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Jordan's Military Modernization: One Step Forward, Two Steps Back

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An Intelligence Assessment

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Jordan's Military Modernization: One Step Forward, Two Steps Back [Redacted]

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An Intelligence Assessment

This paper was prepared by [Redacted]
Office of Near Eastern and South Asian Analysis.
It was coordinated with the Directorate of
Operations. [Redacted]

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Comments and queries are welcome and may be
directed to the Chief, Arab-Israeli Division, NESAs,
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**Jordan's Military Modernization:
One Step Forward,
Two Steps Back** [redacted]

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Key Judgments

*Information available
as of 15 April 1988
was used in this report.*

The Jordanian military is experiencing serious problems that are undermining its reputation as the most capable military force, for its size, in the Arab world. Despite the undertaking by Amman of a comprehensive modernization effort during the past decade, Jordan's military strength and ability to defend against a determined attack by either Syria or Israel have slipped considerably. [redacted]

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The ambitious military modernization plan begun in the mid-1970s has, in fact, contributed to many of Jordan's current problems. Jordan has devoted an inordinate portion of its defense outlays to purchasing expensive new weaponry and to upgrading programs at the expense of maintaining existing equipment. In addition, the defense budget is shrinking as a result of economic difficulties, stemming in part from a decline in foreign financial assistance. [redacted]

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Prospects for continued economic troubles indicate that no relief is in sight, making unlikely significant progress in Jordanian military modernization. Declining foreign assistance from the Gulf Arab states and shrinking Foreign Military Sales from the United States are depriving King Hussein of his most important sources of both financing and equipment. [redacted]

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The military's Maintenance Corps, often cited as one of Jordan's key military strengths, has been overextended as a result of the modern technology and electronics incorporated in Jordanian tanks and other equipment. This problem will grow as advanced fighter aircraft are acquired. Jordan's troubled maintenance and logistic networks, unable to support the armed forces adequately during peacetime, would probably crumble in combat. [redacted]

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Unprecedented problems with the quality of manpower in the military is debilitating the Jordanian military:

- Poor management and planning have led to shortages in crucial spare parts and maintenance.
- Corruption is increasingly undermining the morale among the lower ranks, historically one of Jordan's most important strengths, and is jeopardizing the reputation of the military.
- Unresponsiveness to the burgeoning problems in the military suggests lethargic leadership, undermining another longstanding strength of the Jordanian military. [redacted]

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Jordan's apparent decision to purchase one squadron each of French Mirage 2000 and British Tornado fighter aircraft probably will magnify the military's problems. The burden of absorbing two new systems into the Air Force will minimize for several years the benefit of purchasing such advanced equipment. 

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Jordan has increasingly turned to the Soviets for equipment unaffordable or inaccessible in the West, but dissatisfaction with Soviet support and dislike for Soviet advisers—along with Hussein's pro-Western outlook—probably will block significant Soviet political inroads. Nevertheless, financial imperatives could force King Hussein to purchase more equipment from Moscow, providing the Soviets with more exposure and opportunities to influence the Jordanian military. 

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US access to, and influence with, the Jordanian military is declining. Anti-US sentiment among the military is growing, principally because Washington has repeatedly rejected King Hussein's requests for arms. Junior Jordanian officers are becoming less amenable to close relations with US counterparts. As Jordan looks to other suppliers for arms, its requirement for US training, maintenance, and advisory support will decline. The deterioration of military ties will erode Jordan's traditionally strong incentive to cooperate both militarily and politically with Washington.



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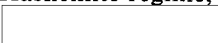


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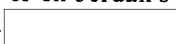
**Jordan's Military Modernization:
One Step Forward,
Two Steps Back** 

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Military Modernization Objectives

Since the mid-1970s, Jordan has been engaged in a multimillion-dollar program to modernize its armed forces. King Hussein realizes that Jordan faces insurmountable manpower and financial barriers that ensure his country will remain militarily inferior to Syria and Israel. Nonetheless, the King has sought to maintain at least a credible military force to deter potential attackers. Hussein also clearly needs to continue to show his military, the cornerstone and guarantor of the Hashemite regime, that he can still provide for them. 


Economic Problems

The primary obstacle to improving or even maintaining Jordan's military capability is Amman's budgetary constraints and the overcommitment of these scarce resources to modernization at the expense of maintenance and training.¹ Hussein has been forced to rely on the largess of the Saudis and smaller Gulf states to fund major weapons programs. The Saudis, however, have shown increasing reluctance to support the King's wish list, underscored recently by their refusal to fund Jordan's purchase of a modern fighter. As a result, Jordan must make its limited purchases carefully, basing its decisions often more on cost than on quality or on Jordan's ability to integrate the weaponry. 


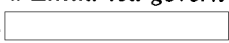
Declining foreign assistance will continue to constrain Jordan's ambitions to modernize its armed forces. Jordanian officials have indicated that they use about one-third of their Arab aid to finance military purchases, and this aid has dropped from a high of nearly \$1.2 billion in 1981 to just over \$400 million annually since 1986. Equally important has been the precipitous drop in US military deliveries to the kingdom,




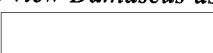
Jordan's Perception of the External Threat

The buildups in Israeli and Syrian arsenals, although intended to defend against each other, have increased Jordanian concern that these more numerous and more capable arms could be used against Jordan. Although historical enmity with, and distrust of, Iraq is a nagging worry, Saddam Hussein's commitment to the war against Iran and Jordan's outspoken support for Baghdad have muted for the time being previous strains in the relationship. 

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Jordanian Armed Forces Commander Bin Shakir recently estimated the consensus among Jordanian military leaders is that for the immediate future Israel would require a green light from the United States—a go-ahead Jordanians believe will not be forthcoming—to initiate an attack on Jordan. 
Bin Shakir added that Jordan was not prepared to mount an independent military effort against Israel. Nevertheless, the Jordanians worry that, should events lead to direct conflict with the Palestinians such as occurred in 1970, the Israelis might seize the opportunity to secure territory on the East Bank. Jordanian leaders are particularly concerned that a Likud-led government would act in this manner. 

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Syria is not viewed as a direct military threat at the present time, 
because it is in a weakened condition stemming from economic difficulties and involvement in Lebanon. Bin Shakir believes that these issues are keeping Syria occupied with its own problems for the short term and that Assad is trying to avoid conflict with Jordan for the present. Jordan still has strong, bitter memories of Syrian military intervention in the Jordanian civil war of 1970-71 and during November 1980 when Syria deployed nearly three armored divisions to Jordan's border. These memories and the Syrian military's persistent improvements and expansion compel the Jordanians to view Damascus as a powerful potential adversary. 

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which plummeted from about \$151 million provided in 1985 to about \$81 million last year, and the repeated rejection of Jordanian requests for US arms such as the F-16 fighter aircraft, Stinger missiles, and Bradley fighting vehicle. [redacted]

[redacted] that the defense budget had remained constant in terms of total Jordanian dinars allocated since 1984. He estimated that the budget during those years allowed no growth in the military and necessitated reduced training time, ammunition allocations, and maintenance. [redacted]

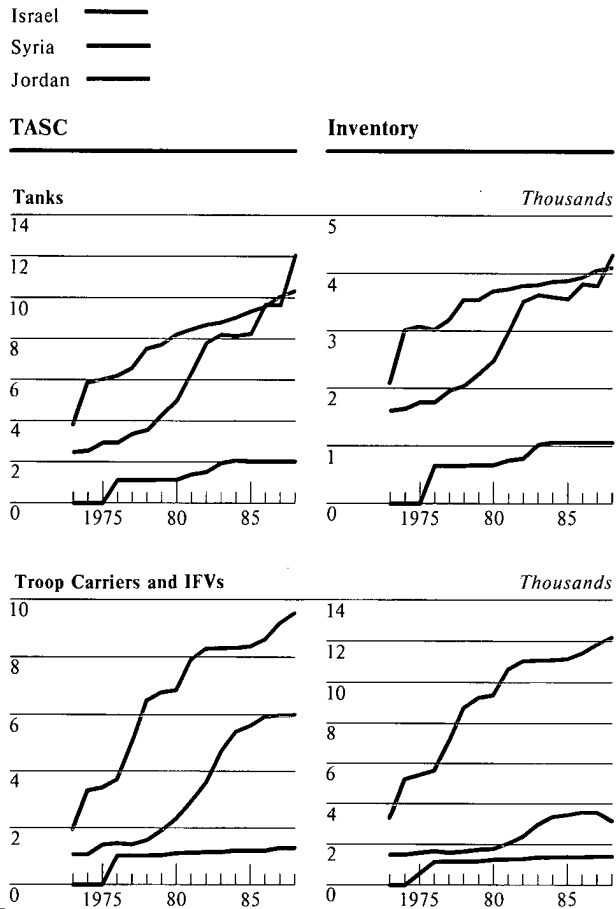
The same senior officer reported in 1987 that additional budget cuts had begun to have a major effect on overhaul programs and would cut severely into spare parts ordered by the Maintenance Corps. In fact, during the past year the military was forced to reduce spending by at least 15 percent below 1986 levels, according to the US defense attaches. The budget cuts affected nearly every branch of the military. Only basic medical care, food, and pay were [redacted]

