

NEWS ON IRAN

No. 25 National Council of Resistance of Iran - Foreign Affairs Committee January 16, 1995

DOMESTIC

Suppression

Kayhan, Jan. 14 - The commander of the greater Tehran's security region, brigadier Abolfathi said police patrols using high speed motorcycles will be established to strengthen the strike capacity of the state security forces.

AFP, Jan. 13 - A leading member of the Council of Guardians said during Friday prayers that the bill to ban the use of satellite dishes has been completed. Emami Kashani said: "We are currently trying to raise the funds to implement the law."

Israeli radio, Jan. 11 - Reza Seifollahi, the commander of the state security forces, said those Iranians who have been watching foreign television programs through satellite antennas might be punished. He said that the law must clarify the status of those who were using the antennas before they were banned.

Protests, strikes

Voice of Mojahed, Jan. 18 - More than a dozen employees of Raja'i dam, 25 km from the northern city of Sari, have been on strike for two weeks to protest low wages and long working hours.

Voice of Mojahed, Jan. 16 - Subsequent to a resident's refusal to exchange his house for a piece of land offered by the municipality of Isfahan, the city demolished his home. They did so once the family went to the cemetery to pay respects to their two children, executed by the regime for being Mojahedin supporters. Upon returning, the home owner and local residents attacked the municipality agents and set their loader on fire.

Voice of Mojahed, Jan. 15 - A number of Tehran's railway employees staged a strike to protest the regime's disregard for their demands of wages increases and housing. Clashes erupted for several hours with the Guards, who eventually dispersed those taking part in the strike.

Similar protests and skirmishes erupted last week between the people and the Guards Corps in Qazvin (northwest of Tehran) and Jahrom (southern Iran), over rising inflation and spiraling prices.

Voice of Mojahed, Dec. 31 - Twelve members of the Pasdaran (Guards Corps) died in a clash with local residents in the Delgan region, 120 km from Iranshahr, southeastern Iran. Ali Me'mar, the garrison commander for the Corps' Salman brigade in the city, and his deputy were among those killed.

Voice of Mojahed, Dec. 28 - The head of the intelligence department in the city of Khash, southeastern Iran, died in a clash with local residents.

Corruption

Jomhouri-Islami, Jan. 15 - The money embezzled from two branches of the Saderat bank is \$400 million. The

sum is four times the amount allotted by the Majlis to banking accommodations, including cultural affairs.

Salam, Jan. 10 - Some time ago there was talk of embezzlement in the Bank of Tejarat. Now several billion have been embezzled in the Saderat Bank. Why are they ravaging the people's money? What are we to do? Who answers for all these thefts and embezzlements?

Israeli radio, Jan. 12 - The director general of Iran's national steel corporation, the head of Iran's national industry organization and a physician employed by the steel corporation were arrested for financial corruption and grand theft. Two children of the physician, whose name was not given, used government funds to study in Britain. Their annual expenses were £350,000 and \$450,000 respectively.

Rising prices, falling rial

Jomhouri-Islami, Jan. 15 - Prices for some home appliances will rise between 20 to 30%. A shop owner said: "I have been in this business for 20 years and not seen such price hikes."

Ettela'at, Jan. 15 - Iran's currency rial fell against all major foreign currencies. Dollar rose to 3, 150 rials in the open market.

Salam, Jan. 14 - Retail prices for some foodstuffs and consumer goods have increased and others cannot be found. The price of eggs, beef, lam, poultry, peas, split peas, tomato paste, beans, Thai and American rice have risen between 2 to 7%.

Israeli radio, Jan. 12 - Some Iranians called on the government to stop the so-called fight against high prices because that has not only failed to reduce the prices of commodities but contributed to more price increases and the shortage of some goods. A citizen told the daily *Salam* that prior to the campaign eggs were 50 cents a kilo; now they are 60 cents.

Salam, Jan. 10 - Why vegetable oil which sold a while ago at the cooperatives at 1,050 toumans (\$3.50), is now selling for 2,200 toumans (\$7.65)?

Ettela'at, Jan. 9 - Why has the price of glass risen again. Although, it had increased its prices by 30% in April, Qazvin's glass factory again hiked its prices. If these increases are approved by government officials, they run contrary to the campaign against high prices. If otherwise, the department for governmental punishments should address the matter.

AFP, Jan. 13 - The air pollution in Tehran has taken on dangerous dimensions, endangering residents of the Capital with all sorts of physical, psychological diseases and a slow death. With a population of 10 million, twice the number in 1979, Tehran with an area of 28,000 square kilometers, is suffering from the pollution created by too many cars.

Plane crash a sabotage?

