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“FILE ON 4”

Transmission: Tuesday 10th May 2016

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Reporter: Jane Deith

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ACTUALITY WITH LETTER, MUSIC UNDER

DEITH: It started with a brown envelope marked ‘confidential’ and ended with the leak of thousands of internal documents from an energy services company in Monaco. What’s in the files has led to allegations that Unaoil hasn’t just been working with multinational oil and gas companies, but paying people in positions of power to clinch contracts. Tonight we’re going to follow the oil spill as it spreads from Monaco to the Middle East to Britain – and industry giants like Rolls Royce. What you’re about to hear is a real life story of alleged bagmen and backhanders – and a man from Hull called Basil.

SIGNATURE TUNE

ACTUALITY IN MONACO

DEITH: I’ve come to the source of the oil leak, Monaco. This is where the super-rich fly in by private helicopter to enjoy their penthouses and gin palaces. It’s a playground for the privileged.

DEZZANI: There's the cliché that's rolled out from Somerset Maughan – a sunny place for shady people. I'm Mark Dezzani and I've been resident in the region for 33 years as a local broadcaster and journalist. We're alongside what's called the Quai Kennedy. It's the east side of the port here in Monaco, and we're just walking towards the brand new yacht club.

DEITH: We're just passing a café with sort of sofas for people to lounge with a glass of wine in the sun. Is that very much a Monaco pastime?

DEZZANI: Yes, it's late morning, it's almost time for the first glass of rosé, the great expat drink of choice being rosé. A lot of wealthy people have a lot of time on their hands – not wanting to be sexist about it, but a lot of spouses. Forming clubs and associations here in Monaco is a great pastime.

DEITH: And how many notes would you need in your wallet for a decent night out in Monaco?

DEZZANI: If you have to ask, you can't afford. If I'm hosting and entertaining, up to 10 grand can be easily spent, especially on a Grand Prix weekend. That would be actually quite modest.

ACTUALITY – BANGING

DEITH: The stands for the Grand Prix are going up. But another high stakes drama has rocked Monaco. The UK's Serious Fraud Office has been in town, raiding this rather unglamorous office building - the headquarters of Unaoil - and the homes of its directors. Unaoil is owned by a British family, the Ahsanis. The SFO is acting on the leak of thousands of internal Unaoil emails and documents that would appear to suggest the company was involved in international corruption. Ata Ahsani left Iran and established Unaoil in London before moving the business here to Monaco. His sons now run operations. Cyrus Ahsani is the CEO and Saman Ahsani is the Chief Operating Officer.

DEZZANI: The sons of the Ahsanis seem to be party animals and enjoy a good time as well. Generally the family weren't that well known outside of the Monaco social set, except that, as with a lot of families here in Monaco, when you operate a business and you're seriously wealthy, you usually have a charitable association as well, so they've got the Unakids charitable association, which does ostensibly a lot of good work for single parent families in war-torn regions, I believe. People like Sir Roger Moore, who is resident here, and Stelios and Richard Branson and other big names have lent their names. The son, Cyrus, was involved with the Monaco Ambassadors Club. The Monaco Ambassadors Club was set up to promote the image of Monaco abroad, so while these allegations are being investigated and they are in the spotlight, obviously he's had to remove himself from the Monaco Ambassadors Club.

DEITH: What's the general feeling now amongst residents of Monaco?

DEZZANI: It's funny, when you talk to people locally, the Panama Papers seems to be a bigger issue. They don't like to talk about their neighbours that much here in Monaco. I think privately most people are probably feeling sorry for them, because when you talk about corruption and the oil industry, people aren't terribly surprised, to be honest.

ACTUALITY

WOMAN: Bonjour monsieur. Bonjour.

MAN: Bonjour madame.

WOMAN: Je suis Jeanne.

MAN: Bonjour ...

DEITH: It's not the kind of publicity Monaco would choose. It's trying to shake off its reputation as a shady place, and now allegations of dodgy dealing.

ACTUALITY ON TERRACE

DEITH: So this has got to be the best view in Monaco, surely?

TELLE: Certainly. It looks like a little Hong Kong

DEITH: On his terrace overlooking the principality, Monaco's First Minister, Serge Telle, looks at me earnestly through small round glasses and tells me the country has nothing to hide.

