

Iran's new configuration

The mullahs' factional victory over Bani-Sadr has been promoted by British and Soviet intelligence, reports Thierry LeMarc.

Abolhassan Bani-Sadr has now ended his political career as president of the Iranian Islamic Republic; the party of the mullahs, as led by the president of the Supreme Court Ayatollah Beheshti and the president of the Parliament Hashemi Rafsanjani, has succeeded after months of intrigues and political warfare in entirely seizing the state apparatus. Beheshti, a clever manipulator, is supported by former U.S. ambassador William Sullivan and his superior, George Ball.

Far from being merely a new step in the power struggle between two men, the events of the past two months are heralding a new era in Iran and in the region. Such a development, according to *Die Zeit's* editor-in-chief, Theo Sommer, could directly lead to the involvement of the two superpowers, hence provoking a world crisis of incalculable proportions—a crisis deepened by the fact that ongoing events in Iran are only too complementary to the madness now ruling Israel. True, Iran has been in a process of civil war for the past two years, ever since the “Islamic Republic” was proclaimed; but what was a “limited” and only looming civil war will now explode all over the country.

The explanation for the present crisis lies in two possible strategies for Iran, two potential roles. In the first, Iran becomes a military cornerstone of the kind of axis now being developed by Haig's State Department with Pakistan, China, and Israel—the Islamic Republic as a “Western bastion.” The other option is an Iran whose internal destabilization could be used to destabilize the entire region through hordes of “Islamic fundamentalist” commandos. Finally, both options are not totally contradictory, but are presently based on differences between persons and on the fact that Iran seems to have been chosen as the battlefield for the war that the superpowers cannot immediately wage in the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The ousting of Bani-Sadr

Over the recent period, Bani-Sadr had chosen his camp. This was expressed a few weeks ago in a small

declaration in which he expressed his support for the upcoming Pakistani-American negotiations and the expected American military package to be delivered to Pakistan as part of the policy of so-called containment against the Soviet Union in the region. In so doing, Bani-Sadr was signaling his readiness to deliver Iran to the Washington-Islamabad-Peking military axis.

This posture by Bani-Sadr was not the result of a changing mood of the man who, in May 1979, had promised to turn Iran into a new “Pol Pot's Cambodia,” but is coherent with his behavior during the hostage crisis, and is primarily based on an ongoing series of negotiations between Bani-Sadr and various Iranian exile groups in Europe that are particularly known for their pro-British tendencies.

Such deals included the possibility for these groups to return to Iran and rule with Khomeini and Bani-Sadr, but without Beheshti's mullahs. Such concern was, for example, expressed recently by the newly created mysterious “National Iranian Army” in a release published by the Paris-based *Iran Jehan (Iran and the World)*, a magazine known to be close to former Prime Minister Ali Amini, a former protégé of the Kennedy clan. The NIA called on all Iranians to rebel against the mullahs, appealing to Bani-Sadr to join their fight. Unmistakably, the appeals voiced no criticism of the mad Khomeini. Immediately, observers noticed the similarity between NIA's call and the recent letters by the former governor of Khuzestan province, Admiral Madani, addressed to Khomeini.

Madani, an unfortunate rival of Bani-Sadr in the presidential campaign, had left Iran before being convicted of “association with the CIA” by the Islamic Republican Party (IRP). From Europe, he sent repeated letters to Khomeini advising Khomeini to appoint him as the prime minister. He similarly ganged up with the so-called National Reconciliation Council of Ali Amini and of Gen. Feredoun Djam with the aim of establishing an “Iranian Islamic Popular Republic,” with a strong Iranian army, and the country as a “Western

bastion" against the Soviet Union.

Not so surprisingly, a key force backing both the exiles and Bani-Sadr was nothing less than the extreme leftist Mujaheddin-e-Khalq. Massoud Rajavi, its leader, recently toured Europe to meet with Madani and his colleague. Supposedly an "Islamic Marxist" group, the Mujaheddin are in fact under the ideological influence of the same forces that created Bani-Sadr and his "Pol Pot" model, as mediated by Kassem Rajavi, the brother of Massoud. Massoud Rajavi was recalled from his post as Iranian ambassador to Pakistan a few weeks ago, provoking an outcry from the president's office and from the Mujaheddin's leadership.