[redacted] that the cuts precluded purchasing necessary spare parts and threatened the military's readiness to conduct combat operations. The military budget probably can sustain only minimum Jordanian requirements, eliminating some procurement programs. Jordanian plans for more advanced self-propelled artillery and upgrading armored personnel carriers probably will be scrapped unless Jordan secures substantial and unforeseen external aid. [redacted]

Jordan's projected allocations for crucial items over the next five years reveal continued and, in some cases, worsening shortfalls. The projections, for example, budget for only half the minimum training ammunition requirements, and the entire amount is to be divided between training and reserve stocks. The [redacted]

tion for artillery allows only two of the three battalions in each division to fire live ammunition each year, with only the officers from the remaining battalion getting limited live fire experience. Even this low level of firing exercises is forcing the Jordanians to borrow from their war reserves. The reduced war reserve will result in further eroding the military's readiness and ability to sustain combat. [redacted]

Figure 2
Comparison of Jordanian, Syrian, and Israeli Armored Forces, 1973-88



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Army Programs Suffering

Following the general pattern in the Middle East in recent years, Jordan has sought since the late 1970s to improve the combat effectiveness of its ground forces by giving increased emphasis to armor, by providing more fire support at smaller unit levels, and by improving the mobility of mechanized and artillery

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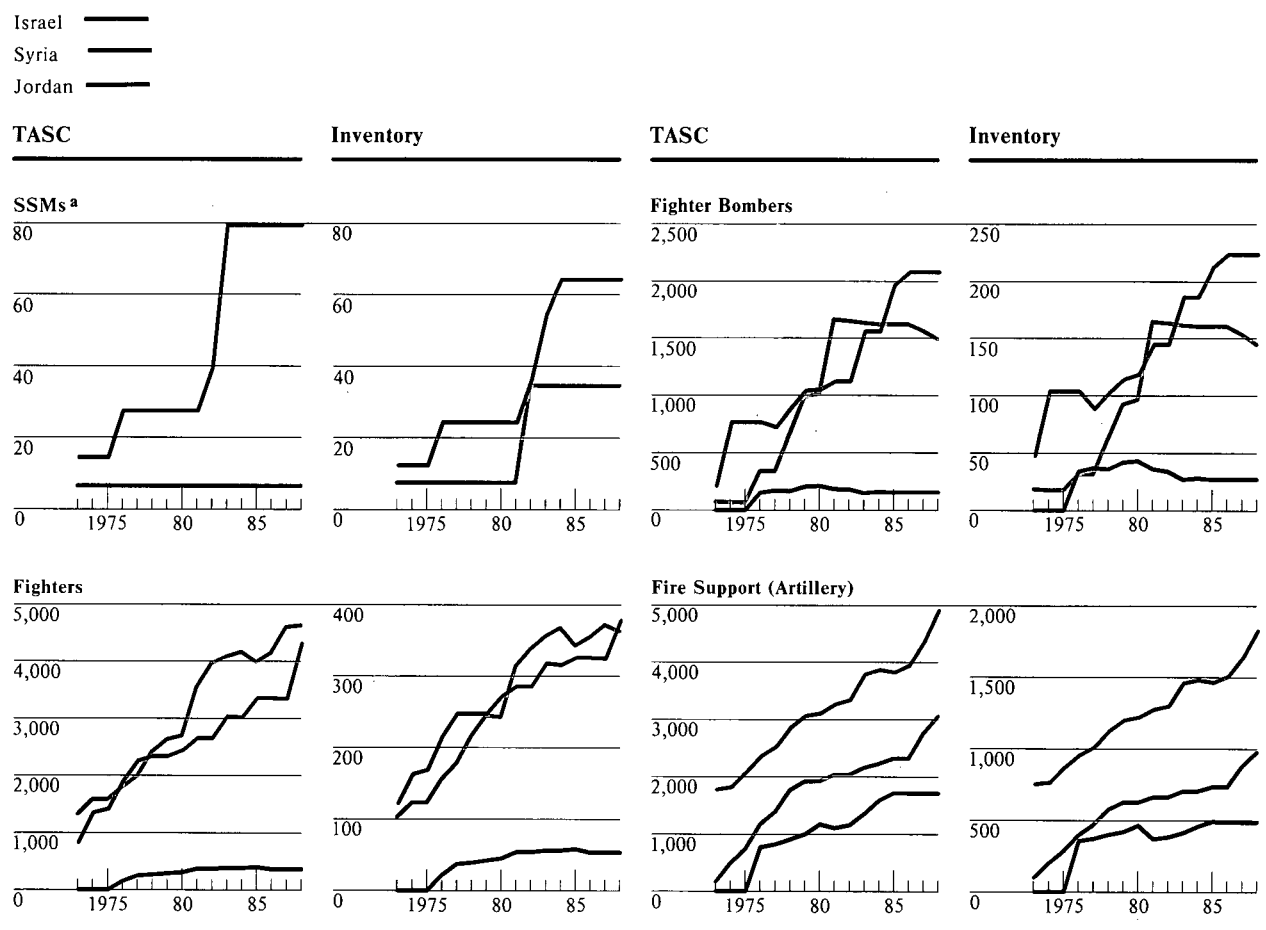
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Figure 3
Comparison of Jordanian, Syrian, and Israeli Fire Support Forces, 1973-88



^a The Cricket and Cricket I Israeli SSM systems are not yet scored.

[Redacted]

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forces. During the past several years, however, programs to rebuild and upgrade armor and artillery have been delayed or aborted because of a lack of required parts, conflicting priorities between upgrade programs and routine maintenance in the workshops, and sparse funds. [Redacted]

Armor
 Facing ever-improving weaponry in Israel and Syria, the Jordanians over the past decade have replaced their tank fleet with new, rebuilt, and converted

tanks.² The ground forces replaced obsolescent M-48s with Khalids—advanced British-built Chieftans with 120-mm guns—purchased additional US M-60s, and upgraded its Centurions, marginally enhancing the Army's firepower. [Redacted]

² Israel has greatly improved the survivability and effectiveness of its aging British and US tanks and is producing upgunned Merkavas, while Syria continues to receive new T-72 M1 tanks from the Soviets. [Redacted]

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Jordan's inability to absorb or service the more advanced technology incorporated in the newer tanks has eroded much of the potential advantage of modernizing the fleet. The Jordanians have a larger fleet of tanks with theoretically more firepower than before, but a far greater number of the more complex tanks are unserviceable, [redacted]

Moreover, greater skill and more training will be required to operate the advanced systems optimally, in our view. [redacted]

Jordan's Khalid tank program, the centerpiece of ground forces modernization, faces serious problems.

[redacted] last year [redacted] fewer than half of the Army's 275 Khalids were operable. We believe the primary problem is with ordering sufficient stocks of spares and major components—stemming from poor planning and a lack of funding—but the Jordanians also appear unable to service relatively minor problems. Many of the tanks are inoperable because of simple gearbox malfunctions and overheating, [redacted]

[redacted] Jordanian maintenance and servicing procedures are causing the problems. As a result of the problems, senior Jordanian Army officers have voiced a concern that the Khalid may be unreliable, and [redacted] they worry that the Army could not field an adequate number of tanks in a military conflict. [redacted]

Problems with the Khalid's 120-mm main gun ammunition illustrate the faulty planning. Jordan failed to order required parts to enable the Khalid to fire fin-stabilized sabot rounds, which were acquired in large [redacted]

after the problem was discovered, Jordan had not filed a work order to complete the necessary modification for the Khalid, meaning the entire fleet of Jordan's most important tanks cannot, for the near term, fire the basic round designed to defend against a Syrian or Israeli armored assault. [redacted]

Artillery

Field artillery modernization and expansion have been key components of King Hussein's upgrading of the Army, but Jordanian artillery is still seriously out-gunned by Israeli and Syrian firepower. Moreover,

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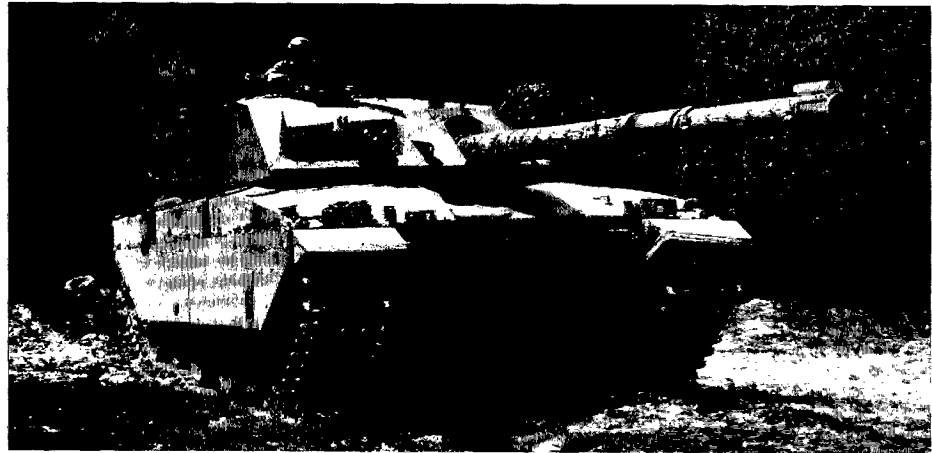
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Figure 4. Maintenance problems have grounded as many as half the Jordanian Army's 275 Khalid main battle tanks.