TELLE: There is a judiciary cooperation between Monaco and the rest of the world, and especially European countries, so we did execute what was asked to do from the Serious Fraud Office. We accompany your people, the Serious Fraud Office people to where the company was located and they executed the judiciary commission. The prince is absolutely determined to make Monaco a totally... clean is probably not the right word, but a transparent banking system. So the vision for the Prince and the Government is to be sure that Monaco gets rid of these type of things. But for the time being, we don't know exactly what happened, so we have to wait until something happens on the legal side.

DEITH: I hadn't heard of Unaoil until a few weeks ago. They're not a household name. So what do they do? Unaoil say they're in the business of providing 'industrial solutions' for their clients - construction, engineering and operations and technical advice. Shwan Zulal, managing director of Carduchi Consulting, which works in the oil and gas industry, told me a bit more about Unaoil.

ZULAL: They always had a good reputation to be able to secure contracts. They kept a very low profile. I've never seen any marketing or any advertising for their consultancy, but obviously word of mouth is the best way to promote your business and your results. Any oil company or any service provider who wants to do business in the oil industry, they need somebody who knows the country, somebody who knows the ropes, because if you are a British company who have never been to Iraq, you really can't just jump in, you really need to get the right people who actually know what they're doing on the ground, they know people. For example you won't understand the regulation, the laws. You need to have a proper business plan to what you do, so this is very legitimate.

MUSIC

DEITH: But someone has decided the world should take a closer look at what Unaoil does. A very close look.

MCKENZIE: The letter was quite intriguing, that there was a big international bribery business scandal which I could follow up if I was to place an ad in the French right-wing newspaper, Le Figaro.

DEITH: The envelope marked 'Confidential' had landed on the desk of Nick McKenzie, an investigative journalist on The Age newspaper in Australia.

MCKENZIE: The advertisement was to be for a house in Sydney, Australia, and in that advertisement, we needed to place a code word. The code word was 'Montecristo' and our reader, upon reading that ad, would know that it was me who was placing the ad and that was the key signal which would instruct him to, I guess, begin contacting me.

FRENCH WOMAN'S VOICE: Australie, Sidney, Montecristo. Propriété de luxe, sur terrain de 1.000 m2, maison 850 m2, 8 chambres.

MCKENZIE: And some time later, a mobile number, which I later found out was a fake number in a German sim card, contacted my mobile phone with a series of instructions, and many weeks after that I eventually persuaded this mysterious he or she on the other end of the line to meet me in Europe. Our rendezvous point was meant to be outside the Louvre Museum in Paris. My mystery source didn't show up so I basically used that non show as a leverage or pressure point to convince this person to meet me somewhere else in Europe, and I met this person a few days later in a different European city.

DEITH: They gave Nick two hard drives containing hundreds of thousands of confidential Unaoil emails, memos, letters, contracts and invoices. But why did they want Nick to have them? What did they want the world to know?

MCKENZIE: The source was of the view that very large western companies were basically using this very powerful middleman, Unaoil, to win contracts and that this bribery to win contracts for these large western multinationals had been going on not for one year, not for two years, but for well over a decade, really though acting with impunity.

DEITH: What was the scale of this?

MCKENZIE: Unaoil was acting for dozens of companies. We're talking about companies such as Rolls Royce, Petrofac - some of the biggest companies in the world across a whole range of territories from Iraq to Iran to Libya to Nigeria. We're talking about really an unprecedented scandal in terms of the number of companies and number of countries involved.

ACTUALITY OUTDOORS

DEITH: We know companies were working with Unaoil on some big contracts, but did those companies know that Unaoil might have been paying people it shouldn't? Well I'll be able to tell you more about that as we go through some of the leaked documents in the course of this programme. Because File on 4 has seen a large number of the Unaoil files. We've been looking through them to find out what they were doing for British companies. One man was key to bringing in a lot of business. He's sometimes affectionately called The Captain – not because he's part of Monaco's yachting scene.

ACTUALITY IN HULL

The Captain – real name Basil Al Jarah – now hails from Hull. Apparently he once worked on an oil container. These days he lives in a big house just outside the city – although he's probably hardly ever been at home, because he's been all around the world working for Unaoil.

