

NEWS ON IRAN

No. 22 National Council of Resistance of Iran - Foreign Affairs Committee December 15, 1994

DOMESTIC

Clampdown,

Israeli radio, Dec. 12 - The Majlis began its second debate on the use of satellite dishes. It agreed that Government offices and officials can use the antennas, but banned the general public from installing or distributing the dishes. In recent months, the government has ordered residents in large apartment complexes to dismantle their satellite antennas.

Abrar, Dec. 6 - Deputy to the politico-ideological bureau of the commander in chief of the armed forces said: "All soldiers reporting for duty must pass courses on prayers. Those who fail to complete the course will not receive their end-of-service certificates."

Abrar, Dec. 8 - Kerman province's security forces' chief announced that police forces had ambushed and killed the leader and members of a group of bandits in this southern province two weeks ago.

Salam, Dec. 1 - The Air Force commander, brigadier Mansour Sattari said: "Suppressing enemies of the Islamic Revolution and uprooting their threats are our natural and unalienable rights. This is not just confined to our own territory."

Leadership crisis,

Tehran radio, Dec. 9 - In his Friday prayer sermon, Mohammad Yazdi, the head of the Judiciary, said: "The principle of *Velayat-e Faqih* is one of the principles in our constitution that can never be revised. At this sensitive juncture, those who write, have access to podiums and address large gatherings must be very careful about speaking negatively (about Khamenei's *Marja'iat*). It is wrong to point out the deficiencies of this or that person. You are allowed to highlight the positive attributes. But on the basis of the Shari'a, negative writing on other scholars of Islam is wrong and can be prosecuted by law.

Le Monde, Dec. 9 - Khamenei's supporters have entangled themselves in a serious conflict by elevating him to the rank of "*Marja Taqlid*" for all Moslems. By putting his name alongside other ayatollahs in Qom, they think they can deceive others. This is the first time that a *Marja* is elected by 150 (out of 270) parliament deputies. It is as if Iran's rulers control the destiny of the entire Shiite community around the world. Traditionally, the theology schools unanimously choose the Grand Ayatollah... What's more, Khamenei has not completed the necessary courses to be a *Marja*. He is a simple preacher. Neither being the leader of the Islamic Republic, nor his backers' standing ovations in the Parliament, change anything.

Transparent scheme

Reuters, Dec. 3 - Chief justice Morteza Moqtada'i invited impartial human rights groups to visit Iran but said U.N. special investigator Reynaldo Galindo-Pohl was not welcomed back. As soon as Iran found out that the special representative of Human Rights Commission, Pohl, had prepared his biased reports under the influence of arrogant powers and deviated groups, (it) did not permit him to enter the country to resume his work.

Jomhuri-Islami, Dec. 4 - An important issue about the United Nations' reports on the situation of human rights is that such biased and slanted actions do not relate to this or that U.N. representative. For the Islamic Republic the issue is not whether Galindo Pohl or someone else prepares the report. We believe international organizations are satanic powers' lackeys and pursue no aim other than to violate the rights of the masses... Thus, it hardly makes any difference as to who is the U.N. representative, Galindo Pohl or anyone else.

Tehran radio, Dec. 10 - The head of the Prisons' Organization, Assadollah Lajevardi, said that 100,481 persons, including 6,000 women, are behind bars in Iran. He said there are a dozen or so prisoners belonging to political grouplets and charged with endangering the country's security. He added that the Islamic Republic is ready to allow representatives of international bodies and organizations visit Iran to observe the prisoners' life-style and conditions..."

NCR Secretariat, Dec. 11 - This is not the first time the mullahs revert to such ploys. Their atrocities during the last 15 years are so horrible and extensive, however, that these transparent gimmicks do not beguile anyone. If Lajevardi and other criminal officials of the regime insist on their claims, they must not oppose a visit to Iran by the UNHRC's Special Representative and delegations from the International Committee of the Red Cross and other international bodies, accompanied by the Resistance's representatives, to investigate the fate of political prisoners and 100,000 executed prisoners of conscience.

Social ills

Salam, Dec. 7 - A reader called to make the following comment: "What you write in your newspaper does not reflect the people's feelings. What they want is liberty. Liberty is a cure-all. People are not suffering from shortages of sugar and cooking oil.

Israeli radio, Dec. 10 - Shortages of gas in Tehran, where a fifth of Iranians live, has caused enormous problems for the capital's residents. Not only are families affected, but also patients in many hospitals are threatened. *Abrar* wrote that officials ignore the residents' complaints.

