

OPS
cc Master
Subject: Middle East
Arms Sales At 4



cc to [unclear]
fws

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

6 December, 1984

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T207/84

Your Highness.

My Minister for Defence Procurement, Adam Butler, has told me how much he enjoyed his visit to Bahrain last month and has commented in particular on the warm welcome he received in your island. He was very pleased to be able to meet Your Highness and the Crown Prince and Commander-in-Chief, Shaikh Hamad bin Isa.

We were naturally disappointed to hear that Bahrain will be buying the American F5 aircraft rather than Hawk, which you were very keen to buy when I saw Your Highness here last spring on your State Visit. I fully understand how this decision has come about. None the less, I am writing to you to say that in view of our eagerness to help the Bahrain Defence Force in setting up a fixed wing air force, and in the light of all the RAF's advice during the negotiations on Hawk, I hope that should you decide in two or three years to purchase an advanced jet trainer, you will still be prepared to consider Hawk. This aircraft has proved itself to be the best of its kind in the world and, as your Highness knows, it has already been purchased by two air forces in the United Arab Emirates and by Kuwait, not to mention the Americans. We believe that it is the ideal aircraft to be the standard jet trainer for the GCC states.

Adam Butler was able during his visit to confirm to the Crown Prince that two of your pilots will shortly be taking

up RAF training courses in order to qualify as instructors on Hawk. I am very pleased to hear that we shall be maintaining close links with the Bahrain Defence Force.

I much enjoyed meeting you during your State Visit to London. I look forward to seeing you again on your next visit here.

Yours sincerely
Ragab Shaikh

His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Sulman Al Khalifa, G.C.M.G.