ACTUALITY WITH PHOTO

DEITH: I'm looking at a photo of him that Nick McKenzie got hold of. He's nicely groomed with a black moustache and a sincere looking smile – he looks like an approachable man. Except there is no way of approaching him - on LinkedIn or on Facebook, and you won't find an email address for him.

MCKENZIE: If you google the name Basil Al Jarah, you find nothing, which is unusual in this modern digital world. This man, Basil Al Jarah, is a man of mystery on the internet, but the massive email leak exposed to us his operations, and effectively he was Unaoil's man on the ground in Iraq. He's a very well-spoken, articulate and often forceful person and quite a colourful personality, and we can see this through his emails. And he was the man who was driving the big deals for Unaoil's large western multinational plants in Iraq. He knew how to influence people, he knew how to bring home a deal and he was prepared to use any means available to him, and he really really was quite expansive in his memos, really talked about in great detail how he would execute a deal.

MUSIC

ACTUALITY WITH EMAILS

DEITH: Now seems like a good time to start looking through the Unaoil files. In 2009, Basil Al Jarah asks his boss, Cyrus Ahsani for permission to pay someone, who appears to be an oil official in Iraq, a retainer, backdated from the previous month. And Cyrus gets back to him on his Blackberry:

AHSANI [VOICED]: Baz, what have we agreed on this – ie what's the retainer? Cy.

SOUND EFFECTS, TYPING & EMAIL PING

AL JARAH [VOICED]: \$6,000 per month. \$5,000 for him and \$1,000 he needs for presents to people within. I think this will only go on as far as we get commitments firmed up and he knows his portion. Similarly if he leaves this position, it stops.

DEITH: A year later, Basil al Jarah gives his boss an update on their man in Iraq.

AL JARAH [VOICED]: He is getting rich. He wants me to accompany him this morning to see a flat in Chelsea to buy.

DEITH: Unaoil emails are often written in what sounds like code. Here's an email in which a Unaoil manager tells Basil Al Jarah and the Ahsanis 'the best medicine for a calm life is a dose of George Washington. Why not?' Is this a reference to US dollar bills? Well, it sparks an email back from Saman Ahsani:

SAMAN [VOICED]: The way you write your emails may give rise to questions. Please. We have all accepted our code of conduct and should not give the impression in any correspondence that we are acting otherwise.

ACTUALITY OUTSIDE PETROFAC

DEITH: Going through the Unaoil files, it's clear it's The Captain, Basil Al Jarah's job to look after some of their most important clients. I'm at the office of oil services company, Petrofac, in Westminster. It's owned by British businessman, Ayman Asfari. It's a rapidly growing company – particularly in Iraq. In 2010, Basil Al Jarah is working for Petrofac as it bids for a contract on Iraq's Garraf oilfield, worth hundreds of millions of pounds. We can see from his emails he is using a middleman in Jordan, who has access to the right people in Iraq. Basil Al Jarah tells him there's \$1million in it for them if 'his people' swing it for Petrofac and another company with the state oil company committee.

AL JARAH [VOICED]: I think you perhaps didn't understand me clearly. We need to remove [beep] from the list and clear the way and support for Petrofac to win this order. We are now agreed the figure 1 for this service. But Petrofac must win, so we have to follow it through and you get paid when we get paid.

DEITH: He doesn't say \$1 million – he says the figure 1. But the clue's in another email in which Basil Al Jarah is less careful – telling the middleman the figure might end up being 'nought point five million dollars' instead of 'one million dollars'. Firms who work with western companies in the Middle East sometimes act as agents and sometimes are contractors themselves. Both are legitimate lines of business if they're transparent. But Dr Ali Allawi, Iraq's Finance Minister between 2005 and 2006, says in the past, companies have gone down the contracting route to hide payments to individuals.

ALLAWI: They bury the corrupt fees that they pay to these corrupt officials, so it's a kind of write up to the subcontract that is then buried in the purchases and procurements and providing of services, rather than a kind of a one-off payment that would be very glaring. And they do, in fact, provide some kind of low level subcontracting service, basically to act as a cover for a much more elaborate scheme.

DEITH: So an example of contracting that might be used as a cover is what?