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Jordan has no modern guns in reserve, only obsolete towed howitzers to replace destroyed guns. Jordan also lacks rocket launchers for massing fire, and it has no extended range weapon to counter Syrian or Israeli surface-to-surface missiles. [redacted]

Some improvements have been stalled by funding shortfalls. For example, mechanized divisions still are short of guns, and general support artillery battalions meant to support large field formations have not progressed beyond the planning stage. Money to upgrade Jordan's 155-mm M-109 howitzer fleet ran out before the program was completed, and it appears Jordan cannot modernize its entire force, as was originally planned. [redacted]

The key to Jordan's artillery upgrade plans is procurement of advanced counterbattery radars from the United States and France. Jordan received four US-made TPQ-36 short-range radars in late 1986, but within several months one was being cannibalized to keep the others operational. [redacted] combination of administrative logistic mistakes and operator inexperience reduced the radar readiness rate almost immediately. Some Jordanian artillery units are equipped with French attila-atiba fire direction systems, but they lack equipment needed to communicate with the TPQ-36-equipped units—reducing substantially the effectiveness of artillery in combat, which requires coordinated, timely firing orders. [redacted]

The TPQ-36 has been one of Jordan's highest priority procurement programs in recent years. On future battlefields these radars will be crucial to locating and destroying enemy artillery positions. The Israelis' counterbattery fire is highly effective, and they train extensively with their own and US-produced radars. The Syrians are being coached by the Soviets to improve their ability to neutralize enemy artillery. [redacted]

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Maintenance Programs Suffering

Jordan's Army Maintenance Corps, long considered a key strength of the military, is experiencing severe problems that threaten to undermine overall operational readiness and effectiveness. [redacted]

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[redacted] ing poor management, spare parts shortages, and funding limitations. The problems affect major rebuilding programs, especially Chieftain, M-60, and Centurion upgrades; artillery modernization; and armored personnel carrier improvements. [redacted]

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Poor Management

Problems result from a combination of poor administrative procedures and very lethargic management by the Maintenance Corps leadership. The more senior officers in charge of Army maintenance are reluctant

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Figure 5. Problems maintaining and operating TPQ-36 counterbattery radars have seriously degraded their effectiveness in Jordan's ground forces.

to change their outdated system of ordering, storing, and distributing spare parts, [redacted] reporting. The officers who develop priorities and oversee maintenance operations increasingly blame the source of supply—either France, Britain, or the United States—instead of their own inability to forecast requirements, control the flow of spares, and correctly prioritize the work to be done. [redacted]

In addition to leadership deficiencies, the Jordanian maintenance corps has no long-term expertise in major weapon systems. [redacted]

[redacted] does not retain mechanics with comprehensive expertise on specific systems, and it lacks sufficient technical manuals to train and familiarize new personnel on the rebuilding and maintenance programs. Jordan's spare parts system is archaic compared with those of other militaries, despite its modern arsenal of weaponry. Jordan has no computer

system to monitor parts on hand or for determining which spares must be ordered, according to the attaches. Moreover, parts ordering is highly centralized, with the most routine requisitions needing the signature of a senior officer. [redacted]

[redacted] that long lines of soldiers with routine requisitions for parts are a common sight at central storage facilities, leading to unnecessary delays in ordering parts and completing the repairs. [redacted]

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Spare Parts Shortages

These severe managerial problems coupled with shortages of funding have resulted in a critical shortage of spare parts for virtually all British- and US-made equipment in the Army. The new chief of the Army Maintenance Corps, [redacted]

[redacted] late last year that he had no working spare engines, transmissions, or transfer cases for M-60-series tanks, Centurion tanks, and M-109 and M-110 howitzers—equipment that is the foundation of Jordan's ground forces. Karasneh said that, if an engine or other major component in an armored vehicle requires more than simple repairs, the component is transferred to the armor workshops in Az Zarqa for rebuilding. As a result, the vehicle is out of service for several months to a year, given the backlog at the workshop. [redacted]

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[redacted] the supply of major assemblies and spare parts required to service Jordanian artillery and ground support vehicles is insufficient to sustain combat for more than a few days. Shortages for Jordan's approximately 1,100 M-113 armored personnel carriers are most apparent.

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[redacted] has six replacement engines for the entire fleet. Such inventory levels are roughly equivalent to what the United States would stock for one mechanized brigade, but they are meant to support the entire four-division Jordanian Army. [redacted]

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Air Force Modernization

Jordan's Air Force, more than the other services, cannot compete with the much larger and more advanced inventories in Israel and Syria. Jordan's

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Figure 6. The terrain along the Jordan River forms natural barriers to an Israeli armored assault on the Jordanian heartland.



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fleet of 55 aging F-5E fighters and 32 F-1s are no match for Israeli F-16 and F-15 fighters or for Syria's new MIG-29s. Key weaknesses in Jordan's Air Force that King Hussein seeks to redress are:

- Lack of radar electronic countermeasures.
- Absence of self-protection electronic warfare equipment.
- Limited payload, power, and maximum speed.
- Lack of all-aspect missiles (those that can engage a target from any direction).
- Air intercept radars with insufficient ranges and no lookdown capability.

A New Fighter—No Panacea

King Hussein has sought a modern fighter since at least the early 1980s to redress deficiencies in the Air Force. Although his purchase of even two squadrons of new planes would hardly affect the balance in air power in the region, it would return credibility to his small Air Force, in our view, and give pause to prospective attackers, particularly the less-than-proficient Syrian pilots.

Both King Hussein and his Air Force would prefer to purchase US F-16 airplanes. Given the unavailability of his first choice, the King recently agreed to purchase 12 Mirage 2000 fighters from the French for

more than \$1 billion, with an option to purchase eight more in the future. The King apparently also intends to purchase eight Tornados from Britain.

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The Jordanian Air Force is short of pilots—there are only four pilots for every five planes—and Jordan will be hard pressed to fully man the new planes it purchases. The Air Force cannot expand because of a shortage of pilots and limited funding, and we expect instead that it will retire two squadrons of F-5E fighters and retrain the pilots on Mirages and Tornados. During the year it is likely to take to get the pilots proficient on the new planes, these two squadrons, which constitute about one-third of Jordan's Air Force, will be virtually inactive. In addition, since each Tornado requires a pilot and a weapons control officer, the Jordanians must train several personnel from scratch.

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Two new types of aircraft will require training two sets of maintenance crews. The Jordanians have been frustrated by unsatisfactory French support of an earlier purchase of F-1 fighters and can expect equally poor support for the Mirage 2000s. The Tornado as well could be very difficult for the Jordanians to keep

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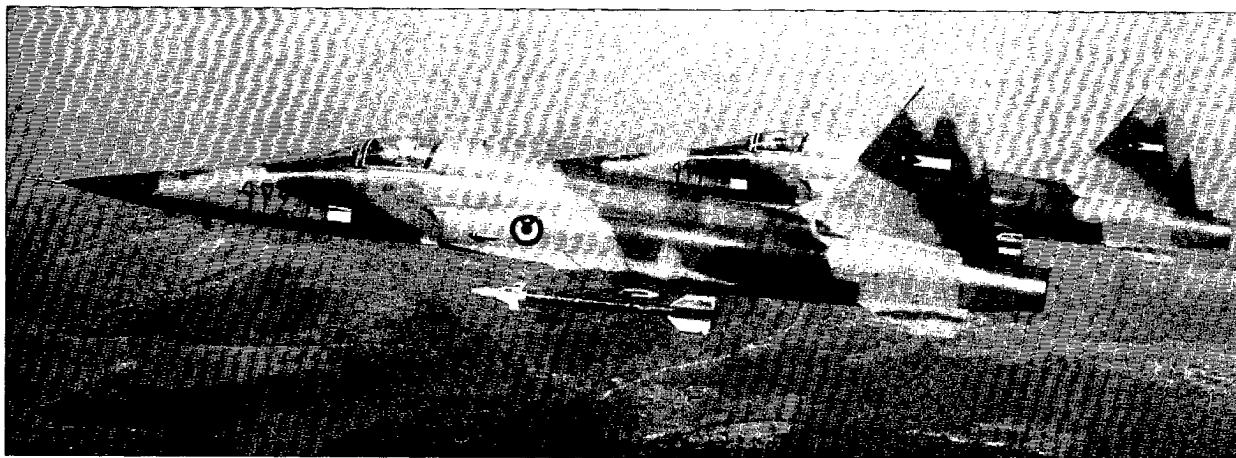