FOREIGN

U.N. 33rd condemnation of mullahs

NCR Secretariat, Dec. 13 - The United Nations Third Committee strongly condemned for the 33rd time the clerical regime's widespread and persistent human rights violations, particularly the brutal suppression of women and religious minorities, continuing executions in Iran and assassinations of Resistance's activists, Iranian dissidents and foreign nationals.

NCR President Massoud Rajavi described the resolution's adoption as a decisive judgment by the highest international authority on human rights, confirming the illegitimacy and irreformability of the ruling dictatorship. He said: While the mere adoption of these resolutions is necessary, it is not at all sufficient. The world community must expel the mullahs from the community of nations for their record of assassinations and atrocities.

NCR President stressed that the Security Council must put on its agenda the adoption of practical and specific punishments against Khomeini's heirs to stop the continuing suppression and carnage in Iran.

Fundamentalism

Tehran Times, Dec. 12 - Velayati expressed his displeasure at the course the Islamic Conference Organization session is taking. He said: "Most countries want to be at the service of the West and plan to isolate Iran due to her anti-western policies... The views of the Islamic Republic are in contradiction with those of most Islamic countries. It is the West which must change its image to satisfy Islamic countries."

Ettela'at, Dec. 11 - Khamenei told a group of visiting members of the Supreme Cultural Revolution Council that the need for a full-scale revolution in felt...

He also criticized the British Parliament for publishing false news about the status of women in Iran. He said by publishing such lies the British Parliament had lowered itself to the level of a sold-out reporter.

AFP, Dec. 10 - An international conference by fundamentalists organized to address "Moslem women's harassment in the West," attracted 300 persons. It was organized by the British-based "Office of Islamic Information and Culture. The head of the office, Zia-oddin Makki, called on Moslem women to "liberate" themselves from the values of western societies and dress on the basis of "Islamic *hejab*." One of the speakers was introduced as Khamenei's personal representative. Women, all veiled, were seated separately from men.

FEATURE

"Women of Iran 'treated as subhumans,'" *The Observer*, December 4, 1994;
by Margaret Coles.

Excerpts:

A newly published report has cast fresh light on the continuing suffering of Iranian women under the rule of the mullahs.

The report, issued last week by the all-party British Parliamentary Human Rights Group, has brought to light examples of torture, oppression and executions. Much of the information is being revealed in the West for the first time.

The group, comprising members of the Commons and Lords, says that Iranian women are treated by the regime as subhumans. Failure to cover themselves from head to foot in public can carry the death penalty, though the usual punishment is 84 lashes. The penalty for adultery is stoning to death for an unmarried woman; the penalty for the unmarried man is flogging...

In May last year, Roya Ansari, 24, had acid thrown on her face by agents of the *Pasdaran* (Revolutionary Guards) during a campaign against veiling in Isfahan. She has reportedly lost her sight. Sarmast Akhlaq-Tabandeh, a former interrogator for the Revolutionary Guards in the central city of Shiraz, has revealed numerous accounts of rape of Iranian women political prisoners.

He said: "Once they had arrested a couple along with their eight-year-old daughter. Separated from her parents, who were undergoing interrogation, the girl was crying uncontrollably. One of the interrogators, Zolghadr, pretended to calm and soothe her. He took her to the prison storehouse where he raped her."

In another account the former interrogator said: "Virgin women prisoners must as rule be raped before execution. The prison officials would write down the names of guards on the firing squad and the names of officials present and then would conduct a lottery draw. The night before the execution, the woman is injected with a tranquilizer and the "winner" conducts the rape.

"The next day, after execution, the religious judge at the prison would write out a marriage certificate and send it to the victim's family along with a box of sweets..."

Kati Ghazi, the American-educated, Iranian-born reporter for the *New York Times*, was stripped of her press credentials because a little of her hair showed in public.

A woman called Fariba, aged 53, was less fortunate. While stacking groceries into her car, she was stopped by a guard, and then realized that "my head scarf has slipped back a little from my forehead...but I didn't have a hand free to adjust it."

Fariba was taken to prison with more than 100 women aged between 15 and 62. They were held for seven hours, then released and later taken to court. Each of the women, including one who was five months pregnant, was sentenced to receive 80 lashes...

The number of women who take their own lives bears testimony to the misery they endure.

In 1993, at least 3,600 people committed suicide in Khorasan province by taking tranquilizers and poisons. Among them were 2,530 women. That year, 59 people tried to commit suicide by setting themselves on fire. A senior official at an intensive care unit of burn cases at Mashhad's Qem Hospital said nearly all were women, and nearly all died.

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