

## Soviets warn against outside interference

*The Soviet Union has repeatedly and forcefully warned through press and other spokesmen that it will not tolerate outside intervention into Iranian affairs. Two such warnings appeared last week in Pravda and Izvestia:*

*Pravda, Dec. 28, "Interference is not permissible," by Petr Eugen'ev:*

Anti-government mass demonstrations are continuing in Iran. Under the circumstances, ruling circles and an American special group, which arrived days ago in the Iranian capital under the guise of a group of advisors, are intensively seeking an exit from the situation. The fate of the regime remains the main question.

The American group is reportedly comprised of 60 people from the CIA, State Department, and other agencies. Formally this "contingent" has been landed for supposedly obtaining first-hand information. But in fact, its members are seeking people who, in their opinion, could be members of a new government. They are making recommendations on how to preserve the Shah's power. According to the foreign press, the special group is working in coordination with SAVAK, the Iranian police. The group's "recommendations" are to the advantage of the American oil and military monopolies, but conflict with the interests of the Iranian people and threaten the sovereignty and independence of Iran.

A case of American interference is at hand, and it has caused a lawful protest from broad layers of Iranian society. It is intolerable and contradicts the norms of international law.

As for the Soviet Union, which maintains traditional good-neighborly relations with Iran, it opposes — as has already been authoritatively and decisively announced — interference in the internal affairs of Iran from the outside in any form whatsoever and under any pretext. Events of a strictly domestic nature and occurring in that country and the questions connected with this should be resolved by the Iranians themselves.

*Pravda, Jan. 1, "Seeking a pretext," by V. Korionov:* American news media report that official Washington is "seriously" considering sending American ships, led by an aircraft carrier, into the Persian Gulf. The *New York Times* notes that "President Carter's assistant for national security Z. Brzezinski is dominating the development of this policy."

The inspirers of the latest "gunboat diplomacy" are seeking means to justify military interference in the internal affairs of Iran. They are using baldly provocative means aimed against the USSR. Responsible government figures, writes the *Times*, makes assurances that it is not a question of attempting to save the Shah's power, but of

"demonstrating American opposition to any possible attempt by the Soviet Union to interfere in this crisis."

It is becoming more and more clear that the latest provocative concoction from the Washington political kitchen has one goal — to justify in advance an action which is hostile to the cause of peace and to the sovereign rights of nations.

*Izvestia, Dec. 26, "Placing hopes in the colonels":* Official Washington continues to support the Iranian monarchy. But in the press there are headlines like "If the Shah Falls . . ." (*Newsweek*). It appears that the activity of the numerous U.S. secret services in Iran is also directed towards preparing structural changes which suit the interests of the United States and the Western monopolies. Various scenarios are being developed. The *New York Times*, without a note of provocation, writes that brigadier generals and colonels "whose loyalty to the Shah is not absolute, would organize a coup d'etat." Indeed, such an operation would be nothing new for the CIA. In Greece they put the "black colonels" in power instead of the monarchy. But they didn't last long either.

## Iran's new premier— can he succeed?

The Iranian parliament has given a vote of confidence to the Prime Minister designate Shapur Bakhtiar to form a civilian government to replace the two-month-old military government of General Gholam Reza Azhari. Bakhtiar, a long time leader of the largest opposition grouping in Iran, the National Front, was asked by the Shah on Dec. 23 to form a new government in order to quell the political crisis in Iran which threatens to force the Shah to foresake his 37-year-old position as the Persian Monarch.

Bakhtiar's task of forming a government will not be easy, as his predecessor Gholam Hussein Sadighi found after weeks of searching for perspective cabinet members. Sadighi, who had been asked by the court to form a government in mid-November, finally gave up at which point the Shah turned to Bakhtiar.

The future of Iran and the entire Mideast and Indian Ocean region rests squarely with Bakhtiar's both forming and holding a government together while resolving the worst Iranian crisis since Mohammed Mossadegh briefly seized power from the Shah in 1953. At present, a complex of round-the-clock negotiations are underway in Iran, involving the military, the Islamic clergy, the opposition, and the court to find an agreement upon which a new government could be based.