Figure 7. Jordan's aging F-5E fighters cannot compete with Israeli F-16s or Syrian MIG-29s. [redacted]

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in the air because even the British have had difficulties with this complex, multirole fighter. The Saudis, with far more British assistance than the Jordanians can expect, have had considerable problems keeping their Tornados operable, [redacted]

reported that very little live fire is conducted—a crucial phase of training with attack helicopters—and no antitank missile launches by the Cobras have been noted. [redacted]

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The complications of purchasing two new aircraft models go beyond difficulties in training pilots and maintenance crews. If the King follows through with his intention to purchase both Mirage and Tornado aircraft, his Air Force will face a logistic nightmare, given its fleet comprised of four different types of fighters from three different suppliers. Jordan would be left with one squadron each of French Mirage 2000s, British Tornados, and US F-5Es, and two squadrons of French F-1s. Jordan's Air Force would remain one-fifth the size of Israel's or Syria's, but it would operate a similar number of aircraft models and require similarly complex logistic support. [redacted]

Moreover, the Jordanian helicopters are assigned to the Air Force, not the ground forces that they are designed to support during combat. The Israelis adopt a similar organization, but closer coordination between the Army and the Air Force and better understanding of the role of attack helicopters have made the Israelis alert to potential problems and led to procedures to redress them. By contrast, coordination between services in Jordan is poor, and combined-arms exercises including helicopters are rare. Consequently, these expensive assets that could be key to battlefield success in future hostilities will not appreciably contribute to Jordan's battlefield strength. [redacted]

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Attack Helicopter Problems

Jordan purchased two squadrons totaling 24 aircraft—AH-1S Cobra attack helicopters—nearly three years ago for about \$200 million to improve the Air Force's ground attack and troop support roles. [redacted]

[redacted] that the operating proficiency of the helicopter crews is still limited, the overall mission is not clearly defined, and training has been lacking. [redacted]

Air Defenses—Improved But Lacking

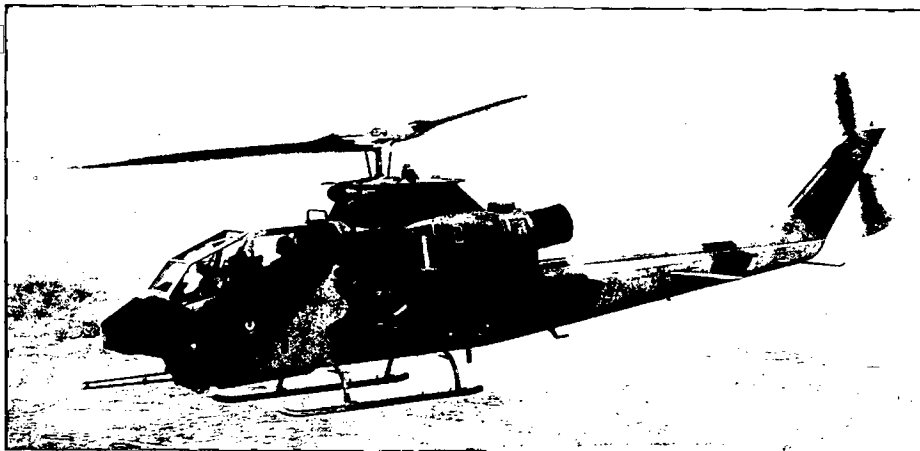
Jordan recognized in the 1970s that insufficient air defense equipment was its most serious tactical deficiency, and this has been Jordan's top priority procurement program in recent years. Air defense is also the one area in which they have made substantial progress. Since 1980 the Jordanians have purchased [redacted]

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Figure 8. A Jordanian AH-1S
Cobra attack helicopter.



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nearly \$1.6 billion worth of Soviet air defense equipment, including SA-8s, SA-13s, and SA-14s, filling gaps that existed in the country's air defenses. In addition, Jordan is studying French and British proposals for acquiring modern air defense radars.

Continuing deficiencies and gaps in Jordan's early warning radar system leave much of Jordan open to undetected attack by hostile aircraft. The Soviet missile and artillery systems provide adequate air defense for Jordan's four maneuver divisions' operating areas but do little to detect or engage aircraft outside their limited deployment areas.

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Despite the clear gains in Jordan's air defense, problems with the Soviet-supplied systems have degraded their operation and slowed their integration into Jordan's existing network.

early warning radar, a British Plessey AR-3d, was out of commission for repairs for several months, leaving a large gap in early warning coverage. The Jordanians have attempted to procure gap-filling radars from the United States and Britain to improve coverage in northern and western Jordan, but funding limitations and maintenance problems have prevented them from purchasing or operating enough radars to provide adequate protection.

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was dissatisfied with the quality and reliability of Soviet-provided radios. Serious problems in communicating with other combat units equipped with British and US radios led the Jordanians to replace the Soviet communications gear with British and US radios.

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Soviet air defense equipment has received mixed reviews in Jordan. The ZSU-23/4 antiaircraft artillery system has been highly praised, deemed extremely reliable, and assessed as superior to US- or other Western-produced weapons. Jordan, however, has experienced problems with other systems provided by the Soviets.

Electronic Warfare Deficiencies

Jordan's military lacks electronic warfare resources. Despite the immediate operational need for modern equipment, Jordanian military officials have made little or no progress in redressing the situation. Funding limitations and an absence of technical expertise have combined to prevent Jordan's military from making significant gains toward resolving this serious problem.

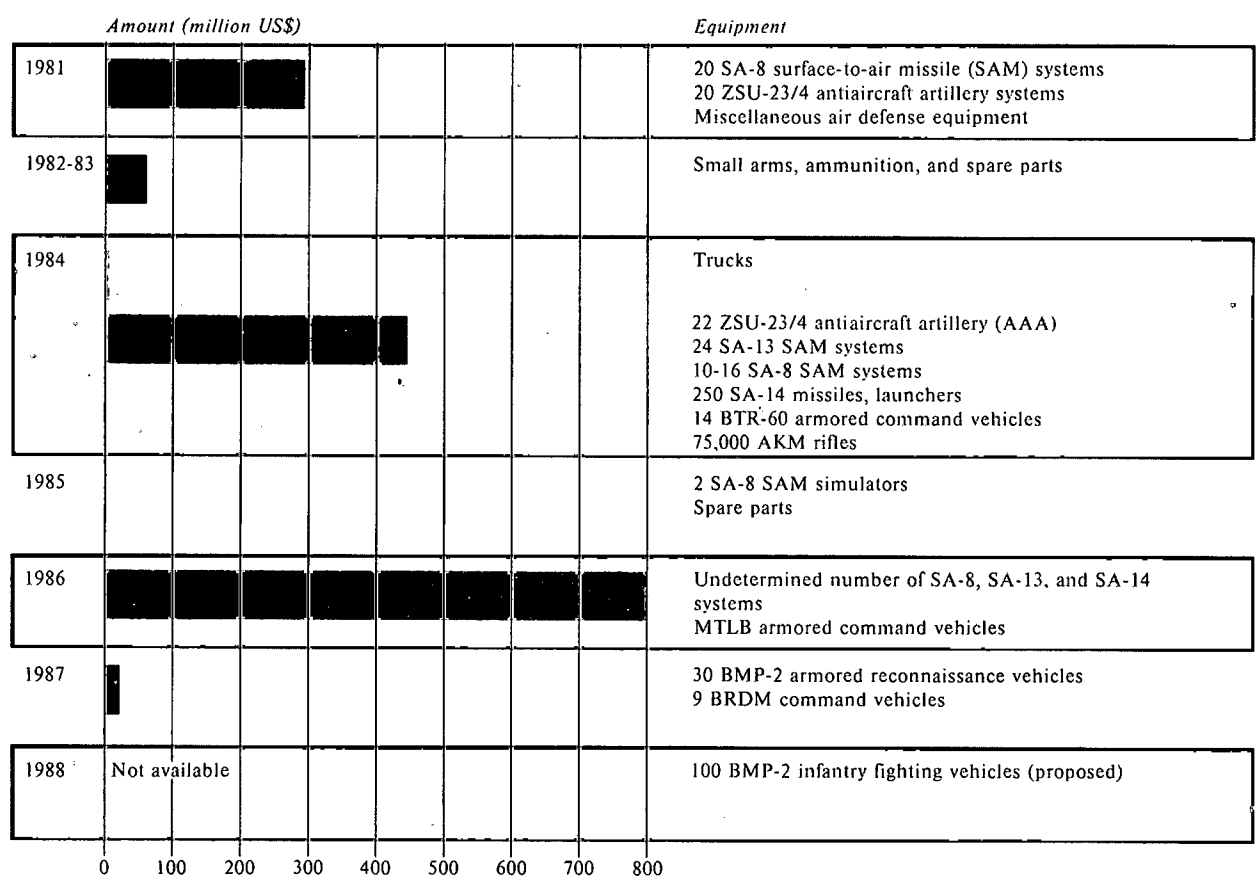
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public live fire demonstrations during the system's initial testing in Jordan in 1984. The missiles were test-fired again in 1987 and again performed poorly. The Soviets apparently blamed Jordanian incompetence for the failures—but, according to the attache, the Jordanians immediately followed the SA-8 failures with a successful firing of a US-produced Hawk missile.

