESSAGE FROM PRIME MINISTER TO KING HUSSEIN

SUMMARY

1. MESSAGE DELIVERED. KING'S TRAVEL PLANS NOT YET CLEAR. HE REPORTS ON VISIT OF TARIQ AZIZ TO AMMAN. THE KING IS WORKING ON THE HOSTAGE PROBLEM AND HOPES TO DEVELOPE A PROPOSAL TO RESOLVE THE WIDER CRISIS.

*He is putting himself  
at the head of the  
pro-Iraq club. That  
will only make his own  
position work  
with the  
anti-Iraq  
group  
not*

DETAIL

2. I DELIVERED THE PRIME MINISTER'S MESSAGE TO THE KING THIS AFTERNOON (22 AUGUST). HE RECEIVED IT WELL AND COMMENTED THAT HE HOPED VERY MUCH TO SEE MRS THATCHER SOON. HOWEVER, SHE WOULD NO DOUBT UNDERSTAND THAT HIS IMMEDIATE PREOCCUPATION WAS TO QUOTE DE-ESCALATE UNQUOTE A CRISIS WHICH, IN HIS VIEW, COULD STILL EXPLODE AT ANY MOMENT. HE WAS THEREFORE NOT YET SURE WHEN HE COULD GET TO LONDON BUT WOULD INFORM ME AS SOON AS HE COULD IDENTIFY A DATE. MEANWHILE, HE WAS VERY MUCH LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU NEXT WEEK.

3. I ASKED THE KING WHETHER ANYTHING USEFUL HAD EMERGED FROM THE VISIT OF TARIQ AZIZ ON 21 AUGUST. HE SAID THAT THE IRAQIS WERE EXTREMELY CONCERNED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF AN AMERICAN PRE-EMPTIVE STRIKE. I WOULD NO DOUBT HAVE SEEN WHAT TARIQ HAD SAID AT HIS PRESS CONFERENCE IE THAT THE HOLDING OF THE WESTERN COMMUNITIES IN KUWAIT WAS THE ONLY WAY TO DETER THE AMERICANS FROM ATTACKING (OR WORDS TO THAT EFFECT). HE (THE KING) FELT THAT THERE WAS SOME HOPE OF MAKING PROGRESS ON THE ISSUE OF THE FOREIGN COMMUNITIES IF, IN RETURN, A FIRM ASSURANCE COULD BE OBTAINED FROM THE AMERICANS THAT THEY WOULD NOT INITIATE HOSTILITIES. I SAID THAT, GIVEN THE COMPLEXITIES OF THE MILITARY SITUATION AND THE POSSIBILITY OF SADDAM TAKING FURTHER UNPREDICTABLE



*not for the maps*

STEPS, A CAST-IRON ASSURANCE WOULD BE ASKING A GREAT DEAL. HOWEVER, IT WAS ENCOURAGING TO HEAR THAT THE KING WAS WORKING ON THE ISSUE OF THE HOSTAGES. I KNEW THAT YOU WOULD BE MOST ANXIOUS TO BE KEPT INFORMED OF ANY PROPOSALS RELATING TO THEM WHICH THE KING MIGHT BE DISCUSSING.

4. THE KING WENT ON THE SAY THAT HE WAS ALSO CONTINUING TO DEVELOP HIS IDEAS FOR SOME SORT OF TRADE-OFF (PARA 4 OF MY TELNO 442, NOT TO ALL) WHICH MIGHT LEAD TO A SETTLEMENT OF THE OVERALL PROBLEM. HE FELT THAT HE NEEDED TO MAKE CONTACT WITH OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES WHICH HAD NOT TAKEN A FIRM POSITION AGAINST IRAQ. HE INTENDED TO VISIT SANAA ON 23 AUGUST AND, PROBABLY AFTER THE WEEKEND, VARIOUS NORTH AFRICAN COUNTRIES (HE MENTIONED ALGERIA, MOROCCO, AND QUOTE PERHAPS EVEN LIBYA UNQUOTE). HE HOPED THAT IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO DEVELOP WITH THESE COUNTRIES A SENSIBLE PROPOSAL WHICH MIGHT PAVE THE WAY FOR A POLITICAL SOLUTION.

5. THE KING ALSO MENTIONED HIS CONCERN OVER THE EVER-GROWING NUMBER OF REFUGEES FLOODING INTO JORDAN. HE THOUGHT THAT STEPS MIGHT HAVE TO BE TAKEN TO CONTROL THE FLOW THROUGH THE IRAQI-JORDANIAN BORDER.

REEVE

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ADVANCE

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(NO 10 DOWNING ST)  
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RESIDENT CLERK

NNNN