

Iran's breakup: the trigger for Persian Gulf chaos

From its bureaus in Washington, New York, Bonn, Paris, and Mexico City, the *Executive Intelligence Review* has assembled the inside story of how the Anglo-American intelligence services prepared the present crisis in the Persian Gulf. What worries most responsible world leaders—the spectre of a conflagration in the area that produces two-thirds of the oil supply of the entire world—will be, should it occur, the result of strategic planning by London and Washington.

As pieced together by *EIR*, their strategy is roughly as follows:

First, in direct coordination with the National Security Council in Washington, the Iranian regime since late September has set into motion a two-fold policy:

(a) it has adopted a strategy of enforcing a brutal, Shi'ite-colored "pan-Iranism" which, unless checked, will splinter Iran into several mini-states along tribal and ethnic lines around a much-reduced Iran comprising the Teheran-Qom axis and, perhaps, the oil fields region, with this disintegration process spreading throughout the Arab world; and

(b) in its foreign policy Iran has set about encouraging the revolt of Shi'ite minorities in Iraq, Saudi Arabia, the Gulf state, and Lebanon.

Second, in tandem with the danger represented by the Iranian regime's policy, the United States, Britain, and NATO have begun collecting their assets in the area for the establishment of a Middle East Treaty Organization. The political basis for such an approach is the regional network of the Muslim Brotherhood. Already, Egypt, Israel, Oman, and Iran have formed a loosely coordinated machine. Its consolidation now depends, according to Washington sources, on the destruction of the Syrian and Iraqi regimes and the capture of Saudi Arabia by the Muslim Brotherhood forces.

In Saudi Arabia, those forces are led by Prince Abdullah, the commander of the Saudi National Guard, who is a known sympathizer of Ayatollah Khomeini and who is reputed to be the chief British intelligence

contact inside the Saudi royal family. Recently, Abdullah met with George Ball to discuss exactly this strategy. The perceived threat from Iran is meant, by London and Washington, to contribute to forcing Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states to join the pact proposed by Oman.

On Oct. 21, Sen. Henry Jackson said on NBC's *Meet the Press* that Iran was about to break up "into little pieces," and that this event would create a profound crisis which, he said, would necessitate the deployment of Egyptian and Israeli forces as "surrogates" to occupy the oil fields in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf. At a closed briefing that same week at the Georgetown Center for Strategic and International Studies, which is associated with Henry Kissinger and the Jesuit order, former U.S. Energy Secretary James Schlesinger and Princeton University Professor Bernard Lewis, who is the intellectual author of the plan named after him for balkanizing the Arab world and Iran, presented a similar scenario. Yesterday, in a telephone interview, Dr. Lewis said that the Saudis "would be crazy" not to go along with the proposed Oman plan for Gulf security.

