

## Jordan put in the cross-hairs in latest crisis over Iraq

by Our Special Correspondent

The events which convulsed Iraq and Jordan in the first week of August might superficially be regarded as merely another act in the United Nations-sponsored dog-and-pony show which has become a regular feature of international relations, since sanctions were first imposed on Iraq in 1990. The dog-and-pony show has been staged roughly every two months, to coincide with the scheduled meetings of the U.N. Sanctions Committee, which would review the status of negotiations with Iraq, ostensibly, to determine when the embargo could be lifted. Every time such a meeting has approached, a new presumed atrocity has been attributed to Saddam Hussein; unsubstantiated reports of troop concentrations on the Kuwait border meant Iraq was threatening the Sabah dynasty once again; aerial photographs of large buildings, theatrically displayed by U.N. Ambassador Madeleine Albright, meant that Saddam Hussein was constructing villas for his personal use while withholding funds from a hungry populace, etc.

Thus, when news broke on Aug. 10, that Lt. Gen. Husein Kamal al Majid and Lt. Col. Saddam Kamal al Majid, both sons-in-law of Saddam Hussein, had left the country and found asylum in Jordan, it seemed as though another round of the dog-and-pony show had begun. The general announced in a press conference the following day, that he could divulge important information on Iraq's programs for production of weapons of mass destruction, which, he said, the Baghdad leadership had been concealing from U.N. inspector Rolf Ekeus. The implication was, Baghdad had been cheating, and should be punished through a further prolongation of the sanctions. Events took a different course, however, when Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz announced that Ekeus would be welcomed in Baghdad, where the leadership would supply him with whatever information he required, thus undercutting the claims of the defector. Ekeus's mission to

Baghdad did yield interesting results: In a press conference in Amman on Aug. 22, he indicated that the material supplied him had been valuable, and might aid in lifting the sanctions.

Thus, if the clamorous defection had originally been conceived as part of the dog-and-pony show, it was running the risk of backfiring.

Whatever may have been the impetus for the defection of Lt. Gen. Husein Kamal, his flight to Jordan functioned to trigger operations aimed at destabilizing not only Iraq, but also Jordan, and with it, the entire region. To grasp the nature of the danger inherent in the crisis, it is important to consider certain crucial facts related to the defector and to the internal situations of Jordan and Iraq, which are apparently being either misassessed or ignored by international players, emphatically including the U.S. State Department.

### Who is Husein Kamal?

First, Lt. Gen. Husein Kamal al Majid. Although when he crossed the border into Jordan with a 30-person entourage, including two daughters of Saddam Hussein, the event was immediately celebrated by the international press as tantamount to his being magically transformed from a pumpkin into a Cinderella, the facts are different. He is best known for his ruthlessness, in forcing through implementation of programs for arms production and, later, reconstruction of infrastructure, programs which had been designed by others. Lt. Gen. Husein Kamal had been minister of defense and minister of military industry, but he did not have the professional qualifications the positions would imply. He is neither a scientist, nor an engineer. Nor is he a military man; he received his titles as a reward for his ability to get things done, not for any military experience or achievements. This is particularly important, because Husein Kamal, in his Am-

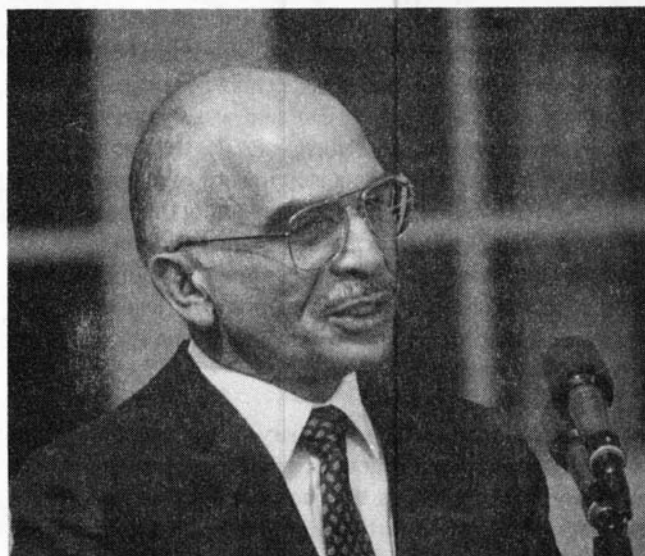
man press conference on Aug. 11, called upon the Iraqi military to rise up against the Baghdad regime.