The greatest threat to Iran under the present conditions is a right-wing military takeover, which would usher in a period of Chile-style repression and give Iran's most corrupt and brutal feudalists a chance to reconstitute themselves. Which way Iran goes will depend upon tough

decisions the Shah will make regarding both a reduction of the power of the monarchy under the new government, and who will control the military. Whether the Shah decides to take a brief leave of absence from Iran in order to appease the restive Iranian population and give Baktiar a chance to begin to rebuild his nation will indicate the degree of agreement on these key issues.

#### The military factor

The Soviet press has registered numerous warnings over the past week of a right-wing military coup in Iran. Such concern on the part of Moscow and numerous French sources indicates a growing awareness of Britain's determination to back such a coup and maintain the sizeable leverage it has wielded for centuries in Iran through rightwing oligarchical interests. A swing to the right could come in one of two ways. Either through a coup conducted by little known officers, as one Iranian suggested perhaps an army artillery commander, or from a clique of prominent top generals such as the Administrator of Martial Law, General Oviessi, and the Commander of the Air Force, General Rabii. Oviessi is known to work closely with U.S. Ambassador Ardeshir Zahedi, who in turn has been attacked by Soviet press sources as a close ally of leading cold war circles in the U.S. — a reference to Zahedi's well publicized friendship with Henry Kissinger. Zahedi has also become a confidant of National Security Council Director Zbigniew Brzezinski, who has been supporting continued reign for the Shah backed by a right-wing solution.

According to the Dec. 24 *New York Times*, Zahedi, Oviessi, and other generals are demanding that the Shah not leave Iran under any circumstances, that Zahedi be included in a new cabinet, and that Oviessi become the Chief of Staff, demands which Baktiar could never accept in his efforts to form a government with members of the opposition. Informed sources agree that if some agreement is not reached between the right and the moderate left leaning opposition over the sensitive issue of who will control the military, then the chance of a split within the generals is likely followed by civil war. For this reason Baktiar has stated his willingness to offer the Shah continued control over the armed forces, but has insisted that a highly respected general who has respect from the opposition, General Djam, become the Chief of Staff. Djam, who has been serving as Iranian Ambassador to Spain, just returned to Iran — suggesting his possible participation in a new government.

#### Splitting the opposition

State Department sources last week stressed that if a possible solution between the right and left wings could be reached around the return of General Djam, Iran may be on its way to recovery. The more intransigent elements of the opposition associated with exiled Shiite leader Ayatollah Khomeiny and his associate Karim Sanjabi, the leader of the National Front, have been unwilling to accept Baktiar's proposal that the Shah maintain control over the military, even considering that such a concession was vital to maintaining the solidity of the armed forces. As a result

### Baktiar: 'We will try to put the country back on its feet'

*The following is a translation of excerpts of an interview with Iranian Prime Minister-designate Shapur Baktiar which appeared in the Jan. 2 Le Figaro. In response to a question concerning his chances of forming a new government in Iran, Baktiar replied smiling:*

**Baktiar:** When, in 1940, Charles de Gaulle climbed into his modest plane to go to London, he was not convinced of success either! . . . I still need a few days to form my government. It will be a social-democratic government, of course, and all its members will be perfectly clean, irreproachable from the standpoint of corruption. At the Defense Ministry for example, I will have General Djam (graduate of the French military academy Saint-Cyr, husband of Princess Shams, the Shah's sister — ed). He is respected by everyone. Even before I present my team, the military censorship will be lifted and the newspapers will be allowed to reappear.

As soon as the Assembly grants me its con-

fidence, His Majesty will make a statement in which he officially defines the limits of his power, this by virtue of the Constitution which wants the Sovereign to reign but not to govern. Then the Shah will designate a regency council and will be able to take a few weeks of vacation in a foreign country. . . . If Karim Sanjabi, who just excluded me in a somewhat ridiculous fashion from the National Front, accepts this post as President of the regency council, the place awaits him. Otherwise, we will find someone else. And then we will try to put the country back on its feet.

*Q: But what will Khomeiny's attitude be?*

**Baktiar:** I have contacts with him, and I myself went to see the religious leaders of Qom who listened to me with interest.

*Q: Are you an optimist?*

**Baktiar:** When a country is in chaos, people have to sacrifice themselves in order to try something. So I am sacrificing myself.

of Baktiar's acceptance of the Shah's offer to form a government and govern Iran conjointly with the monarch, the Front leadership immediately expelled Baktiar.

