

## Fruits of Iran— Gulf militarization

During the weekend of Dec. 1-2, the paper of the ruling Iraqi Baath Party, *Ath-Thawra*, charged that Iran's Khomeini regime is acting according to "a plan to provide justification for American military intervention" in the Gulf. Many more articles appeared in the Iraqi press spreading the same theme.

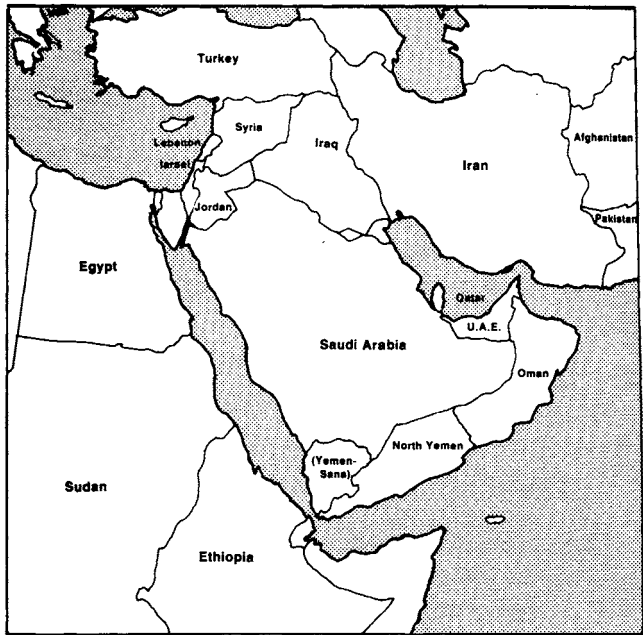
An Iraqi Minister of State, Borhan el-Din Abdul-Rahman, arrived in Mexico Nov. 30 and charged that the United States and Iran were conspiring in the current Gulf scenario. According to an account in the Dec. 1 Mexican journal *Heraldo*, Rahman made the following argument:

The extradition of the former Reza Shah Pahlavi is only a pretext used by some elements of the government of Ayatollah Khomeini, who, in combination with U.S. officials, intend to take control of the territory and energy potential of Iran, said Rahman.

(Rahman) explained that, with the taking of the U.S. embassy in Teheran, the "traitorous officials of the current regime in Iran seek to aggravate the conflict between their country and the U.S. in order to bring about the invasion of Iranian territory by U.S. troops."

He indicated that, as a minister of state of Iraq, he is convinced that Iranian groups have allied with the U.S. in order to encourage the conflict and ensure that the conflict reaches a critical point which "forces" the U.S. government to invade Iranian territory.

While some might deride the Iraqi charges as "overly conspiratorial," it is interesting to note how closely



Rahman and *Ath-Thawra's* charges correspond to the elation felt in certain Anglo-American circles over the "opportunities" presented by the Iran crisis.

Expressing this theme was New York Times columnist William Safire in a Nov. 26 commentary entitled "A Time for Daring."

The United States, Safire insisted, could "seize this opportunity to become a welcome military presence at the world's energy jugular... We could thoughtfully respond in a way that projects our forces into the area on a long-term basis. We could recoup the losses of a decade and re-establish our strategic pre-eminence."

Safire recommended that the United States "should lease the two airfields being returned to the Egyptians by the Israelis in the Sinai." This would "position us legally as firmly as at Guantanamo," he said, especially if the base could be protected by a "permanent U.S. ground force."

Further, the United States "should be taking up the quiet offers made to us to sign leases at Bahrain and islands near Oman, stationing permanent naval forces there."

In conclusion, Safire proclaimed: "The Ayatollah's provocation is heaven-sent. The President's job is ... to use this incident with audacity to assert American power in the Mideast and to reverse the strategic decline over which he has presided."

Since the taking of American hostages in Teheran a month ago, militarization of the Persian Gulf region has proceeded:

- **A U.S. naval buildup.** A U.S. Indian Ocean task force headed by the Carrier *Midway* has been joined by the

*Kitty Hawk* carrier. According to the Dec. 3 *Daily Telegraph of London*, the *Kitty Hawk* is docking off the base at Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean to pick up heavy-duty helicopters useful in mine-sweeping operations, after which it will steam toward the Arabian Sea nearer Iran. Last week, the *U.S.S. Forrestal* was dispatched from the Atlantic to the eastern Mediterranean to join the Sixth Fleet there, in what the *Washington Post* mooted was aimed at reinforcing intervention capabilities into Iran.