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Figure 9
Jordanian Arms Purchases From the Soviet Union



Summary: Jordan has purchased just over \$1.6 billion in arms from the Soviets. Over \$1 billion worth is in Jordan—some of the 1986-88 purchases have yet to be delivered.

[Redacted]

In a conflict between Jordan and either Syria or Israel, Jordanian communications would be vulnerable to jamming and intercept—causing debilitating command and control problems. At the same time, the Jordanians are not equipped to disrupt or to effectively intercept their enemies' communications.

[Redacted]

The Jordanians are negotiating with British and US firms to upgrade existing aircraft in their inventory with electronics to jam Israeli and Syrian communications and to warn of hostile radars acquiring Jordanian planes, but equipment similar to those in Israeli or Syrian aircraft cost about \$1 million each—beyond Jordan's limited budget. In addition, Jordan may be arranging training in electronic warfare for its ground forces from a US company, [Redacted]

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reports. But merely training troops on basic electronic warfare techniques will do little to solve Jordan's backwardness in this important aspect of modern warfare, in our view. [redacted]

Manpower Problems

The average Jordanian soldier has long had the reputation for being of the highest caliber in the Arab world, counterbalancing Jordan's many equipment shortages and size limitations. Our assessments of Jordan's combat capabilities and of the military's ability to defend the country and the regime have long focused on the individual quality and loyalty of the Jordanian soldier. [redacted]

Revelations during recent years of pervasive maintenance and logistic difficulties, widespread high-level corruption, reduced training, and stagnating pay, however, undermine this highly favorable situation, in our assessment. [redacted]

[redacted]

Small Manpower Pool

Jordan lacks sufficient manpower to field military forces on the scale of neighboring states. Jordan's population of about 2.9 million cannot support a force much larger than the current 75,000- to 90,000-man standing army, particularly given the exclusion of Palestinians from most combat units. Shortages in skilled manpower have been further complicated by low military pay, improved job prospects overseas during the oil boom, and, increasingly, by a less favorable view of the military among the general public and a corresponding decrease in the number of East Bank Jordanians willing to make the military their career. [redacted]

The small manpower pool available to the military is affected by the kingdom's unwillingness to capitalize fully on the well-educated and technically skilled Palestinian segment of the population—largely because of Hussein's memories of the Jordanian civil

war in 1970. We believe Palestinians comprise well over half the population but are underrepresented in the military command. Only the Air Force allows a small number of Palestinians to serve in combat. Palestinians serve two years like other Jordanian citizens and make up about 40 percent of conscripts, but only a small number make the Army a career.³

[redacted]

Unlike the Syrians, the Jordanians cannot make up for shortcomings in quality with more men. The Syrians maintain a force more than four times as large and therefore expect and require far less from the individual soldier. Jordan spends more per soldier than Syria and, given its limited resources, cannot afford to expand conscription or to extend service time for large numbers of soldiers. Instead, Jordan's manpower philosophy coincides much more closely with Israel's—to compensate for its enemy's larger size by fielding higher quality forces. [redacted]

[redacted]

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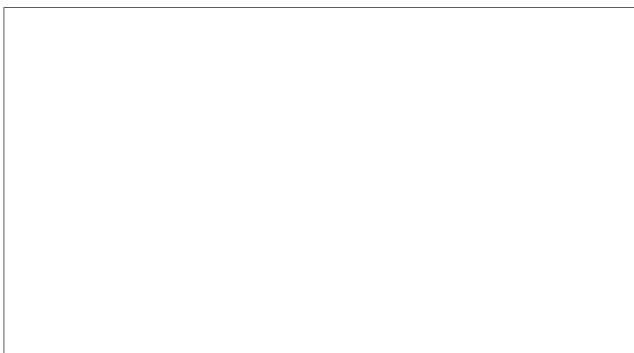
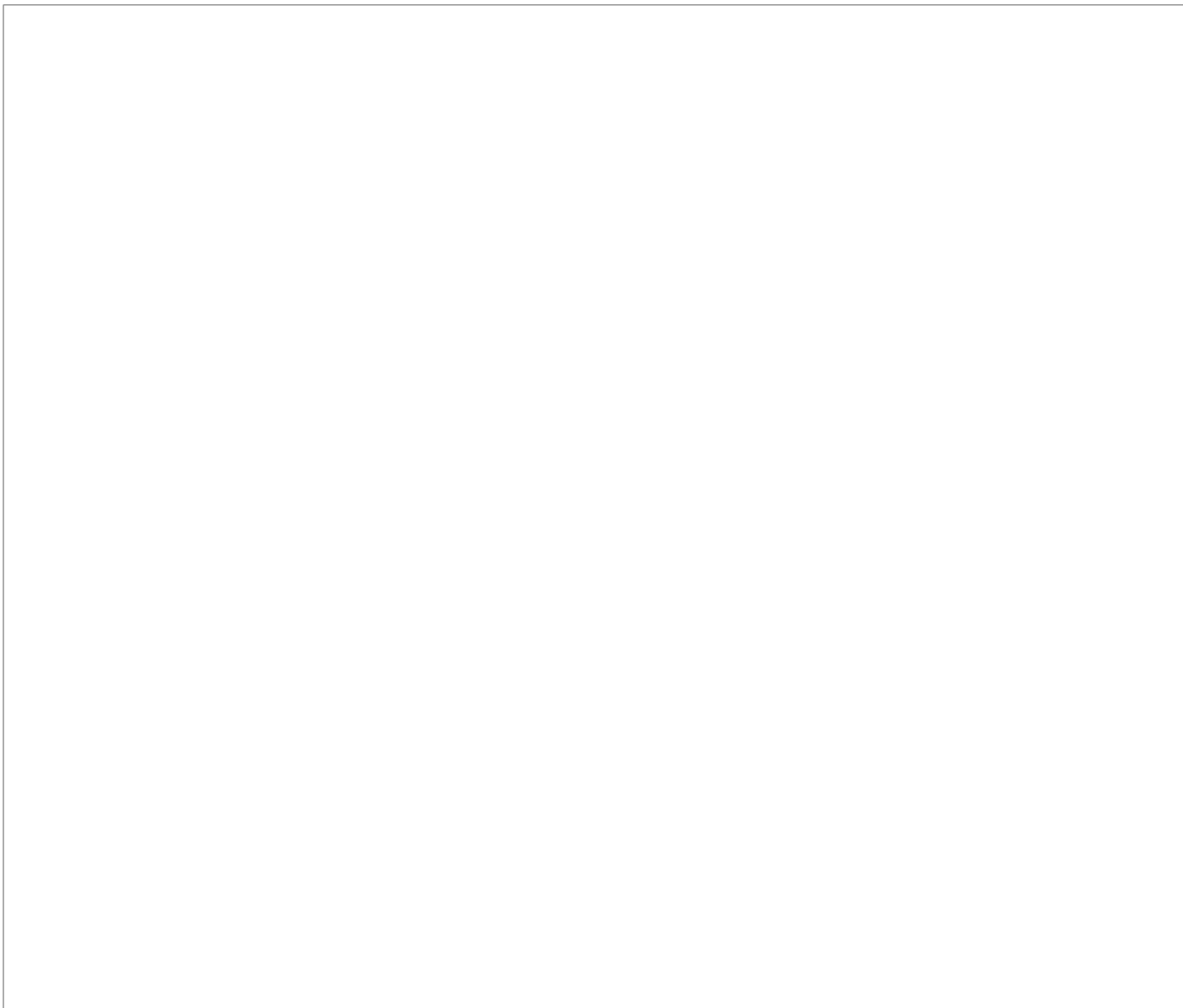
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Jordan's officer corps is still, in our view, intensely loyal to the King, less politicized than most of their counterparts in other Arab armies, and keenly motivated to defend Jordan. But we believe the military's esprit de corps is declining. 

