

# Iran: the uncertainty continues

## *Bakhtiar faces threat of civil war, generals' coup*

Despite the departure of the Shah this week from Iran, the situation there remains far from stable, with the threat of a possible coup d'etat carried out by rabidly anti-Soviet, pro-Shah generals hanging ominously over the newly-formed government of Prime Minister Shahpur Bakhtiar.

On Jan. 17 in Alwaz, located several hundred miles to the south of Teheran, renegade "pro-Shah" troops reportedly "went wild" upon learning that the Shah had left the country. Shouting "traitors" to their commanding officers who had called for allegiance to Bakhtiar, they proceeded to carry out an assault on an anti-Shah crowd celebrating the Shah's departure and demonstrating their support for fundamentalist religious leader Ayatollah Khomeini.

Khomeini's refusal to support the Bakhtiar regime and declaration its intent to replace it with an "Islamic government" is the key factor fueling the coup momentum. Alarmed at the prospect of a Khomeini-dominated government, the military is tending increasingly toward carrying out a pre-emptive takeover of its own.

Iranian sources believe that Israeli intelligence is behind the hard-line generals. The Israelis, according to several Iranians quoted in the *Christian Science Monitor*, are "playing on the extreme sensitivities of an Army that has just lost its leader, the Shah."

"They are trying to do here what they achieved in Lebanon," they continued.

Khomeini is doing his utmost to keep the situation hot. He refused to meet with the head of the Regency Council who traveled to Khomeini's Paris headquarters last week, and is continuing to spur on his supporters to insurrection. As soon as the Shah left Iran, Khomeini issued a "revolutionary statement" calling the Shah's departure only a "par-

tial victory" and vowing to form an Islamic republic when he returns "at the proper moment."

However, signs are emerging of an undercurrent against Khomeini that could potentially isolate him in the days and weeks ahead. Friction has arisen between Khomeini and other religious leaders in Iran who are more amenable to accommodating the new Bakhtiar government. Similarly, there are signs of strain becoming evident between Khomeini and the opposition National Front, whose chairman last week visited Khomeini to pressure him not to return to Iran out of fear that his return could trigger full-scale civil war.

Caught in the middle of the Iran crisis is Bakhtiar, whose efforts to restore a modicum of stability to the country appear to be eroding. Only one day after Bakhtiar's cabinet had received a resounding vote of confidence by the Parliament, Justice Minister Yahya Sadeq Vaziri resigned. Vaziri was considered

one of the strongest ministers in Bakhtiar's cabinet. This blow to the fledgling government was augmented by the resignation of 15 members of the lower house of Parliament. In addition, Foreign Minister Mir-Findereski, the former ambassador to the Soviet Union who looks with favor on maintaining good relations with Moscow, is considering quitting the government, according to unconfirmed rumors emanating from Teheran.

This coming week will be the litmus test for Bakhtiar. Without the vigorous support of France, the Soviet Union, and the U.S. for his efforts to restore order to Iran, Bakhtiar will be left isolated and susceptible to a coup attempt, the repercussions of which will set off waves of instability throughout the region, feeding into another oil crisis in the West and setting the stage for a Brzezinski-backed showdown between the Soviet Union and the U.S.

## London places Israel back on path toward war in Mideast

Continued Arab efforts toward a Geneva peace conference and progress in talks aimed at Syrian-Iraqi unification this week forced London's geopoliticians back on the road to war in the Middle East. The target area is southern Lebanon, where new Israeli military provocations have begun in earnest.

Lebanon's fragile sovereignty is receiving another battering from Israeli armed forces. Strikes into Lebanon have included a gunboat attack on Tyre and commando raids on southern Lebanese

villages. These actions, coordinated with attacks on United Nations peacekeeping forces by southern Lebanese Falangists and Shi'ite religious fanatics run by Israeli intelligence, have raised anew fears that Israeli and Syrian forces will become engaged in direct combat.

Israel's right to re-enter Lebanon is based on tales of an "upswing of Palestinian terrorism," which received token credibility after the raid this week on Maalot. A squad of guerrillas attacked a guest-house, causing the death of one

Israeli resident, after which Israeli troops killed all three raiders.

The *Baltimore Sun* reported Jan. 18 that Israel is stepping up regular aerial intelligence flights over Syrian territory, "confident" that Syria will not respond out of "fear of war."