Kayhan, Jan. 14 - A Majlis deputy said that possibility of sabotage in the crash of the plane carrying the air force commander and five of his deputies cannot be ruled out. Abolfazl Hassan Beigi, deputy from Damghan and a member of the Majlis Defense Affairs Committee noted that the pilot was one of the air forces' best wartime pilots. He added that several suspects have been arrested so far and a team of experts continues to investigate the cause of the crash.

FOREIGN

Olympic ban

Voice of America, Jan. 12 - For many years the world athletics community had banned the participation of South Africa for its policy of apartheid. Now, Associated Press reports that women's rights advocates want the same treatment for Iran and other countries that prevent women from joining their national teams. The Atlanta-plus group, a coalition of European and American activists set up a symposium in Paris to begin its campaign.

Diplomatic row

Kayhan Hawaii, Jan. 14 - Iran has decided to reduce its diplomatic ties with Norway due to "Oslo's support for the Iranian opposition and the author Salman Rushdie." A foreign ministry official said, "diplomatic relations are lowered and will be maintained at that level. While Norway does not change its position toward Iran, the ambassador will not return to Oslo."

Ressalat, Jan. 13 - Riyadh is trying to cover up its domestic problems by publishing reports about Iran's internal affairs. It repeats allegations disseminated by the People's Mojahedin of Iran.

Nuclear quest

AP, Jan. 10 - CIA director James R. Woolsey said Iran was "the long-term, chronic problem" for the United States that deserves "perhaps the most attention" by U.S. policymakers because of Iran's role in international terrorism and its potential as arms marketer.

AP, Jan. 9 - Defense Secretary William Perry told reporters that the United States was "very much concerned about the potential that Iran might become a nuclear development. "We do not consider that an acceptable development." U.S. and Israel are concerned that Iran could acquire nuclear weapons within five years and believes it could rebuild its nuclear program.

AP, Jan. 9 - Iran has signed an \$800 million deal with Russia to finish building a nuclear facility halted by the 1979 Islamic revolution. The agreement heightens concerns that Tehran is developing nuclear weapons. Iran is thought to be less than five years away from producing nuclear arms. Russia's participation in the deal was condemned by Iran's largest opposition group in exile, the Baghdad-based Mujahedeen Khalq. "Such undertakings only assist the religious-terrorist dictatorship in Iran to pursue expansionist goals to acquire nuclear weaponry." the group's spokesman, Ali Safavi, said.

FEATURE

"Here We Go Again," *The New York Times*, January 13, 1995;

by A.M. Rosenthal

Excerpts:

Here we go again. One more time, still one more time, the merchandisers of death, from China to Russia to Western Europe, are ready to build up the blackmail power and military potential of a virulent, marauding dictatorship. This time it is nothing less than they are peddling than nuclear military potential. The country is Iran, the most virulently anti-Western, anti democratic nation in the world, terrorism's headquarters.

Yes, yes, I know it is hard to believe, but do try because if Americans and their elected Republican and Democratic leaders do not stand firm, Western capital, Western technology and inexhaustible stock of Western self-destructiveness will combine to speed Iran on the road to nuclear military power.

Iran is pushing for delivery of "peaceful use" nuclear reactors purchased from China, Russia and Germany, among other merchandisers. So far, the U.S. has been able to block it. But Iran and its suppliers, including some U.S. allies, are getting ready for a big drive this spring when the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty is reviewed.

These reactors can be made to deliver plutonium, the radioactive poison essential to the production of nuclear bombs, which Iran does not yet possess in weapon quantity...

If a country decides to divert some of its "civilian" plutonium to military use, the international inspection system cannot find out before it is converted into bombs. Lovely.

But how about giving Iran reactors and getting its word of honor not to extract plutonium? The suggestion has been made. Next.

A world ban on civilian production of plutonium might help keep the danger under control. But in the end it will take the common sense and economic power of the U.S., plus real bipartisanship between Congress and the White House, to contain Iran's nuclear drive.

Iran is already on the road to the bomb. But some U.S. and Israeli officials believe the Iranian bomb is just five years away. Others say it will take longer. Given the record of accuracy of Western (and Israeli) foresight

about Iran, which runs from fair arrow-straight to miserable, it is safer to take the shorter estimate.

But even supposing the Iranian bomb is a decade away, is there any conceivable reason to bring the day closer except the pleasure of cutting our own throat?

Yes, two. The profits of the death trade. And the recurrent sentimental self-delusion that afflicts Western politicians and intellectuals about Mideast dictators... Now, heaven help us, it leads them to put the making of a nuclear weapon in the hands of the motherland of hate and terrorism.

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