

**GOVERNMENT OF JORDAN**

**Head of State** King Hussain Ibn Talal

**Cabinet**

- Prime Minister, Defence** Zaid al-Rifai
- Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of State for Prime Ministerial Affairs** Abdel-Wahab al-Majali
- Foreign Affairs** Taher al-Masri
- Finance & Customs** Hanna Odeh
- Municipal, Rural & Environmental Affairs** Yusef Hamdan
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- Justice** Riyadh al-Shaker
- Agriculture** Marwan al-Hamoud
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- Occupied Territories Affairs** Marwan Doudin
- Health** Zaid Hamzeh
- Interior** Rajai Dajani
- Communications** Mohieddin al-Hussaini
- Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs** Sami Joudeh

part of an attempt to break PLO influence in the occupied territories, stressing that the intention was to improve conditions for Palestinian residents. Rising unemployment in Jordan is seen by many observers as one reason for the government's increased interest in the scheme. It is widely felt that a continuing influx of people from the West Bank would soon put an intolerable strain on Amman.

Under the programme, Jordan intends to contribute 20-25 per cent of the \$1,300 million planned to be spent in the West Bank and Gaza over five years. The money would be used for housing, utilities and education projects, and to continue to pay the salaries of civil servants, teachers and municipal workers, which has been Jordan's responsibility since 1967.

The general emphasis of Jordan's own five-year plan — towards more balanced regional development, improved agriculture, and job creation — was well received at the conference. However, several participants, particularly from the Arab states, felt that at 5.1 per cent, the projected average annual growth in GDP was over-ambitious. They also expressed concern about the economy's tendency towards over-consumption, which makes it dangerously reliant on foreign financing.

Revelations in late November of

secret arms shipments from the US to Iran via Israel came as a serious blow to Amman. The US actions severely undercut Jordan's position as both a moderate ally of Washington and a staunch supporter of Iraq.

Since the actions underlined the intimate relationship between the US and Israel, they also put paid to hopes of any meaningful US move on the Arab-Israeli conflict. As a result, King Hussain has, more strongly than ever, been promoting the idea that the best chance for a solution to the conflict lies in an international conference. Israel, however, remains totally opposed to such an idea.

The US' readiness to supply weapons to Iran contrasted with the obstacles it put in the path of Jordan, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Early in 1986, Hussain failed to convince the US Senate of Jordan's suitability as an arms recipient. Despite assurance from Secretary of State George Shultz that the \$1,900 million package was "absolutely necessary," Congress overwhelmingly vetoed the sale in early February.

The meeting in Damascus in December 1985 between Hussain and Syria's President Asad had been seen as opening a new chapter in inter-Arab politics. Hussain's February 1986 break with the PLO — when 25 Fatah offices were closed and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's

second-in-command was expelled — seemed to confirm this judgement, since, despite their divisions, Syria and Jordan share an interest in negating PLO independence as represented by Arafat. In May, Asad

visited Amman, and Hussain acted as mediator in an effort to bring Syria and Iraq closer together, managing to remain on good terms with both parties.

On the economic side, develop-

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