Had the general had any military backing whatsoever, he surely would have been better advised to make use of it while he was still inside the country. His "revelations," that Iraq was about to invade Kuwait and Saudi Arabia until his defection prevented it, were so far from military and political reality inside Iraq, as to prompt U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry to admit, that the assessment was unreliable. Furthermore, Kamal is no champion of democracy or human rights. As the Kuwaitis (themselves no paragons of human rights) pointed out, Husein Kamal was number four in the family power structure, after Saddam Hussein and his two sons. If that power group is considered responsible for violations of human rights, Kamal cannot be excluded.

Although the defector does not qualify to lead a viable opposition movement, some self-styled opposition figures are playing with the option. According to a piece in the Arabic daily *Al Hayat* on Aug. 19, the chairman of the Iraqi National Democratic Party, based in London, Nabil Al Janabi, claimed to be coordinating with Husein Kamal and the king of Jordan, for Saddam Hussein's early overthrow. The opposition figure further claimed that his alleged coordination with the Jordanian leadership included plans for a Jordanian-Iraqi federation.

Second, the situation inside Iraq is not as the defector has painted it. Five years of sanctions have indeed stretched the country's economic resources and physical strength to the limit. Consumer goods in short supply are available at prices out of the reach of even the middle class. Medicines are simply not available in the quantities and quality required by an extensive public health system built to service up to 20 million citizens. As a result, people—particularly, the young, the aged, and chronically ill—are dying in droves, unnecessarily. No matter how much the population suffers under the genocidal sanctions regime, it is generally understood that the U.N., not Saddam Hussein, is responsible.

Indeed, every time pressure is put on the country, as in the ongoing crisis, the tendency of the population is to rally to its leadership. Furthermore, according to reports of diplomats in Baghdad as well as persons who have recently travelled there, the central government is very much in the saddle. Lt. Gen. Husein Kamal was fired from his post by Saddam Hussein, for reasons which may have to do with internal family feuding; once he had lost his position, and with it, certain privileges, he bolted. But the stability of the regime does not rest on such figures, nor does it depend on peace within the extended family. Despite the considerable power wielded by Saddam Hussein personally and the ambitions of his sons, particularly the elder, Oday, to acquire more power, the leadership structure in the country is made up of the military establishment, the Republican Guards, and the Baath Party apparatus. If any leading personality of these sectors, anyone of the stature of Tariq Aziz, for example,



*If Jordan's King Hussein succumbs to the pressures upon him to break trade relations with Iraq, all hell will break loose in his own country.*

were to defect, then one could speak of a crisis in the government. Otherwise, decidedly not.

### **King Hussein's diplomacy**

Jordan internally was already in the throes of a deep crisis, before the defection occurred, due to domestic opposition to the manner in which the normalization process with Israel has been driven forward (see *EIR*, July 28). Jordan's economy, which was supposed to benefit by the peace process, has lagged, and popular discontent has grown as prospects for a peace dividend have dwindled. Trade with Iraq is one of the mainstays of the Jordanian economy, although severely hampered by the embargo.

It is also in consideration of economic concerns, in fact, that King Hussein was involved in a far-reaching diplomatic effort aimed at reintegrating Iraq into the Arab fold. As reported in the Aug. 5 *Jordan Times*, King Hussein used a trip to Qatar to launch a call for a mobilization, particularly among Arabs, to end the U.N. sanctions against Iraq. Significantly, King Hussein located the need to lift the sanctions in the context of assuring true peace for the region. He is quoted as saying to the Qatari news agency, "I believe that within the framework of peace in the region, Iraq, with its vast potentials, can play a role in the establishment of peace." He added that without Iraq, "there might not be a genuine and comprehensive peace." King Hussein was blunt in his criticism of the U.N. modus operandi: "What is required from Iraq to offer in addition to what it has already done? If there are specific points, these should be declared publicly so that a dialogue and discussion can be initiated with the purpose of reaching positive results." The king is quoted as saying he found it strange that the Arab world and the United

States had not responded to Baghdad's requests for dialogue, and urged them to do so.

The importance of this initiative, which has been utterly ignored in the international press, cannot be underestimated. What it means, is that King Hussein was leading an Arab initiative *just prior to the defection crisis*, to have the sanctions against Iraq lifted, as a step toward reintegrating that nation into the region and world community. Further reports in the Arabic press, indicate that Jordan had sounded out various Gulf states and Egypt regarding a formula whereby Iraq would be freed from the embargo, its leadership left intact, and the process toward democratization started.

