

Observation no: 136 (Six-Day War)

Country-year: Jordan - 1966

1. Did the current regime come to power in a military coup?

No.

Jordan gained its formal independence from the mandate of Great Britain in 1946. Abdullah, brother of King Faysal in Iraq, had been in power as emir since the establishment of the Hashemite monarchy by the British in 1921 in the then called Principality of Transjordan and then as king of the Kingdom of Jordan after independence.¹ On July 1951, King Abdullah was assassinated in Jerusalem and his grandson Hussein, became king on August 11, 1952 after his own father, Talal, had abdicated due to mental illness.

2. Has the country ever experienced a military coup?

No.

The Jordanian army, previously known as the Arab Legion, was financed and led by the British until 1956 under the Anglo-Jordanian Treaty that safeguarded Britain's influence in the country. Because of the initial mutual reliance of the army and the government, the Jordanian army became a strong support of the King's regime.² On March 1, 1956, the Arab Legion was renamed the Jordanian Armed Forces and King Hussein became its Commander-in-Chief.

3. Is the country's top leader a former military officer?

No.

King Hussein was the descendent of King Abdullah, first king of the kingdom when the Hashemite monarchy was established in Jordan by Great Britain in 1921.

4. Are ethnic, sectarian, or racial criteria used to exclude segments of the population from the officer corps?

Yes.

Traditionally, the recruitment of the officer corps consisted in the direct promotion of ordinary soldiers from the ranks that were in majority composed of Bedouins

¹ Heller, Mark. *Politics and the Military in Iraq and Jordan, 1920-1958: The British Influence. Armed Forces & Society*, 1977, pp. 88-89.

² Heller, Mark, pp. 89-90 & 92.

from southern tribes for which the prestige of serving in the army was very high. This was to the detriment of allegedly more politicized, and therefore potential opponents to the regime, urban and Palestinian Arabs. The result of this method of recruitment was the high concentration of Bedouin officers in operational ground units and in elite forces such as the Royal guard.³

5. Are there strict ideological requirements for entry into the senior officer corps?

No.

I cannot find evidence of this in the major histories already cited.

6. Is party membership required for entry into the senior officer corps?

No.

I cannot find evidence of this in the major histories already cited.

7. Does military training involve extensive political education or ideological indoctrination?

No.

I cannot find evidence of this in the major histories already cited.

8. Has the military been used to repress internal dissent in the last five years?

No.

I cannot find evidence of this in the major histories already cited.

9. Has the military been used to govern the country in the last five years?

No.

See answers to questions 1 & 2.

10. Is there a paramilitary organization separate from the regular military, used to provide regime or leader security?

Yes.

³ Heller, Mark, pp. 92-93.

The Royal Guard, stationed in Amman, ensured the regime and leader security.

11. Is there an internal intelligence apparatus dedicated to watching the regular military?

No.

I cannot find evidence of this in the major histories already cited.

12. Has a purge of the officer corps occurred in the last five years?

No.

I cannot find evidence of this in the major histories already cited.

13. Is there an institutionalized forum through which civilian leaders and military officers regularly exchange information?

No.

I cannot find evidence of this in the major histories already cited.