ALLAWI: So if you have, say, a subcontract for \$100 million project that involves, let's say, \$30 million worth of civil engineering, then the subcontractor may charge you \$30 million for the subcontract, which actually costs \$20 million, and the balance goes to the corrupt officials. Now whether the oil companies knew or didn't want to know where the balance was going was another matter.

DEITH: Well, quite. If Unaoil was up to anything like this, did Petrofac know? [MUSIC] Unfortunately for one of its former executives, there are emails suggesting he did. There are suspicions that Petrofac's former Vice President, Peter Warner, was involved in unusual payments. In 2006, Mr Warner wrote to Cyrus and Saman Ahsani, instructing Unaoil to pay \$2 million to a company called Comex Industries LLP.

WARNER [VOICED]: Total amount is likely to be \$2 million and not \$2.4 million, but I have yet to get that sorted out. Comex has been used before some time ago so is tested.

ACTUALITY IN EARLS COURT

DEITH: I've come to the company address he gave them, in Earls Court in West London. It's the red brick, Victorian Wetherby Mansions. But there was no business here. It was a front – just one of a chain of fake companies created by organised criminal networks for those who wanted to disguise who they were sending money to, and why.

ACTUALITY WITH INVOICE

DEITH: Why is Peter Warner of Petrofac asking Unaoil to pay millions of dollars to a shell company? And why would he be writing invoices for this fake company? I've got the invoices here and there is no mention of Petrofac anywhere. They set out that a Unaoil subsidiary called Unacomm will pay Comex Industries LLP using its offshore account in the Marshall Islands. Another document reveals the money will then be transferred to four bank accounts in Lithuania, Switzerland, Germany and Austria. Peter Van Veen is from the charity Transparency International, which fights overseas corruption.

VAN VEEN: Clearly they're going to great lengths to hide and obfuscate who is actually behind and where it's going, and if a casual observer or a casual investigator only had hold of one or two emails it would be almost impossible to determine the source or the target of the funding. I think if we talk about another case that's in the news, the Panama Papers, it just shows you actually how common some of these contracts seem to be. The fact that someone has a company in London that might be a shell company, there might be a genuine reason for that, but if it's impossible for the authorities or the banks to figure out who is actually benefitting, where the money is actually going, then we pose serious questions and that should be a red flag to everyone.

ACTUALITY WITH EMAILS

DEITH: I'm looking at some emails Peter Warner wrote in 2008. Here, he writes to Saman Ahsani about:

WARNER [VOICED]: Some confidential payments I need to make, probably in the range of two metres. I will set up some paperwork for this when I get back to the office and send to you for review.

DEITH: The payments are in connection with a deal in Kuwait. Peter Warner later emails the paperwork – four invoices from a construction company, which he says ‘cover two metres’. The invoices add up to \$2 million. Again, nowhere is Petrofac mentioned in the invoices he sends over.

If what Peter Warner was doing was legal, why was he talking in code about metres and why was he talking about confidential payments? Mr Warner retired from Petrofac two years ago, and joined the board of Unaoil. We tried to contact him through Unaoil and by email and have heard nothing. Petrofac wouldn’t talk to us either, but sent us this statement:

READER IN STUDIO: We take any allegations of activities that may contravene our strict anti-bribery and corruption standards very seriously. We aspire to the highest standards of ethical behaviour and we are determined to investigate these allegations to the fullest extent possible.

MUSIC

DEITH: There is another, bigger British name in danger of being tarred by the allegations of corruption clinging to Unaoil. Rolls Royce have worked with the men from Monaco in Africa, Central Asia and Iraq.

EXTRACT FROM VIDEO FROM IRAQ WAR

GEORGE BUSH: The tyrant will soon be gone, the day of your liberation is near. It is too late for Saddam Hussein to remain in power. We will tear down the apparatus of terror and we will help you to build a new Iraq that is prosperous and free.

DEITH: After the fall of Saddam, the western companies he expelled came back for the black gold. As well as contracts to extract oil, there was money to be made in oilfield services. Unaoil won a multimillion dollar contract to supply three Rolls Royce Avon gas generators to Iraq’s South Oil Company. It looks like originally it was

DEITH cont: going to be a Rolls Royce contract, with Unaoil as the agent. But the Monaco firm became the provider, a Unaoil manager saying Rolls Royce preferred it that way, given 'Iraq risks and payment issues'. The leaked Unaoil files suggest their Iraq manager, Basil Al Jarah, invested years in befriending and treating a senior South Oil Company Official called Kifah Numan - 'softening him up' in Basil Al Jarah's words. He took him on a shopping spree in London.