## The U.S. reaction

Against this backdrop summary of the situation inside the neighboring Arab countries, and the reported Jordanian initiative, one should ask the question: Why was the defection treated as it was, particularly by the U.S. State Department? After the Jordanian government granted Lt. Gen. Hussein Kamal and his entourage asylum, the press whipped up hysteria about an imminent Iraqi attack against Jordan in retaliation, which prompted President Clinton to issue security guarantees, should the need arise. During subsequent press briefings at the State Department, the line emerged, that King Hussein was being prevailed upon not only to harbor the defector, but to promote his alleged cause of overthrowing the regime in Baghdad. To that end, the king was being pressured to cut off all trade relations with Iraq.

King Hussein's comments to an Israeli newspaper, *Yediot Aharanot*, to the effect that the events could lead to a positive change in the Iraqi situation, provoked an immediate backlash inside Jordan, where the government issued statements clarifying that no operations against the Baghdad government would be allowed to originate from Jordanian territory. This reflected the intractable commitment on the part of the Jordanian population to continue to support the Iraqi cause, and the government's awareness of the fact that any semblance of support for the defector would unleash popular unrest. The Jordanian leadership at all levels reiterated that trade relations with Iraq would remain unaltered.

Pressures continued to be placed upon Jordan, especially from the U.S. State Department, whose emissaries Robert Pelletreau and Mark Parris were on tour in the region. According to a State Department briefer, Jordan was being asked to stop trade with Iraq, as a means of exerting further pressure on Baghdad to comply with U.N. resolutions.

## Asked to commit suicide

A quick glance at the bare facts of Jordanian-Iraqi trade relations suffices to demonstrate that asking Jordan to do this is tantamount to asking the country to commit economic suicide. Jordan's relatively small economy has, in physical terms, been an integral part of Iraq's, increasingly so since the sanctions regime. Iraq provides Jordan with \$500-700 million a year in oil. Of the 50,000 barrels per day (bpd) of

crude oil Jordan receives, one-half is scot free and the other half sold at 1990 prices. Another 25,000 bpd of refined oil is sold, again at bargain prices. Jordan pays for this oil through barter agreements, providing the food and medicines which the U.N. sanctions regime is supposed to allow. Jordanian economic analyst Fahed Fanek, a syndicated columnist and member of the Arab Thought Forum, told *EIR*, "The Iraqi market takes 30% of our exports." Thus, if trade were blocked, the Jordanian economy would suffer immensely. He pointed out that Jordan's Red Sea port at Aqaba, which has been undergoing expansion to accommodate the trade flows to Iraq, would be destroyed were trade halted.

Parallel to not-so-diplomatic pressures to force Jordan to dispense with its trade partner Iraq, there have been proposals floated by U.S. State Department personnel, for economic alternatives to be found. Saudi Arabia and Kuwait are being asked to provide Jordan the equivalent of the oil it receives from Iraq, as well as to open their markets to Jordanian goods. As Fahed Fanek pointed out, the Saudis might be able to offer the oil, "but the \$500 million we would have to pay for it, would be 10% of our GDP [Gross Domestic Product]." Furthermore, "open borders with Saudi Arabia would not be enough to compensate for the volume of exports now going to Iraq." Both Kuwait and Saudi Arabia responded to the asylum granted defector Hussein Kamal in Jordan, by offering full reconciliation with Amman. Diplomatic relations between the Gulf states and Jordan had been broken at the time of the Gulf war, when Jordan refused to join the anti-Iraq coalition.

On Aug. 23, King Hussein made a major policy speech to the nation, in which he spoke of Iraq in unusually harsh terms. He lamented the very difficult situation of the Iraqi people, but laid the blame for it on the leadership. Trying to strike a middle path, between external pressures to sever relations with Iraq and internal pressures to maintain them, the king said Jordan would *not* close borders with Iraq, but was seeking alternative oil sources as a precautionary measure. He showed sympathy for Hussein Kamal's decision to leave his country, and warned Iraq that the sanctions would not be lifted unless all U.N. resolutions, including those recently introduced concerning human rights guarantees, were fulfilled.

One is reminded of a classical Shakespearean tragedy, in which the king, the figure who embodies the hopes and the responsibilities of the nation, is subjected to forces outside his control, who prevail upon him to act in ways which can only bring on the doom more rapidly. If Jordan is driven to break trade relations with Iraq and to support, albeit passively, an adventurous bid to uproot the leadership in Baghdad, all hell will break loose. Interruption of trade between the two countries would plunge both into severe crisis; if chaos were to break out in Iraq, the repercussions would be regional.