The motivation behind these Israeli provocations is in part evident from recent statements by Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan to the Israeli Cabinet. According to the Jan. 16 *Washington Post*, Dayan has argued that Israel must side-step "legal niceties" in a peace treaty with Egypt because of Israel's new role in the region "due to the instability in Iran." Above all, Dayan claimed, Israel must avoid relinquishing the right to pre-emptive strike against the Arabs in any "peace" treaty with Egypt.

### **Egyptian warnings**

Reacting to such arguments and to Israel's operations in Lebanon, Egyptian Prime Minister Khalil took the unusual step this week of publicly warning that peace treaty negotiations with Egypt did not justify Israel provoking Syria in Lebanon.

Israel's latest actions are reflective of two intersecting processes. Internally, the government of Prime Minister Menachem Begin is under mounting pressure from hard-liners in the Israeli Parliament and Cabinet to escalate military provocations. According to the Jan. 17 *Christian Science Monitor*, these hard-liners represent the intersection point of "religious mysticism ... with emotional nationalism and coolly calculating military thinking."

But these extremists are clearly acting according to the "geopolitical" designs of Henry Kissinger and the British. Begin recently met with delegations from the Tory parties of both Great Britain and Canada, who have stressed Israel's great importance in "defending the free world from Soviet aggression," especially in light of the Iran situation. In his meeting with Canadian Tory leader Joseph Clark, Begin returned the favor, citing Soviet "aggression" in Ethiopia, Afghanistan, and elsewhere as "evidence" of the importance of Israel for "the free world."

## State Dept. dirty tricks against

The U.S. State Department is harboring a nasty British-controlled operation against American entry into a new world economic order centered on the newly established European Monetary System (EMS). This is the shocking fact which investigators from the U.S. Labor Party turned up last week in tracing back to State's Soviet desk a trail of calculated lies about the party and its chairman Lyndon LaRouche, who has just announced his 1980 presidential bid (see *U.S. Report*).

LaRouche, an internationally renowned political economist whose proposals influenced the shaping of the European Monetary System, was slandered together with his party to U.S. intelligence, State Department officers, foreign embassies and U.S. corporations by employees of the Department at the time of his Washington, D.C. presidential announcement Jan. 15. But the USLP's international exposure of this illegal interference into U.S. domestic politics by the Church of England's channels of State has created a major scandal. Many predict that Episcopalian heads at State will roll.

The heat at Foggy Bottom can be measured by the statement of press spokesman Hodding Carter III at the Jan. 17 daily briefing: "anyone who would characterize a political party or its members from within this building would clearly be exceeding the limits of their authority," Carter stated for the record.

The ugly sequence that led up to Hodding Carter's directive hangs a large question mark over the much-ballyhooed split between Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski. Current consensus from West German, French, Japanese and Mexican observers is that apart from the issue of immediate nuclear confrontation with the Soviet Union, the Episcopalian layers at State are just as complicit as lunatic Brzezinski

in seeking to maintain the USA's "special relationship" to Great Britain.

For the British oligarchs and their American "blue-blood" Episcopalian cousins, the special relationship hinges on a mutual opposition to the EMS, and mutual general agreement on the strategic objective of a New Dark Age — a scenario detailed last week in these pages by LaRouche.

The format of the State-originated slanders against LaRouche centered around the terms "Rockefeller conspiracy" and "connections to West German Trotskyists" — phrases which give away the blue-blood lineage of the operation. That line has been coming from Alex Seith of the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations. Seith, former executive assistant to Episcopalian patrician Averell Harriman at the Democratic Policy Committee, is "Old Ave's" successor for "troubleshooting with the Soviet leadership."

Seith's contacts in the Soviet Union? None other than the centers most contaminated with British intelligence MI-6 networks, such as the IMEMO economics think-tank in Moscow and Soviet USA specialist Georgii Arbatov, described by Seith as his "good friend" whom he frequently visits. Moreover, the timing of the current resurgence of Seith's slanders correlates with recent anti-LaRouche activities by the Communist Party USA, reported in the diplomatic community.

The Harriman-Seith pedigree to Foggy Bottom's dirty tricks underscores the British background to the whole affair. Ironically, it was British intelligence, with the assistance of Harriman, Seith et al., who from 1958 onward concocted the "Rockefeller conspiracy" as a commodity to be sold to the USSR through Arbatov and related channels.

### **Slanders on record**

Jim Huff, of the State Department's Bilateral Affairs Section, Soviet Desk,