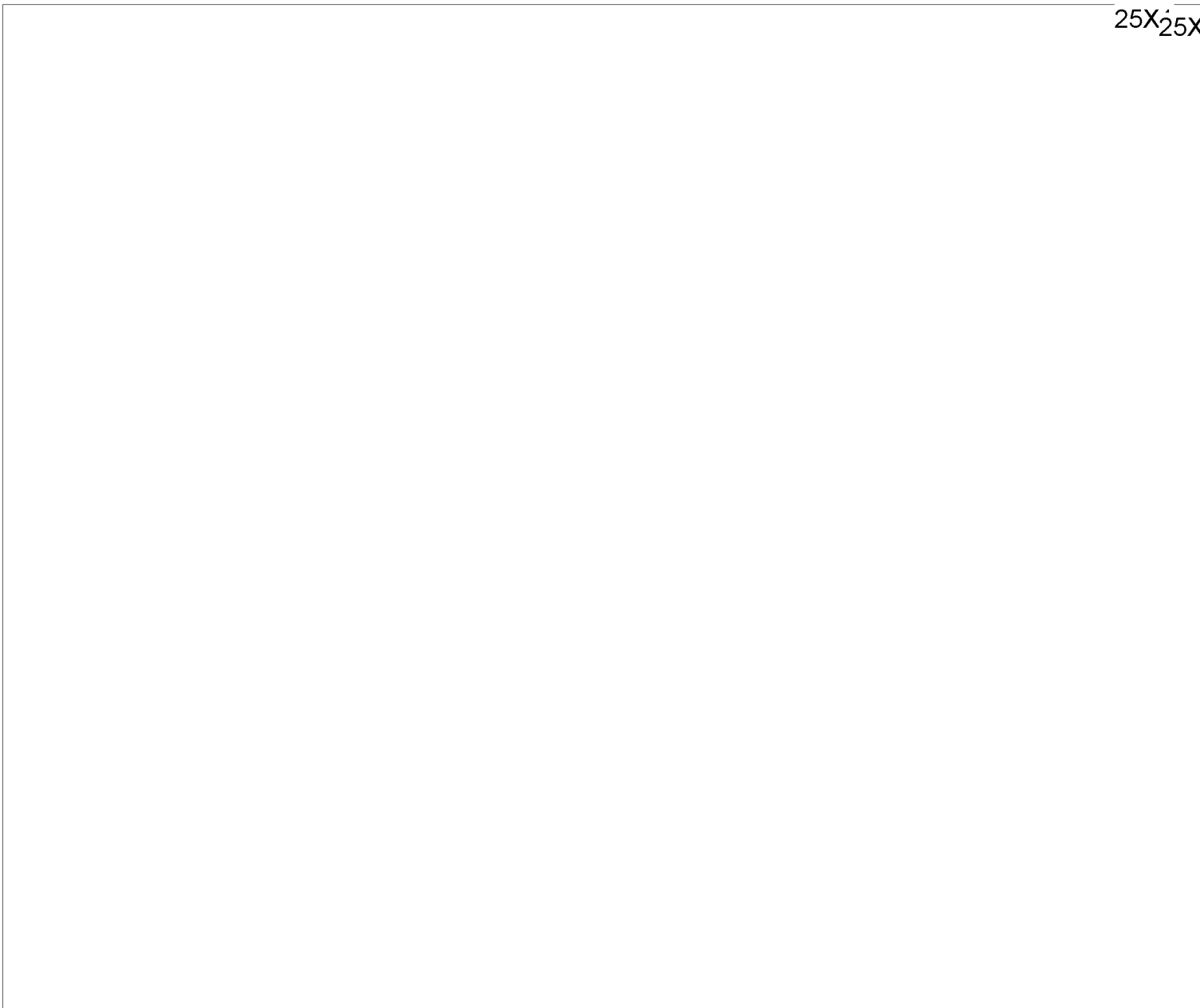
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Reduced Training

Jordan's budget squeeze has forced reductions in the frequency and quality of training for the armed forces. Ground forces' training, in particular, has declined substantially. [redacted] ing, small-unit training at battalion level and below is still adequate, but brigade-size exercises are held

infrequently. Division or higher exercises have not been held in nearly five years. Classroom training in basic military subjects probably remains above standard for the Middle East, but Jordanian soldiers' classroom work is rarely tested in the field. The first realistic military experience the Jordanian soldier is likely to face is in actual combat. The Israelis and, to

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Lackluster Spring Training Exercise

The culmination of Jordan's spring 1988 training cycle—one of the Army's two annual brigade-level exercises—underscored serious weaknesses in Jordanian training and highlighted deficiencies in the military's capabilities. [redacted]

[redacted] *as did the King, the entire Jordanian military leadership, and several foreign guests. The attaches assessed that the exercise was essentially an elaborate demonstration that did not enhance the armed forces' operational abilities.* [redacted]

Poor Jordanian training in general is the cause of many of the military's deficiencies that are discussed in this paper. But this year's exercise gives a detailed view of the many problems and weaknesses of the army, and indicates that these problems are worsening. The poorly executed exercise also reinforces our judgment that the Jordanians could not compete against either Israel or Syria in battle. [redacted]

Elements of two of Jordan's four divisions participated in the training along with signal, air defense, engineer, and other support units, but the exercise focused primarily on weaponry and did not realistically incorporate the support elements as would be required in battle. Moreover, some key parts of the exercise were well rehearsed beforehand, and thus the Army's ability to react to combat situations was not tested. Artillery targets were preregistered, and air support was minimal. [redacted]

even these aircraft overflights were just for show, and explosions from airdropped ordnance were pyrotechnic, much like on a movie set. [redacted]

[redacted] *that during the main feature of the exercise the attacking armored brigade met no resistance from a defending infantry brigade as the tanks seemed to drive straight through the defenders to preassigned assembly areas.* [redacted]

Jordan's difficulty with incorporating helicopters was also highlighted in the exercise. Four Cobra attack helicopters supported the armored brigade's attack, but again apparently for demonstration purposes only. The helicopters flew much higher than would be acceptable in combat, probably so the audience could view them better, and they fired rockets far to the right of the objective, and did not make use of terrain to minimize their exposure to enemy fire. Accordingly, the crews probably derived no meaningful practice in training jointly with armored forces. [redacted]

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The exercise underscored Jordan's nagging problems with integrating its varied equipment inventory. Soviet-origin antiaircraft systems, designed for direct support of maneuver brigades, played no apparent role in the training. [redacted] *The attaches also noted the obvious absence of Jordan's new reconnaissance assets and of joint operations between armor and infantry. Troops dismounted long before reaching their objective so that the high-level visitors could view them.* [redacted]

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Finally, the Jordanians failed to use terrain during the exercise although this tactic will be crucial to warding off attacks. Air defense artillery stopped on hilltops instead of in concealed positions. Tanks and armored personnel carriers apparently conducted advances using no evasive maneuver or natural cover or concealment. [redacted] *hat the air defense equipment would have been destroyed by direct antitank fire in the first stages of combat and that the armored formations and infantry would have taken high casualties under fire.* [redacted]

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a lesser extent, the Syrians train far more extensively, preparing their forces for war by exposing them regularly to simulated combat. [redacted]

Air Force training, which has long been immune to budget restrictions, also has been reduced. [redacted] late last year [redacted] training sorties for pilots had been cut from 15 per month to six. [redacted] considers 12 sorties per month as the minimum requirement to retain pilot proficiency. [redacted]

Troubled Supplier Relationships

The US Congressional decision in 1982 to withhold military sales to Jordan until Hussein initiates negotiations with Israel deprived the King of his primary source of military equipment, and Jordan has not found a reliable alternate. Instead, the Jordanian military has turned to a variety of suppliers, mainly France, Britain, and the USSR, for major military purchases. Jordan has experienced difficulties with its new providers, however, and the diverse equipment complicates the overburdened command, communications, and logistic networks. [redacted]

US Role Subsiding

US Embassy reporting makes it clear that Jordan's relationship with the United States is strategically important to the King for the near term. He cannot afford to substantially reduce his contacts without further impairing Jordan's military capability because his Army still incorporates large numbers of US weapons. Over 1,000 armored personnel carriers, of all the Army's artillery, more than 400 tanks, three squadrons of aircraft, electronics gear, and support equipment are US made and require US-origin spare parts and maintenance support. [redacted]

Nevertheless, the US military stake in Jordan has declined as a result of repeated denials by the US Congress of King Hussein's requests for a major arms package. The Iran-Contra arms affair added measurably to Jordan's distrust of the United States and to Hussein's desire to seek other sources of arms and support. [redacted]

The Jordanian Military's Role in Past Unrest

The Jordanian military, in contrast to most other Arab forces, has consistently and staunchly supported its commander in chief. Following its devastating defeat at the hands of the Israelis in 1967 and during its civil war against the Palestinians in 1970, the Jordanian military remained loyal to King Hussein. [redacted]

Coup rumors have spread sporadically in Amman and periodic low-level mutinies have arisen since the early years of Hussein's reign, but the military threatened to topple the King only once—in 1957.

