

## 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