Challenge to Gulf States

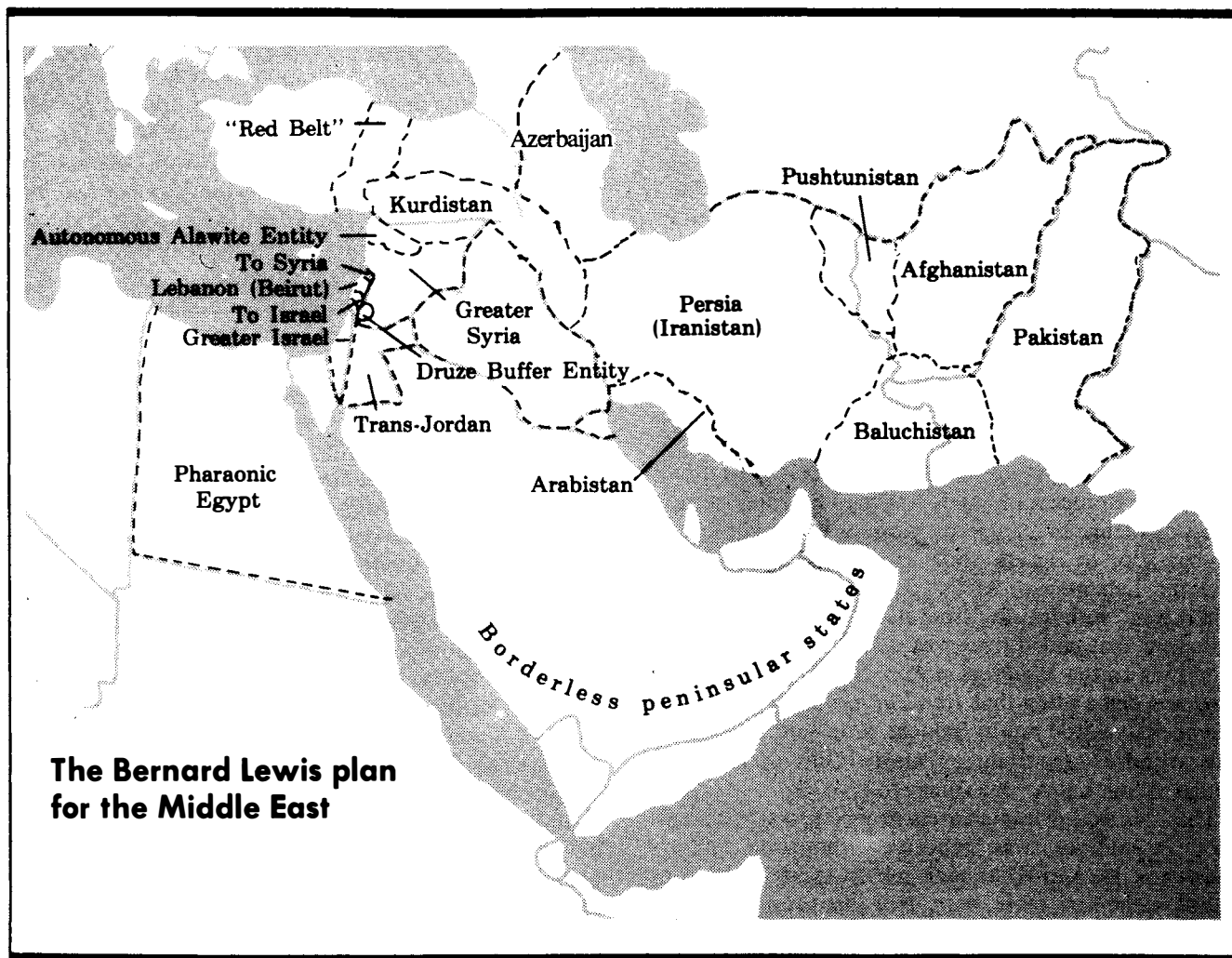
The threat from Iran to the Arabs has been repeatedly proclaimed by the entire religious leadership of the Iranian regime. This threat has intensified since the Sept. 28 Cabinet shakeup that saw Mustafa Chamran take over the post of defense minister.

On Oct. 1, Ayatollah Khomeini himself stated that Iran "cannot support these kinglets, sheikhs, and monarchies" in the Arab Gulf, and he warned that Iran would seek to impose its brand of Islamic fascism there. On the same day, Abu Sharif, the commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard, said that his forces would not rest "until the complete liberation of Palestine, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Eritrea, Philippines, and Iraq." And Ayatollah Montazeri asserted that Iran's neighbors would have to "learn their fate from the fall of the Shah."

For the next month, the chief preoccupation of the rulers of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, the UAE, and Qatar was Gulf security.

On Oct. 16, a summit meeting occurred in Taif, Saudi Arabia, which brought together the foreign ministers of the above-named Gulf countries with Oman. Oman was represented by its foreign minister, Qais al-Zawawi, an agent of the British who sits on the Board of Advisers of Georgetown University's Center for Contemporary Arab Studies. It is that center, in collaboration with CSIS, which planned the American side of the Gulf Security Pact plan.

Iraq—which bitterly denounced the Oman plan—was not present at the meeting, deciding to boycott the event in protest against Oman's presence.



Iraq's challenge to Iran

For several months, the French Government has been involved in urgent diplomatic representations and military talks to ready the basis for a real security plan in the Persian Gulf, according to French and other European sources.

During the summer, France established a working relationship with Iraq and Saudi Arabia to support the stability of the Gulf. Subsequent to that, Iraq and Saudi Arabia announced the formation of a mutual security pact, which was formally signed at the start of October. Reportedly, France also drew up plans for a military intervention force that could enter the Gulf—at the invitation of Saudi Arabia or other states—in case of crisis. In Anglo-American circles, the French plan was taken, correctly, as a challenge to NATO's plans for Middle East intervention.

France's primary regional goal, for which it sought Arab support, is the immediate overthrow of Khomeini's theocracy. Prime Minister Shahpour Bakhtiar, who was exiled after Khomeini's takeover and sentenced

to death, is working closely with French intelligence and the continental European powers.

At the Oct. 16 Gulf meeting, the Iraqi-French policy was victorious. According to official reports from Taif, Saudi Arabia, along with the smaller Gulf sheikhdoms, decisively rejected the Oman plan. But more than that, according to many sources, the Gulf countries are working closely with Iraq on a plan for Arab security in the Gulf.

