

The Shah is ready for a fight

Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger has sounded the battlecry for a U.S.-Soviet showdown over strife-torn Iran.

In a Dec. 11 interview with *Newsweek* magazine's Arnaud de Borchgrave, Kissinger declared that the "West is experiencing a geopolitical decline" in the area from Afghanistan to Angola. "We must stop the USSR" decreed Kissinger, "by defending the Shah and our strategic position."

But the proindustrial government of Iranian ruler Shah Reza Pahlevi has denounced the British Broadcasting Corporation, hardly a tool of Soviet propaganda, as the major instigator of violence against the regime, and European intelligence sources have identified Ayatollah Khomeini, the extreme opposition leader currently wearing out his

welcome in Paris, as a tool of the Israeli Mossad. Kissinger's line that the Shah's government which he pretends to support is "threatened by the USSR" covers up those who actually are threatening the Shah and his policies — the old feudal families of Iran and their British and Israeli underwriters.

Domestically, the Shah's government stiffened its position last week when the new Premier General Gholam Reza Azhari, issued a strong warning to powerful exiled Ayatollah Ruhallah Khomeini. It was the first time the Iranian government has ever attacked a prominent Islamic Shi'ite leader. Azhari denounced the reactionary opposition as not Muslim at all but "atheists" and "saboteurs."

The general made clear that the military would take a hard line on attempts to transform the upcoming religious celebrations of Dec. 11 into mass anti-Shah actions. Dec. 11 is the high point of the religious season known as Moharram, and Shi'ite provocateur elements are pushing for a showdown. It is widely anticipated that the outcome of mass demonstrations on that date will determine the future of the Pahlavi dynasty.

Azhari also laid to rest any hope that the Shah would abdicate the throne to his 18-year old son, a proposal floated both by the British Broadcasting Corporation and the *London Times*. Only the day before the Iranian Information Ministry also issued a declaration denying that the Shah would abdicate. The general made it clear that the Iranian military holds a strong allegiance to the Shah and would take orders from no one else.

The totality of the Premier's statements indicate that the Shah, while willing to negotiate a coalition government with more moderate members of the opposition, is in no mood to appease the demands of Khomeini and Co. What Azhari does not state outright but what high-level French sources have indicated is that Khomeini is a dupe of Israel foreign intelligence, Mossad, and British secret intelligence services which are waging a full campaign to oust the Shah and preserve long standing interests in Iran attached to the influential royalist families.

The BBC's dirty work

The last two weeks have seen four blistering interchanges between Tehran and London over the continued provocative Persian language broadcasting from the BBC. Last month Azhari's government temporarily jammed BBC broadcasts. But when broadcasts were resumed the BBC began broadcasting sermons from Khomeini — a move which prompted the Tehran government to again complain

Iranian leader: 'Reveal Britain's plundering designs'

The lower house of Iran's parliament, the Majlis, held a debate on Nov. 30 on the provocative Persian-language broadcast coming from the British Broadcasting Corporation. Gholam Hoseyn Daneshi, a deputy from the oil-rich Abadan region, made the following remarks regarding the BBC and the British government:

"A glance at the events and developments throughout the world over the past year demonstrate a diabolical plan aimed at the disintegration of Iran. It should not surprise you if you hear Radio Aden has established a Persian section and makes Iran a target of dastardly attacks for half an hour each evening. You should not be surprised if you see that the BBC prepares programs and during its three Persian programs thinks of nothing but to make provocations, create disturbances and chaos. This old fox, no longer able to secure good for itself, is looking for a prey in this chaotic situation, when Iran is the target of devastating attacks. . . .

"My question for the government is: why does it not clarify political facts and why does it not inform the people about the political developments in the world which have been launched against Iran? Why does not the government unveil Britain's designs as it is still tasting the flavor of its plunderings?"

to London's Foreign Office. According to the *Washington Post*, the Iranian government considers the BBC "public enemy number one," and the military government has reportedly resumed jamming of the BBC.