ACTUALITY SHOPPING

DEITH: He bought him perfume, CDs, a leather jacket, and told his bosses –

AL JARAH: Spending \$2,684 on a key decision maker and remain in his good books to process things is worth 100 times that value, without which we would have no contract in our hands now.

DEITH: Keeping in Mr Numan's good books, and keeping him out of the reach of other bidders, seemed to pay off. In a note of a meeting with him, Basil Al Jarah writes that the oil official's reassured him Unaoil can charge the Iraqi Government top dollar for the generators.

AL JARAH [VOICED]: He advised that cost will be no object. I expect we should make a minimum of \$2 million per unit net.

DEITH: If Kifah Numan unfairly helped Unaoil win the contract, it made them and Rolls Royce millions of dollars. We contacted Kifah Numan to ask him about his role in the contract. Again we've had no response.

MUSIC

DEITH: Basil Al Jarah, Unaoil's Iraq manager, was all over this generator contract. He had worked hard and was getting on well with members of Rolls Royce's sales team. For Rolls Royce, the most devastating email in the Unaoil files talks

DEITH cont: about what sounds like a bribe – and not for a corrupt official in Iraq, but for a manager inside Rolls Royce itself.

ACTUALITY WITH COMPUTER

DEITH: Basil Al Jarah writes the manager is:

AL JARAH [VOICED]: Feeding Unaoil useful internal info on how to respond to Rolls Royce. The effort and help he is providing is on the understanding that the undersigned will retain him as a side consultant or technical adviser (very quietly please) to help in handling Rolls Royce on commercial and South Oil Company on technical issues. A figure of 5,000 Dirhams per month .

DEITH: 5,000 Dirhams a month would be about £1,000. It looks like the manager was passing Unaoil sensitive commercial information to help it secure more business with Rolls Royce. After the generator contract was signed, he was in line for a retainer. Unaoil gets the contract, Rolls Royce sells its generators, the manager maybe gets a nice little earner – everyone’s a winner. Basil Al Jarah signs off his email:

AL JARAH [VOICED]: Please treat our understanding with confidence.

DEITH: If the manager was offered a bribe, then at least one person inside Rolls Royce knew there was a risk Unaoil was corrupt. Rolls Royce is now under investigation by the Serious Fraud Office. The company says because it’s talking to the SFO, it can’t talk to us. It could only say this:

READER IN STUDIO: We have made it clear that Rolls Royce will not tolerate business misconduct of any kind, and in recent years we have intensified our focus on ethics and compliance. We have a global Code of Conduct that applies to all employees of Rolls Royce, our subsidiaries and controlled joint ventures, wherever they are located.

DEITH: Basil Al Jarah was apparently playing a high risk game. But it seems he raised the stakes. He was after friends in higher places – inside the Oil Ministry. Even inside the Iraqi Government. In emails, he gives people codenames - Lighthouse, Ivan, and M. And the most powerful of all - the Teacher. In 2011, Basil Al Jarah emails Ata Ahsani and his sons about a half a billion dollar oil pipeline contract that an Australian client he calls L is bidding for. A contract which could also mean \$75 million worth of work for Unaoil, providing engineering and construction and technical specialists. Basil Al Jarah tells his boss the Teacher and M can make it happen.

AL JARAH [VOICED]: Teacher is confident that he can knock out PL. Teacher and M will insist on delivery date to push L through. Please make sure that our holiday period is firm. Pedalling like mad to please Teacher and getting nowhere. Not easy I know, but without these guys' help, chances for L will be slim.

DEITH: What is he going on about – a holiday period? Let's decode this email. The Ahsanis and Basil Al Jarah discuss holidays a lot. By comparing some of those emails with other documents in the leaked files, it appears one day's holiday equals \$1 million. So could one day's holiday mean \$1 million bribe? But going back to the Teacher and M and the pipeline, Basil Al Jarah tells Unaoil he needs something for them in writing.