- **U.S. 82nd Airborne Division moves toward Iran.** Sources in Washington report that elite units, including "political division" units, from the crack 82nd have arrived in West Germany and possibly Turkey for action in the Gulf.

- **Israel offers to militarily aid the U.S.** Since Nov. 5, the Israeli press has asserted that the Iran crisis proves that Israel is the bulwark of U.S. and NATO strategy vis-à-vis the Middle East. Defense Minister Ezer Weizman made a public offer in mid-November to provide the United States with advice on military action to "save" the hostages, and met with U.S. consular and military officials. In a Nov. 21 speech, Vice-President Walter Mondale returned the compliment, calling Israel a "strategic asset" in a speech before the American Jewish Congress. This terminology had never before been used by American officials in referring to Israel.

- **Egyptian military maneuvers.** Rumors have circulated from the Mideast that Egypt's Navy has been engaged in special exercises since the Iran crisis broke.

- **Pressure on Gulf States to join U.S.-led military pact.** As the Iran crisis has worsened, pressure has been placed on the Arab Gulf oil-producers to work with the United States in an "anti-Khomeini front." The head of the Mideast Subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Sen. Stone of Florida, has been circulating a memorandum calling for U.S. overtures to *all* the Arab oil-producers.

Oman has led in forming a pact. On Nov. 18, Oman's ruler, Sultan Qabus, called on Arab Gulf countries to "coordinate their activities in the field of security and politics to ensure order and security in the oil-rich Gulf region," according to Kuwait News Agency reports. Qabus criticized Iraqi opposition as "political immaturity." He then attacked the Soviet Union for its "expansionist" policy and raised the spectre of regional subversion from South Yemen.

Ever since the Saudi unrest began, the Anglo-American press has been drumming up a scare about the Soviets in the area to build support for Qabus's scheme. In one possible sign that this is gaining ground, Bahrain

was reported by the *Baltimore Sun* last week to have granted space at its airfield for U.S. jets readied for military action in the region.

The *New York Times* reported Nov. 28 "intense consultations among the royal families" in the Gulf over the regional situation, and reports have come from the Gulf of a security conference of Gulf states being held from which Iraq was absent.

A similar line emerged from the Georgetown Center for Strategic and International Studies, where terrorism expert Robert Kilmarx said in a Nov. 15 interview, "The Khomeini thing is one of the best things that ever happened to Jimmy Carter. His National Security Adviser, Brzezinski, has sold him on the idea that by using this situation to reassert U.S. world power, he reasserts himself."

As a result of Khomeini's actions, NATO is a "lot stronger than before," Kilmarx said.

## Middle East Treaty Organization

The taking of hostages in Iran has indeed handed the Carter administration the opportunity to carry out one of its long-term strategic objectives: extension of NATO to the Mideast.

Soon after Carter assumed the presidency, Brzezinski's National Security Council telexed a memorandum called "PRM-10," authored by Harvard University professor Samuel Huntington. PRM-10 urged the formation of "quick strike force units" in the oilfields of the Persian-Arabian Gulf. When released, the memo spread alarm throughout the Arab world.

The Carter administration's abandonment of its October 1, 1977 joint U.S.-Soviet statement policy for the Mideast, and its 1978 move toward Camp David, signaled the commitment to the PRM-10 policy. Behind Camp David was a proposal issued by Zionist liquor magnate Edgar Bronfman, in the July 3, 1978 *New York Times*, for an anti-Soviet Arab-Israeli regional treaty organization, a "vehicle like NATO ... against external threats and with the U.S. as full participant."

The Camp David Treaty was the strategic core of this METO conception. As outlined frequently by U.S. Senator Henry Jackson, Egypt and Israel are meant to serve as "proxies" for "intervention in the oil fields" as the oil-producing regions descend into chaos.

The METO plan is now operational as Georgetown strategist Edward Luttwak, now a "special adviser" the military-related aspects of the Iran crisis, explained Nov. 30: "The key now in the situation is the Egypt-Israel treaty partners. If the U.S. treats them as the core of a new NATO, as equally important to the 'China card,' then a new strategic design could emerge out of the current crisis in Iran."