Baktiar has, however, stated publicly that he is confident of splitting the Front and has the support of the very influential Dr. Ahmed Mossadegh, the son of Mohammed Mossadegh, founder of the National Front. The key to Baktiar's strategy rests with silencing the bellicose Khomeiny, who operates out of Paris, and continues to insist upon violent overthrow of the Shah. There are strong indications that the French are playing a critical behind the scenes role in aiding Baktiar in his efforts.

Both Baktiar and General Djam have longstanding ties to the French. Djam was educated in the French military academy and Baktiar at the Sorbonne, after which he fought in the French resistance during World War II. Both French diplomatic and press sources have looked favorably to Baktiar. While the French government has agreed to extend Khomeiny's visa, French intelligence again last week warned the 73-year-old Ayatollah against his revolutionary actions. Informed sources indicate that the French have agreed to keep Khomeiny rather than see him return to Iran where he could be more of a direct problem for the Shah and Baktiar.

According to *Le Figaro* of Jan 2, Baktiar is conducting ongoing talks with the more moderate Shiite leaders in Iran in order to build a consensus and isolate Khomeiny. At the same time he has offered Sanjabi command of a regency council which will rule in the Shah's place while he is away — a clear ploy to reunite the Front around a new Baktiar government.

Baktiar already has made it clear that Iran's foreign policy will take some drastic changes. Most importantly, he has called for the creation of a viable intelligence service by reconstructing the secret services, SAVAK — known for their brutal police repression — as a political intelligence agency. He has also announced that Iran will pull out of the London-created Central Treaty Organization, a clear indication that he is not interested in playing any cold war games against the Soviets.

With these body blows to British regional policy, Baktiar has added that Iran might halt the shipment of oil to Israel and South Africa. In an interview with *Le Figaro*, Baktiar has likened himself to the late French President Charles de Gaulle suggesting his struggle against British imperialism. In this light he has already shown himself to be a nationalist in the tradition of the anti-British Mossadegh, in whose cabinet he served 25 years ago. If this proves to be the case, Britain's longstanding domination of Iranian affairs through the presence of British Petroleum and Royal Dutch Shell will be curtailed.

— Judith Weyer

## Turkish riots tied to 'international conspiracy'

Turkish Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit stated emphatically last week that the outbreak of sectarian violence in south-eastern Turkey was part of an international terrorist conspiracy. "Terrorism in every country originates from abroad," said Ecevit, "and it is a universal fact that it is not created by a single country. Turkey's situation is not different from any other country."

The bloody religious riots erupted on Dec. 26 in the southeastern provincial capital of Kahramanmaraş near the Syrian border, as a result of deliberate provocations by extremist commandoes linked to the neo-Nazi Nationalist Action Party. The leader of the Action Party, Col. Alparslan Turkes, maintains close ties with British, Chinese, and Israeli intelligence as well as with West German fascist Franz Josef Strauss. More than 100 people lost their lives in the violent clashes that took place between Sunni and Alevi (Shiite) Moslems in Kahramanmaraş. The incident marked a dramatic escalation in the series of bloody confrontations that left at least 1,000 dead in 1978 and many thousands wounded. To quell the violence and restore order, Ecevit declared martial law in Kahramanmaraş as well as in 12 other strife-torn provinces.

The outbreak of religious unrest, on top of the vicious left-right violence that has been steadily intensifying over the past several months, is a deliberate attempt by British intelligence to weaken Turkey's central government and transform the country into another Iran.

Expanding on this theme, terrorist specialist J. Bowyer Bell of Columbia University is pushing the line that Turkey is as unstable as Iran was one year ago, and that "prospects for further deterioration in 1979 should not be discounted." According to a report issued by the British intelligence-connected Probe International research firm, Bell "also expects a continuation of the revival of Islamic orthodoxy with significant implications for several Islamic countries."

### Target Turkey

Turkey's impoverished southeast has long been the locale for British-run destabilization operations against the Turkish government. Since the founding of the Turkish republic by Kemal Ataturk, the British, through their networks in the Moslem clergy and through reactionaries like Turkes, have played upon Sunni-Alevi, Kurdish-Turkish, and left-right differences in the population.

It is clear that a prime goal of the unrest in Turkey is to provoke the military into carrying out a Chile-style generals' coup, whereby an army faction committed to NATO's confrontationist strategy and IMF austerity will take power in Ankara. So far, however, the military, even with martial law in effect, has given little indication that it