Reported *Le Figaro*, the French daily that often reflects government thinking:

The Gulf sheikhdoms don't believe in American power, so they are turning naturally to Iraq, the new protector of the Gulf. Based on its accord with Riyadh, Iraq is becoming the defender of the oil states.

According to the Nov. 5 *Financial Times*, the Iraqis began to take action to strengthen their Persian Gulf naval force almost immediately after Iran announced its naval maneuvers in September.

Iraq is planning to double the size of its navy as part of an ambition to assert itself as the dominant power in the Gulf, according to European diplomatic sources. The Iraqis are believed to have presented shopping lists for naval equipment to suppliers which range from the Soviet Union to France, Britain, and Spain. . . . Iraq's shopping list includes frigates, missile-equipped fast torpedo boats, tank landing craft speed boats, and a variety of electronic monitoring and guidance equipment

Meanwhile, Iraq offered to send its troops to defend any state in the Gulf that was threatened by any non-Arab power, which in particular referenced Iran.

But at the beginning of November, Iraq, reportedly backed by France and Saudi Arabia, launched its most direct challenge to Iranian pretensions in the Gulf. Iraqi Ambassador to Beirut Abdel Hussein Muslim Hassan told the Lebanese press that Iraq was serving notice that it was "withdrawing from its 1975 peace agreement with Iran that ended three years of border hostilities," according to the *Washington Post* Nov. 1. He said that Iraq was demanding that Iran "immediately grant self-rule to its volatile Arab, Baluchi, and Kurdish minorities, withdraw from three Persian Gulf islands, and return of Shatt al-Arab Estuary to Iraq."

The Iraqi action immediately provoked a storm inside Iran. In addition Iraq reportedly increased military assistance to anti-Khomeini rebels inside Iran. The Kurds—who for years were used against Iraq by the British and the CIA—are now rebelling in their area of Iran, and Iraq has provided sanctuary and support. Iraq may also be providing assistance to the Kurdish Democratic Party in Iranian Kurdistan, as well as to the so-called Arab Cultural Society of Khuzestan, which is dominated by Iranian ethnic Arabs.

Nightmare scenario

The process that has been unleashed by the action of the Ayatollah Khomeini and his Muslim Brotherhood controller cannot be certain of being contained. If the present Iranian regime now continues to press forward its perverted Shi'ite revolution, then the disintegration of Iran as a nation is a real possibility—with incalculable consequences.

The end result of the process, according to informed

sources, could be the division of Iran roughly into two distinct halves.

In the north, according to reports from Iranian sources, Khomeini's regime and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard have almost lost control of the population. From the northwest of Iran, in Kurdistan and Azerbaijan, to Tabriz and along the Caspian Sea into northeast Iran where the Turkomen people live, and even down into Baluchistan in southeastern Iran, Khomeini's authority is not all supreme.

In fact, it is believed that the Soviet Union, Iraq, and Afghanistan are gradually building up chips to play in those border areas. The Soviet Union, for instance, has long had supporters in Azerbaijan since the 1940s, and it now reportedly has at least 500,000 troops who speak fluently the various dialects of Iran's northern tribes. Iraq is already deeply involved with the Kurds, and, according to the *New York Times*, the U.S.S.R. is fast constructing two military bases in Afghanistan from which it could support a "middle class" revolt against the ayatollahs.

Should Iran begin to disintegrate, then those capabilities will mostly likely be activated at once. For now, the Soviet Union has no intention to act against Khomeini militarily, since such an action might start World War III. In addition, President Leonid Brezhnev has no intention to risk the Soviet Union's good relations with France and West Germany by allowing itself to be drawn into an adventurist confrontation in Iran or anywhere else in the Third World. Propaganda to the contrary, from sources like Henry Kissinger, is meant chiefly to deceive gullible Arabs and Iranians into adopting a fearful, anti-Soviet posture.

In the south of Iran, where Admiral Madani has established airtight control, one contingency plan of the NATO forces is to airlift the 82nd Airborne Division and the 101st Airborne Division, along with NATO units under the personal command of General Robert Huyser. Huyser, of course, was the NATO commander who was deployed into Iran during the February revolution to ensure that the army did not act against Khomeini.

The threat of an airlift of American and NATO forces into Iran, combined with the possibility of a Soviet intervention in Iran from the north with its allies, is a scenario that responsible leaders would move mountains to avoid. But it is exactly this scenario that the United States and the British are setting into motion in Iran.