According to published sources, King Hussein decided early that year to dismiss British officers who held major command positions and a high percentage of staff and technical positions, resulting in intense political maneuvering among native officers. The infighting culminated in a coup attempt against the King in April, but the plot failed because the King took prompt action and because he retained the loyal support of the Bedouin troops in the Army. [redacted]

Dissatisfaction with low pay has led to less serious protests by isolated Army units. In each case, however, King Hussein acquiesced to the protesters' demands and dodged a more serious crisis. For example, in 1974 an Army brigade in northern Jordan at Az Zarqa mutinied, demanding pay raises and a higher standard of living for the military. The King quickly increased salaries for all military members, and subsequently raised military pay again four times in the next five years to preempt new disturbances. [redacted]

The King's strategy has worked—no serious threats from, or unrest among, the military have been reported in over a decade. We do not expect the military to reverse its strong, fundamental loyalty to Hussein, and repetitions of incidents such as the Az Zarqa mutiny in 1974 seem unlikely in the near term. [redacted]

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King Hussein's Role in Shaping the Military

Since his accession to the throne in 1953, King Hussein has shown a direct, personal, and enduring interest in managing major aspects of Jordan's military force development. The King has the final word on major weapons purchases, and promotions of officers into the leadership of the Jordanian armed forces are his prerogative. The King's recent decision to purchase both French Mirage 2000s and British Tornados against the wishes and advice of most Jordanian senior officers, including Air Force Chief Shurdom, underscores his position as the driving force behind strategic planning. [redacted]

The King is viewed by the military as more than its commander in chief—he is its provider and patron. Hussein has worked to ensure the military's loyalty by taking care of its needs, often accomplished by purchasing equipment that Jordan cannot afford. The military also views Jordan's ability to obtain Arab financial assistance, overcoming seemingly insurmountable obstacles, as a personal credit to Hussein. [redacted]

It is largely King Hussein's suspicions of Palestinians that have prevented them from becoming more integrated into the military. The King's control of the military's composition that favors native East Bankers and fiercely loyal Bedouin tribesmen has been a central factor in maintaining its loyalty. At the same time, the King has distributed important military posts among the country's ethnic groups. The Chief of Staff of the armed forces, Lt. Gen. Abu Talib, for example, is a Palestinian, to help assuage their grievances. [redacted]

In our view, however, increasing complaints by military personnel about declining military benefits, corruption, and an inability to acquire preferred weaponry jeopardize the King's revered position. Widespread grumbling has not resulted in disloyalty to Hussein, largely because Hussein enjoys strong support within the top leadership. Recent revelations of growing corruption within this high echelon, however, may have a strongly negative impact on the morale of the military, undercut further its favored position in society, and erode its loyalty to the King. [redacted]

After his arms request failed in 1985, King Hussein said he would look elsewhere, according to the US Embassy. Over the past three years he has done just that. He has no illusions that the United States will reverse its position on selling arms to Jordan. [redacted]

In the longer term, we expect the military importance of ties to the United States will continue to decline. The King has taken steps to distance his military from the United States to emphasize his displeasure with Washington. The US Embassy reports that he has reduced the most visible element of the relationship—joint military exercises. As Jordan integrates increasing amounts of Soviet and European arms, the military will require less and less US assistance, making Hussein more willing to pare down the military's contacts with the United States. [redacted]

Unease over US-Jordanian relations is beginning to trickle down to younger and less educated Jordanian [redacted]

ranking officers in Jordan's elite special forces brigade have a more hostile attitude toward the United States than do their superiors—a particularly disturbing development in this unit given its long history of cooperation with the United States. Embassy reporting indicates that Jordanian field units, which feel the impact of shortages more severely than headquarters staffs, are beginning to wonder if Hussein can deliver major arms, but so far they have directed most of their frustration at the United States. [redacted]

Soviet Union Gains

The Soviet Union is capitalizing on the friction in Washington's military relationship with Amman. Jordan has purchased more than \$1.6 billion worth of military equipment from the Soviets since 1981. Soviet equipment is affordable because the Soviets offer generous financing arrangements, and, most important, it is readily available. [redacted]

The Soviets, however, have not seen a significant political return from these sales, as the Jordanians continue to keep the Soviets at arm's length. Soviet support, including training, maintenance, and spare parts supply, is widely criticized in Jordan. The

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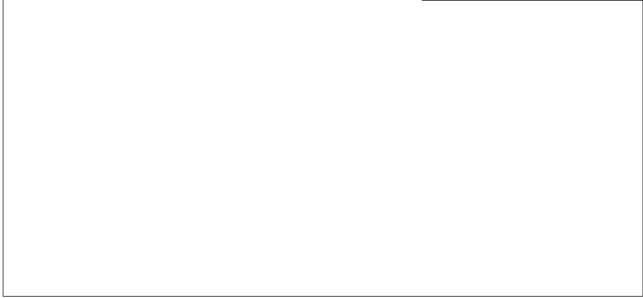
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Jordanians complain that manuals for Soviet gear are written in Russian, in which few Jordanians are trained, and that the Soviets perform all maintenance procedures. [redacted] morale among maintenance troops assigned to the Soviet equipment is particularly poor. Most resent the Soviet presence in their units as well as the superior attitude Soviet officers display toward them. [redacted]



Britain

To avoid overreliance on the Soviets, the Jordanians have increasingly turned to the British for advisory assistance, training, and, more recently, equipment purchases. Jordan has a long history of satisfactory relations with Britain, and the military still operates much British equipment, particularly two armored divisions' worth of upgraded Centurion and Chieftain tanks. [redacted]

The Jordanians are negotiating with the British for equipment upgrades and purchases, most prominently the Tornado fighter bomber. Jordan also may look to the United Kingdom to complete what previously would have been strictly US contracts—such as upgrading its US-built F-5E aircraft with advanced electronics. Britain has guaranteed Jordan more than \$350 million in loans for military procurement, which is more than four times the amount provided by the United States this year. [redacted]

Despite the warming of Jordan's military ties to London, strains persist. The Jordanians blame many of their problems with the Army's Khalid tank on insufficient support from London stemming not from poor maintenance but from a faulty British design of the gearbox. The Jordanians also are frustrated by London's reluctant and slow response to requests for more generous financing terms for purchasing Tornado fighters. High prices for British weaponry also

prevent deeper ties. King Hussein recently turned down a proposal from London to purchase Warrior Infantry Fighting Vehicles in favor of a much less expensive Soviet offer for 100 BMP-2s. [redacted]

France

Jordan's military ties to France expanded considerably with Hussein's preliminary decision early this year to purchase 12 Mirage 2000 fighter aircraft. We believe the decision was made, however, not because Jordan values French technology, training, or support but because Paris apparently offered lenient repayment terms. The purchase, in our view, is unlikely to lead to appreciably greater French influence in Amman. [redacted]

Ironically, closer contact with the French may convince Jordan to seek future major arms deals elsewhere. The Jordanian Air Force has been dissatisfied with French support for previously purchased F-1 fighters, citing exorbitant spare parts prices, lengthy delays in delivering the parts, and overall poor French advisory support. With this past experience in mind, Jordanian pilots reacted negatively to the King's decision to purchase new [redacted]

[redacted] Even those pilots flying French planes prefer British support and believe that the Tornado would be a better aircraft for Jordan. [redacted]

Prospects for Reversing the Downward Trend

The depth of the military's problems, the poor prospects for economic recovery, and the apparent unwillingness of the senior leadership to confront and solve deficiencies suggest that the downward trend in Jordanian military capabilities will continue. Financial assistance from the Gulf states seems unlikely to increase substantially in the near term, and we foresee no other country replacing the United States as a reliable supplier of most military equipment and other assistance for the armed forces. [redacted]

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***The Jordanian Coast Guard—
A Case Study in Ineptitude***

The Jordanian Coast Guard, by far the smallest and lowest priority service in the country, is also the most troubled. The Coast Guard's 500 personnel operate four patrol boats, ostensibly to safeguard the country's 25-kilometer coastline, conduct search and rescue, and patrol Jordan's beaches at Al Aqabah.

[Redacted]

The Guard's previous commander, Col. Atef Ra-sheed, was forcibly retired early this year [Redacted]

[Redacted]

was the principal negotiator in purchasing fast patrol boats from the British. The current commander, Col. Hussein Al-Kawasneh, describes the boats as exceeding the capabilities of the Jordanian Coast Guard [Redacted]

[Redacted]

Shortly after taking over, the new commander assessed his force as manned with underqualified and unqualified officers, poorly trained and ineffective noncommissioned officers, and inexperienced and untrained sailors. He claims that not one officer in the Navy is qualified or capable of operating the Navy's existing patrol boats because they consistently rub,

scrape, or ram the jetty upon entering port. Many of the sailors cannot swim when they arrive in Al Aqabah and achieve only minimal swimming proficiency in basic training, [Redacted] Moreover, many of these deficiencies are unknown to senior leadership, because Colonel Atef during his tenure presented an inaccurate picture of Coast Guard capabilities. [Redacted]

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The Coast Guard's attempts to train combat divers have been a comedy of errors. The first problem that the Jordanians have to overcome is to train special forces personnel to swim. The divers also apparently have an almost total lack of experience with scuba gear. During training last year the divers failed to check the purity of oxygen in their tanks, resulting in a number of them blacking out, [Redacted]

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The Jordanian Coast Guard cannot fulfill its mandated missions. The Jordanians refuse to operate more than 5 kilometers from the Jordanian coast for fear of confronting Israeli naval craft. Coast Guard patrols never venture into the channel just outside Al Aqabah harbor, and they never operate at night, [Redacted]

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think the Israelis will fire on them. The patrol boats' radars are rarely used because of Jordanian concern about Israeli radar-homing missiles. Coast Guard officers view the recent purchase of fast patrol boats as potentially alarming to the Israelis and undoubtedly will be reluctant to operate the new craft near Israeli boats. [Redacted]