Among the declarations which Khomeini has made are a call for the Iranian people to die in battles with the military in order to succeed in the overthrow of the Shah. The Paris daily *Le Figaro* reports that Khomeini's followers are planning a massive demonstration in which the protesters will wrap themselves in white shrouds — traditionally used within the Moslem faith for burial of the dead. The demonstrators plan to defy the troops and be shot down, says *Le Figaro*, in a tactic calculated to put maximum pressure on the military to break with the Shah and join the dissidents. At the same time that Khomeini told the London *Financial Times* that Iranians must be prepared to die, a band of well-armed terrorists known as the "suicide squad" was uncovered in Meshed in eastern Iran.

According to European press sources, the first few days of Moharram, which began Dec. 2, did not produce the anti-government violence that Khomeini had hoped for. *Le Figaro* reports that as a result, the extremist Shi'ite leaders have placed loudspeakers outside the mosques playing tapes of gun battle and screams after curfew hours. In turn various press, including the BBC, would then report the "sounds of violence" throughout the cities.

There has been a marked increase of terrorist provocations against Westerners in Iran. Many foreigners have received threatening phone calls and three homes of U.S. nationals were firebombed last week. These developments coincide with the reemergence of the Mujaheddine ("the people's strugglers"), which was ousted from Iran in 1975. The Mujaheddine interfaces with international terror networks which in turn connect into various Arab terrorist groups. The Mujaheddine was named as responsible for a bloody machinegun attack on a Tehran police station this week which left one officer dead. It is these terrorist networks that will be provoking the participants of the emotional Dec. 11 religious processions into mayhem.

Economic disaster

The net economic toll of Iran's crisis runs into the billions. Following last month's strike which nearly brought Iran's oil output to a near halt, the military government was able to force the workers back to work in part through considerable pay raises and other increased benefits so that Iran's output of crude reach its near 6 million barrels a day average. This was reversed this week by new labor strikes bringing oil output down to less than 4 million barrels a day.

This figures heavily into the Shah's furious diplomatic efforts to reach an agreement with moderate opposition figures to form a civilian pro-

visional government that would rule until elections in June 1979.

It is widely agreed that many figures associated with the National Front — founded by the revolutionary Mossadegh in 1953 — are willing to create a new coalition government. But the precondition will be the silencing of Khomeini, who still wields sufficient power within Iran to threaten and blackmail many figure amenable to a new government. Even the more moderate Shi'ite religious leaders such as the Ayatollah Shariat-Madari recognize this fact and have kept their own discreet channels open to the Shah.

Azhari at his Dec. 6 press conference invited Khomeini to return from his exile in Paris. What prompted the offer is not entirely clear. Whether this means that the Shah has succeeded in putting together a coalition which leaves Khomeini out in the cold is too early to say. If the Shah survives through the December days of mourning and still holds his absolute rule, his next step will almost have to be the formation of a new civilian government.

— Judith Wyer

The Soviets warn of U.S. military intervention

Novosti, the Soviet press agency, dispatched the article excerpted here to NSIPS on Dec. 6. It was titled "American interests in Iran."

According to Soviet officials, the danger of an American military intervention into the situation in Iran is not to be ignored. Corroboration of this appraisal is not lacking either in Iran or the United States.

Soviet experts in military-political problems point not only to the number of Americans now in Iran — over 50,000 — but also to the U.S. Army's military equipment now stationed in that country. . . .

The USA's efforts to influence developments there are also indicated by other facts. The Americans not long ago opened an "information center" in Tehran, which American citizens can call at any time. This measure would seem at first glance to be an effort to maintain closer contact with the United States' fellow countrymen in Iran. It should be noted in this connection, as Soviet experts have confirmed, that recently about 400 CIA agents have come to Iran, and not to help American citizens there, but to support the military regime by fighting the opposition to the Shah. It is obviously not easy to maintain a dependable link-up with such a quantity of secret service agents.