AL JARAH [VOICED]: Cy, please see final version, which is similar to the one we found hard to swallow last time, but changed to monthly payment. I'd like to have it in front of the Teacher here in Amman tomorrow evening. Talk tonight. Thanks for your prompt action. Basil.

DEITH: I'm looking at the contract sent to the middleman for the Teacher and M. It's for \$16 million. But things seem to go a bit awry, because a few months later Basil al Jarah is writing back to the middleman, sounding worried.

AL JARAH [VOICED]: I don't know what size jobs you are doing, but the net holiday is the biggest we have considered. Can you blame us if we ask what steps are being taken?

DEITH: But who is the Teacher that Basil Al Jarah is prepared to pull out all the stops for? Nick McKenzie, the journalist who was first leaked the Unaoil files, says after painstakingly cross-referencing emails and talking to sources in Iraq, he's sure the Teacher is none other than Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister at the time, Dr Hussain al-Shahristani – a former Oil Minister and former teacher.

MCKENZIE: The emails analysed, I guess in totality, make it very clear that one of the men Unaoil wished to corrupt in Iraq was Dr Hussain al-Shahristani. They were prepared to pay these huge amounts of money through a middleman in order to get Dr Hussain al-Shahristani to act in such a way that would benefit Unaoil's multinational clients. The emails make it very very clear that Unaoil thought it was buying the services of Dr Hussain al-Shahristani while he was Oil Minister and then Deputy Prime Minister. Now what we don't know is what's happening with that money once it hits the middleman. Where's that money going? What we can say for sure is the emails make it clear that Unaoil believed it was paying these huge amounts of money via a middleman to influence Dr Hussain al-Shahristani in a way that was not in accordance with the way he should have been acting as a very senior minister in Iraq.

DEITH: And when you say huge amounts of money, can you put a rough figure on it?

MCKENZIE: We can see from the emails that Unaoil was prepared to pay in one instance \$16 million, in another instance, \$500,000, on another occasion \$1 million dollars. If you add them all up, we're talking about well over \$25 million. The emails make that very very clear, that Unaoil felt like it was paying this money to effect an outcome and that it was Dr Hussain al-Shahristani who was behind that outcome.

DEITH: Dr Hussain al-Shahristani went on to become Education Minister, until he recently resigned in a government reshuffle. I spoke to him from Baghdad and started with the obvious question. Are you the Teacher?

AL-SHAHRISTANI: My name was mentioned where they claimed among themselves that they are in contact with these people. I have never heard of these individuals, I've never met them, I've never contacted them directly or indirectly through emails or by phone or by any other means. And I called on the Iraqi authorities, the Integrity Commission in Iraq, the Inspector General, and I also called on the responsible authorities in the western countries to investigate these individuals and find out if these emails are genuine. If they are, the money has been exchanged between these two individuals and where did that money go? And I offered to be the first person available to answer any questions at any investigation committee or court in any place in the world.

DEITH: Are you saying that you are the Teacher but that the claim that you were somehow in the middleman's pocket is false and that is a boast, or are you saying that you are not the Teacher?

AL-SHAHRISTANI: I am saying I have never heard of these people, I have never known them. I just haven't had any knowledge of their dealings, so I cannot really say who they refer to when they refer by different names.

DEITH: You are a former Oil Minister. You would have been a major target for those who wanted to corrupt contracts. Has anyone ever approached you with a bribe?

AL-SHAHRISTANI: Not at all. Not throughout my public service as Oil Minister or Deputy Prime Minister for Energy or as the Minister of Higher Education. There has never been a single case of contact, a person even suggesting, never mind offering any bribes on any contract that I've been aware of.

MUSIC

ACTUALITY IN MONACO

DEITH: As well as the visit from the Serious Fraud Office here in Monaco, Unaoil and its operations are being investigated by the UK's National Crime Agency, in America by the FBI and the Department of Justice, and by the Australian Federal

DEITH cont: Police. We asked Unaoil to talk to us. It refused. We asked whether it had ever secured contracts by means of bribes to officials, politicians, to Dr Hussain al-Shahristani. It denied it. It also denied that Basil Al Jarah had paid a Rolls Royce manager for inside information. This is what Unaoil is saying about the corruption allegations:

READER IN STUDIO: Over the last weeks, a number of unfounded allegations have been made against Unaoil and its management, causing serious harm to our business, our employees and our reputation. We take these extremely seriously and we will defend ourselves vigorously. Over the last three decades, Unaoil has worked with its clients to deliver projects relating to oil and gas infrastructure in some of the poorest countries in the world. We take great pride in our track record of achievement, which has been widely recognised by clients and competitors alike.