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Many of the problems the military faces cannot be reversed only with infusions of money. Continuing management problems, corruption, poor planning, and insufficient technical expertise at all levels of the military severely limit prospects for progress. In our judgment, these problems pose as significant an obstacle to military modernization as funding shortages. [Redacted]

We assess that the arms race between Israel and Syria will gradually enhance their military capabilities and in the process intensify Jordan's regional military weakness. Syria and Israel continue to develop and to purchase increasingly lethal conventional arms and weapons of mass destruction. Jordan cannot hope to compete with them. [Redacted]

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What Needs To Be Done—No Quick Fixes

The Jordanian military faces daunting obstacles in improving its current situation. Foremost, the military requires more money. Pay and benefits for Jordan's armed forces personnel have not kept up with its civilian sector, and, unless this trend is reversed, declining numbers of skilled personnel will seek the military as a career. Nevertheless, while an infusion of money would alleviate many of Jordan's problems, money alone cannot solve the persistent manpower constraints that plague the armed forces. Given the increasing sophistication of military equipment in Jordan's inventory, attracting and retaining high-quality personnel will be crucial to Amman's fielding a credible military force in the future. [redacted]

More money also is needed to procure additional modern weaponry and to maintain Jordan's present inventory. The military budget provides sufficient funds to furnish the military with a minimum level of new weapons but at the cost of letting the existing inventory fall into disrepair. Amman, however, has little hope of obtaining significant new funding. Thus, Jordan's only other option is to redefine current spending priorities—specifically, to concentrate less on purchasing expensive, high-visibility weapon systems and to devote more resources to basic needs such as spare parts, maintenance contracts, and training requirements. [redacted]

Lacking fundamental changes in Amman's spending policies, additional funding, if it became available, almost certainly would be directed at purchasing additional new systems. Thus, maintenance would continue to suffer. For example, instead of purchasing eight Tornados for much less money, the King could have purchased enough spare parts to refurbish and maintain his entire armored fleet. [redacted]

comprehensive three-year program to overhaul Jordan's tanks would cost about \$360 million. The Tornado deal could end up costing the Jordanians twice that. [redacted]

Another alternative—although an unfavorable one—would be to reduce Jordan's standing forces similar to cash-short Syria's deactivation of selected units last year. Amman could then focus more sharply on its limited financial and personnel resources, increasing the readiness and capabilities of the remaining forces. Jordan's leadership could deactivate one of the country's four divisions, distributing the skilled maintenance personnel and operable equipment to the other divisions. In addition, this would allow the remaining active units to train more extensively and return to the Jordanian military its past reputation for fielding a small but effective and well-trained fighting force. [redacted]

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Implications for the United States

The US military relationship with Jordan is secure for the short term because of the abundance of US equipment in Jordan's inventory but will probably decline over the long term. The current generation of Jordanian military leaders is clearly inclined toward purchasing Western, and particularly US, weaponry. Their successors—the current junior officer corps in Jordan—receive less Western training than their elders, have been exposed much less frequently to US

advisers, and are likely to be less inclined in the future to be pro-US. Most important, these younger officers have seen their King's repeated requests for arms denied by Washington, and hostility toward the United States among this crucial interest group is growing perceptibly. [redacted]

The gradual distancing of Jordan's military from the United States will be aggravated by Hussein's arms purchases from Soviet and West European sources.

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As Jordan's inventory is increasingly of non-US origin, the crucial maintenance and spare parts aspect of bilateral military ties will recede and necessitate closer relations with other suppliers. [redacted]

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In the longer term, declining US contacts with Jordan's armed forces will lead to concomitant declines in [redacted]

[redacted] The close military relationship has been the cornerstone of US-Jordanian ties for over a generation and has been largely responsible for close working ties between the [redacted]

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[redacted] The deterioration of this close military relationship will erode Jordan's strong incentive to cooperate both militarily and politically with Washington. [redacted]

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Appendix

Can Jordan Defend Itself?

The growing imbalance of forces between Jordan and its more powerful neighbors strongly suggests that Jordan can no longer rely on its military capabilities to deter potential attacks. Fortunately for Jordan, the rivalry between Israel and Syria is much more intense than those underlying tensions between Amman and either Damascus or Tel Aviv. Competition and enmity between Israel and Syria make highly unlikely a unilateral military move by either against Jordan, short of a full-scale Arab-Israeli war. Syrian memories of Israeli assistance to Amman during the Syrian-supported PLO challenge to Jordan in 1970 almost certainly would deter Damascus from an all-out invasion. [redacted]

Nonetheless, the King cannot rely passively on this combination of conflicting forces among his foes to assure Jordan's continued independence. Jordan's force development and modernization ambitions underscore Hussein's desire to keep pace with the growing threat on the country's borders and to continue to defend Jordanian territory without calling on outside assistance. Jordanian leaders, however, are beginning to revise their longstanding judgment that they could sustain a multifront defense against Israel and Syria for as long as a week. The Jordanian military leadership has concluded that it could defend Jordan from a unilateral Syrian attack for about a week but could counter an Israeli onslaught only briefly, and then only if the Israel Defense Forces was committed to fighting on another front. [redacted]

We judge that even this pessimistic assessment of Jordan's defensive capabilities is unrealistic. Jordan has had no combat experience since its limited involvement in the war in 1973, while Israel and Syria tested each other during the fighting in Lebanon in 1982, have sparred periodically since then in the air and against each others' proxies in Lebanon, prepared constantly for war against each other, and trained their troops accordingly. More important, the long list of deficiencies in Jordan's maintenance, logistic, and command networks that are obvious even during

peacetime makes combat against much larger, better equipped forces a disastrous proposition for Amman. [redacted]

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Outgunned by Israel

Several hours after the opening of hostilities between Israel and Syria, the Syrians probably would call on other Arab states to support their confrontation with Tel Aviv. If the Jordanians were to risk going to Syria's aid, even by moving their limited forces westward toward the Israeli border or by sending significant forces to the Golan Heights to fight alongside Syrian units, the Israelis most likely would react aggressively. [redacted]

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While combating Syrian forces on the Heights, the Israelis could divert enough reserve formations to the Jordanian border to outnumber Jordan's entire Army. Israel could send three of its four southern divisions and one from the West Bank to attack Jordan, leaving one armored division in the south facing Egypt, one on the Lebanese border, and seven to fight the main battle against Syria. Four Israeli armored divisions and associated infantry and support would amount to over 1,200 tanks and nearly 80,000 personnel. [redacted]

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An Israeli armored attack on Jordan or an Israeli move through northern Jordan to outflank Syrian defenses on the Golan Heights would be limited by the rough terrain dividing the two countries. The northern border is bisected by the Jordan River—creating a deep ravine that is unsuitable for armored vehicle movement, bogging down Israeli attacking forces, and giving Jordanian forces the opportunity to dig into defensive positions. [redacted]

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Israel might choose to limit its attack on Jordan to airstrikes that would inflict significant damage on Jordanian forces while minimizing Israeli losses. The Israelis could, in our judgment, destroy most of

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Jordan's 100-plane Air Force on the ground and subsequently strike military targets in Jordan at will. Jordan could not defend against Israeli airpower, would be vulnerable to electronic jamming and intercept, and would be deprived of any means of retaliating. The result, after only a day or two of intense combat, would be the virtual destruction of Jordan's small armed forces. [redacted]

Outnumbered by Syria

Syria, like Israel, could commit a force larger than Jordan's entire Army without significantly weakening its defenses facing Israel. Syria deployed nearly three divisions along the Jordanian border in November 1980 to express opposition to the holding of an Arab summit meeting in Amman and could repeat such a deployment if Jordan proceeded with peace talks without Damascus's approval or participation. Since 1980, Syria has formed two additional divisions, more than doubled the size of its commando forces, strengthened its Air Force, and substantially strengthened key praetorian guard units to defend Damascus. Thus, a sizable deployment to its border with Jordan is possible without substantially jeopardizing its defenses elsewhere. [redacted]

Assuming a drawdown of forces currently in Lebanon and no concurrent tension with Israel, the Syrians could deploy at least two armored and two mechanized divisions and one special forces division to the Jordanian border. This would leave three divisions to man defenses on the Golan Heights, several special forces regiments in Lebanon, and two divisions as a strategic reserve. [redacted]

Jordan's northern border with Syria favors Jordanian defense against an incursion but is not as protective as the terrain in the west facing Israel. The Syrians could quickly occupy the flatlands in the extreme northern belt of Jordan, threatening the major Jordanian cities of Az Zarqa, Irbid, and Al Mafraq. At least two corridors are available between the lava-fields in northern Jordan through which large Syrian formations could advance. Syrian attacks would be impeded by gorges in the western sector, rugged terrain along the central axes, and fierce initial Jordanian counterattacks along the length of the border. Nevertheless, an all-out Syrian attack, accompanied by airstrikes, would inevitably wear down the Jordanian defenders, although at a high cost to the Syrians. We judge that within less than one week the Jordanians could not mount significant resistance to Syrian attackers. [redacted]

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