

## Middle East Report by Leo Scanlon

### Khomeini regime collapsing

*The Iranian dictator threatens to take as many of his enemies as he can with him—and the Soviets are ready to pick up the pieces.*

**T**he Khomeini regime is beginning to bear the burden of a military policy based on the destruction of its own population, and this fact alone is one of the major reasons why the prepared Iranian land invasion of Iraq, expected by observers to begin on June 1 with the holy month of Ramadan, has failed to occur.

The Iranian military, like the Iranian population, is in horrible condition, reports of exile leaders indicate. "The order of battle is arranged with the first line being the children—they are suffering from a multitude of horrible diseases and fevers as a result of the starvation and unsanitary conditions (not to mention the effects of sexual abuse practiced by the Pasdaran). Next comes the regular army, whose ranks are weak, virtually unarmed, and also nearly starving. Finally are the Pasdaran, they have the best arms, a necessity to prevent the soldiers from deserting. Food supplies pass through the Pasdaran lines, which are the best fed, then move to the soldiers, who are fed on what is left, and finally to the children, who naturally are starving. If the Pasdaran turn their backs on the troops for one second, they will be massacred."

The desertion rate is increasing daily, and, according to sources, desertions are occurring over all borders, with every possible means of escape being utilized.

In June, one defector, who found asylum in Iraq, issued a call for an international protest against Khomei-

ni's murder of children by hurling them into the front line of battle. As Iranian children in Iraqi POW camps report, they are first fed lies that the Iraqis are not Muslim and fed a three-day diet of "sugar water," which has an amphetamine-like effect, before they are sent to the front lines. Iranian parents are now reportedly hiding their children from the authorities.

The Iranian economy is also in deep distress. Aside from the dismantling of the economic programs that were underway during the Shah years, Teheran has been forced to severely cut its oil prices to offset the dangers involved in porting at Kharg Island. Overall, the state of the Iranian economy stands in stark contrast to that of Iraq, where millions of dollars have been invested in new infrastructural and industrial projects, even with the war.

This collapse of the Khomeini regime internally is perhaps the primary factor affecting the ability of the Iranian army to wage an offensive. In addition, in recent months, there has been considerable effort from the West to put the squeeze on Khomeini's military capabilities. The United States has forced the slowdown or cancellation of deliveries of spare parts vital to the operation of tanks and aircraft from various countries which have been supplying Khomeini, and even Israel has been forced to engage in "third party" sales through Turkey.

There has also been a large-scale crackdown on Khomeini's foreign in-

telligence capabilities. In at least nine European nations beginning in late May, safehouses of Khomeini's terrorists have been raided. The *London Times* of May 30 reported on some of these; others have proceeded with less press coverage.

Khomeini's threat to take as many of his enemies as he can with him when he goes is no idle boast, and certain irregularities in the handling of his networks by intelligence and law enforcement agencies leave him the opportunity to make good his threats. A video film of 300 European and Latin American women being trained as terrorists in Teheran was smuggled out of Iran on a plane hijacked last month—it should serve as a grim warning to those who accept FBI Director William Webster's bland assertions that terrorism is under control in the United States.

The effect of these combined military and intelligence pressures on the Khomeini regime has been to produce a pressure cooker in Teheran, and one hopes, to crack the regime's support and open the possibility that the military will mobilize to seize the country from the mad mullahs.

According to informed sources, there is a core of military men prepared to undertake such a venture, if conditions are right, and many U.S. intelligence hopes for the region ride on this possibility. The gamble is a desperate one, for once the regime falls, the question will be whether any force can assemble a government faster than the Soviets and their separatist allies can move to close out that option once and for all in the region.

If the latter outcome prevails, those who have dismissed *EIR's* longstanding warning about the Soviet control of the fundamentalist movement will have a heavy burden of responsibility for the chilling events which will follow.