MUSIC

DEITH: If there is a smoking gun, surely fraud investigators will find it, in the hundreds of thousands of memos, emails, invoices and contracts contained in the leaked Unaoil files. The Ahsani family have been ambassadors for Monaco, members of the elite. But the First Minister, Serge Telle, told me if a court ever finds truth in the corruption claims, Unaoil will be banished.

TELLE: The Prince has explained that corruption in the world is a plague, because it deprives people from having access to money and it deprives people from development is concerned by corruption, so it's a permanent plague, not only in Monaco. I mean, we are taking more and more measures and we are going very precisely into what we can do, because we want to take our part with our means to this big fight against corruption.

DEITH: But what of our central character? Unaoil's fixer – the man clocking up the air miles and firing off so many of the leaked emails - Basil 'The Captain' Al Jarah? We wrote to him at his Unaoil email address, but it bounced back with a message saying he's no longer with the company. Unaoil told us Mr Al Jarah sold his stake in its Iraq business last year. So we tried to reach him on the phone.

ACTUALITY OF PHONE MESSAGE

DEITH: Hello, this is a message for Mr Al Jarah. My name is Jane Deith. We're ringing to speak to you

He didn't ring us back. The Captain is keeping his counsel. Now that the Serious Fraud Office is investigating Unaoil, is he in the frame? Are the Ahsanis? Could we see a major prosecution under the UK's updated bribery laws? The Bribery Act 2010 brought in two new offences - bribing a foreign official and failing to prevent bribery. But the Act isn't retrospective, so the challenge for the Serious Fraud Office is, is there enough evidence in the later Unaoil files to build a case? Peter Van Veen, from Transparency International, says companies will always argue they did all the due diligence possible.

VAN VEEN: If you've done business for any length of time in the high risk countries where Unaoil is operating, if you're not asking the right questions, if you're not asking how are you transacting that, then you're still going to be culpable as a company. You know, you have to have adequate procedures in place to prevent bribery from happening on your behalf. So the question for investigators and prosecutors will be a) were those efforts real and genuine or was it a box ticking exercise? That is going to be the difficult one.

DEITH: Do you feel that this is now a moment of real change? We've had the Panama Papers, so this whole idea of hidden wealth, money laundering, graft and greed is really getting up people's noses and this may be the moment that we look back on and say, that was the time when things started to change.

VAN VEEN: Well, absolutely. I think there is a number of things happening. One is that the population at large are much better educated, much better informed on what this all means. It's not just some hypothetical faraway event, they can see this affects their daily lives.

ACTUALITY OF IRAQ PARLIAMENT PROTEST

DEITH: There have been mass street protests in Iraq and last weekend demonstrators broke into the Parliament. They want to remove what they see as a deeply corrupt Government. Oil and gas analyst, Shwan Zulal, says everyone in Iraq knows graft is theft, and for decades people have been robbed.

ZULAL: When oil was around \$100, Iraq used to bring in about 120, let's say \$120 billion a year. This is a huge amount of money. Iraq's population is not that large; it's money for pretty much nothing, it's just coming out of the ground, so put that money into context and then look at the state of Iraq. Electricity can go down to three hours in some places a day. In a country as rich as Iraq you wouldn't expect to have such a high level of poverty. I mean, if you go to Basra, the richest probably 80% of Iraq's oil reserves is down there and you just get shocked walking down the street. It's such a dilapidated, dirty, raw sewage in some streets, and you would think why? Money could be a problem, but Iraq doesn't have a money problem. Iraq has a corruption problem.

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DEITH: For those who come under the reach of the UK Bribery Act, the maximum sentence is ten years in prison. How often are fraud investigators given a mountain of internal documents on a plate? The Serious Fraud Office will be poring over the story of Unaoil and its friends, of 'The Captain' - Basil Al Jarah, the Ahsanis, Peter Warner and the rest. This isn't the end of the drama. It is to be continued.

SIGNATURE TUNE