A former Iranian ambassador to Geneva under the Shah, Kassem Rajavi was primarily a luminary at the Geneva-based "Graduate Institute for International Studies" of International Institute for Strategic Studies member Jacques Fréymond. The former institute is otherwise known for its association with the kooks of the Club of Rome and its sponsorship of the "Islam and the West" association, a cultural body which mixes the Club of Rome crowd and the leaders of the infamous Muslim Brotherhood, such as Maarouf Dawalibi from the World Muslim Congress. The association's program is precisely defined as a war against the "tyranny of the nation-state" in favor of a Pol Pot economic model. Thus, from all evidence, Massoud and Kassem Rajavi's alliances with the Madani and Bani-Sadr group was not so startling, but rather represented a logical progression mediated by their common friends in London and Geneva.

Civil war for Iran

Not so much for differences in their policies, but for the fact that it otherwise meant their exclusion from power, did the IRP have no choice but to strike rapidly. This was made feasible by the decision of Khomeini to allow the IRP to strip Bani-Sadr of his only position of importance: commander-in-chief of the army. After much lobbying, the IRP had succeeded in convincing Khomeini to turn his back on the man he often referred to as his own son.

In this, the main ally of the IRP has been the communist party of Iran, the Tudeh party, led by "Ayatollah" Kianouri. For precisely the reasons outlined above as being Bani-Sadr's policy, the Tudeh, whose apparatus is closest to the British-connected KGB confrontationist faction in the Soviet intelligence community, has always played the card of the IRP, not only to prevent an American-Iranian reconciliation, but also in the expectation that an IRP takeover would lead to a deep political crisis which could allow the Tudeh to seize a significant and concrete margin of power—if not all of it.

For these reasons, the Tudeh, over the past weeks,

gave ample proof of its "well-meaning" intentions to the IRP, going so far as to obtain Soviet and East German help for the establishing of a joint training camp close to the Caspian Sea, where IRP members and communists alike are being trained for commando operations—which would be the "vanguard" of Islam in spreading around destabilizations.

While the defeat of Bani-Sadr could be considered a blow to the United States, the victory of Beheshti's IRP is in fact a victory for both British and Soviet intelligence who are acting from similar scripts: the infamous "Bernard Lewis plan" for the Middle East that foresees the dissipation of the region into numerous autonomous tribes. Bani-Sadr himself was obviously never an American agent but a British asset, in the contingency that the British should decide to move jointly with the Americans in the region to "stabilize" Iran. Supported earlier by the British, as stated a few weeks ago in a laudatory editorial in the London *Times*, Bani-Sadr is now dead for them. This was expressed in another "obituary" published in *The Times* on June 16, in which Bani-Sadr is referred to in the past tense, with the added characterization that he is nothing but a "Groucho Marx"!

So far the new strongman is Beheshti, the man who led the alliance of his party with the KGB-controlled Tudeh, while retaining for himself extensive connections with British intelligence through his membership in the Beirut-based Freemasonic Grand Lodge of the Orient, which is controlled by the oligarchical Lebanese Sursok family—the same family that systematically sold Palestinian lands to the early Zionists.

But for how long?

The left wing of the IRP—led by former presidential candidate Jaladdine Farsi, who, backed up by Habibollah Peyman, the former leader of the terrorists who seized the U.S. embassy, recently made a well-publicized trip to Moscow with Kianouri—is already contesting the power of the cynical ayatollah. That will be the next phase of the power struggle in Teheran, while the rest of the country collapses through economic chaos and war with Iraq.

There are already reports on the spread of cholera in the capital of Teheran and in the refugee camps in the Khuzestan region. Tribal fighting has again begun to spread. As the IRP will soon recognize, to seize Teheran does not imply control of Iran. It is a Pyrrhic victory which might indeed engulf the entire region. While nothing can be expected from the numerous Iranian exile leaders who, over the past two years, have been unable to define a programmatic alternative to Islamic rule, responsibility lies on the shoulders of the Reagan administration to avoid falling into the temptation of allowing a new split in the country which would provoke a new world crisis.