## The James Baker visit

As in a Shakespearean tragedy, the motivations of the evil-doers are readily identifiable. Here, it is ultimately no

secret. As Al Janabi, the Iraqi opposition leader based—significantly—in London, related to *Al Hayat* in the article mentioned above, he was in Amman on July 21, 1992, at the same time that George Bush's Secretary of State James Baker III was there. Al Janabi reports that the king had a meeting with Baker. When Al Janabi asked him what Baker had said regarding Iraq, "King Hussein waited a while before he said, bitterly, 'Baker says that the U.S. administration will not cooperate with Iraq as long as the present regime is in power.'" Other sources have confided to *EIR* that Baker, in talks with King Hussein following Desert Storm, had threatened the monarch, that if he did not play along with the Bush-Baker demands for a postwar reorganization of the region, then he, the king, could be overthrown.

The policy aims behind the machinations against Jordan and Iraq must be seen in the context of the two conflicting views of what the postwar Middle East should look like. If the region is to be a viable crossroads between Europe and Asia, with an economic boom based on massive infrastructure development as the prerequisite for industrialization and mechanized agriculture, then the full potentials of Iraq, about which King Hussein so truly spoke, must be brought into play; no other Arab country in the region qualifies as a "national economy," an economy with sound infrastructure, a substantial, national industrial base and qualified labor power. To realize this potential, Iraq must be freed of the embargo immediately, so that its people and economy may revive and contribute to regional progress. This surely is the perspective envisioned in the Arab initiative toward reconciliation, which the king was championing prior to the defection crisis.

If, on the other hand, the region is to be a playground for international speculative capital, just one more free trade zone for the vultures of the free market to feed upon, then the economy, the industrial plant and equipment, indeed, the very qualified labor force of Iraq, is enticing prey. In this view, which is embraced by the factional cohorts of James Baker III in the "permanent structures" inside certain State Department offices, Iraq would interest international investors, who would seek to loot the country, take over its vast oil concerns, and privatize its state-sector industry. Thus, the cries for an overthrow of the current government of Iraq are actually pleas for an apparatus to be put in place which would oversee the destruction of the nation's economic wealth.

Anyone who believes that the second scenario is coherent with plans for peace in the region, is dead wrong. Either peace will be built upon a solid economic foundation, or there will be no peace. Furthermore, if King Hussein, who has been praised as a key figure in the peace process, is subjected to continuing pressures of the type that have been placed upon him in the recent weeks, there will be no Jordan to speak of.

In every Shakespearean drama, there is a moment which Schiller identified as the *punctum saliens*, the moment in which effective action by the protagonist can shift the course of events decisively. That moment has come for Jordan.

## Brits threaten Chirac with assassination

by EIR Staff

Prince Philip Mountbatten's ecologist troops have issued a televised death threat against French President Jacques Chirac, in the form of a commercial calling for a boycott against French wine, ostensibly to protest French nuclear testing. Titled "The Day of the Jacques," the commercial is modeled on the film "The Day of the Jackal," about the assassination attempts against France's Charles de Gaulle.

The commercial shows Chirac through the cross-hairs of a sniper's gun, sipping wine at a cafe. As the camera pans down from Chirac's face, to his groin, the text reads: "There is only one way to prevent Jacques Chirac, from pursuing his program of nuclear tests in the South Pacific, that is to hit him, where it really hurts." A shot goes off, the wine bottle explodes, splashing red wine on the camera lens, and the caption appears: "Drop a Bomb on Chirac's Plans/Boycott French Wine."

Lyndon LaRouche described this commercial as a terrorist threat coming from pro-terrorist, radical-ecologist circles under the patronage of Britain's Prince Philip Mountbatten.

Chirac, much more than his predecessor François Mitterrand, is carrying out policies that the British do not like. Most important, he is upholding the sovereignty of the French nation-state. Not only is he bucking the United Nations line against nuclear testing; he is also orienting toward President Bill Clinton, rather than toward London, on the war in the Balkans.

LaRouche pointed to three important aspects of the anti-Chirac commercial:

First, the group which made the film is linked to Greenpeace and to the World Wide Fund for Nature, which is headed directly by Prince Philip. As *EIR* has documented, the WWF uses ecologists and terrorists as weapons against political opponents of the British oligarchy (see *EIR*, Jan. 13, 1995, "The 'Green Terrorists' on Prince Philip's Leash").

Second, LaRouche emphasized the similarities of the attack on Chirac over nuclear testing, with the "nuclear energy equals fascism" campaign, coming out of France in spring 1977, which triggered the 1977 summer-fall explosion of Baader-Meinhof terrorism in Germany, and presaged such later events as the terrorist kidnapping-murder of Italian political leader Aldo Moro.

Finally, LaRouche pointed to the common British background to both the 1977 wave of terrorism and to this "most scantily veiled" threat to Chirac now. LaRouche located these developments in the history of the past 30 years. "The