

NEWS ON IRAN

No. 31 National Council of Resistance of Iran - Foreign Affairs Committee March 13, 1995

DOMESTIC

Protests, strikes

Voice of Mojahed, Mar. 9 - A large group of street vendors in Tehran's Ressalat street staged a protest in front of a Tehran municipality and clashed with the regime's agents. The unrest broke out after the municipality refused to give the vendors work permits.

Voice of Mojahed, Mar. 8 - Workers at Makoo's Asphalt factory protested harassment by government agents. They set a fuel tanker on fire. The explosion of the tanker caused heavy damages to the factory.

Iran Zamin, Mar. 2 - Some 300 employees and workers of Tehran Railway staged a sit-in at the Rah-Ahan Square (south Tehran). They marched to the Park-e Shahr (City Park) in central Tehran and continued their sit-in at the parking of Tehran's municipality.

Guards equipped with helmets, fiberglass shields and batons immediately blocked off the area, preventing the public from entering neighboring alleys.

Iran Zamin, Mar. 2 - Subsequent to the arrest of many people in Babol during last Friday's anti-government demonstration, 400 relatives of those detained have staged a sit-in at the city's "Hamzeh Kelay" square. They demand the unconditional release of their children.

Nearly 5,000 people demonstrated last Friday after an indoor soccer match, clashing with the *Pasdaran* and attacking government banks. Security forces opened fire, wounding 40 protesters. The Guards arrested at least 100 people.

Voice of Mojahed, Feb. 28 - More than 600 residents of Soltan-Abad township in Robat Karim, 25 kms from Tehran, staged a protest gathering in front of Robat Karim's Water Department.

Mostly women, the protesters came out onto the streets and set tires on fire. Forces of the *Bassij*, the army and the police attacked the demonstrators and arrested a number of them.

Suppression

Jomhuri Islami, Mar 4 - Beginning March 8, the *Bassij* forces in Bushehr, southern Iran will stage an urban maneuver involving 15 battalions. The maneuvers will be held in four phases and the *Bassij* will take positions in strategic locations.

Corruption

Jomhuri Islami, Mar. 12 - General Director of the Intelligence Department in Zanjan, northwest Tehran, reported that 200 million rials (\$50,000) have been embezzled from the province's athletic department. Three government employees in the province's finance

department and four officials of the sewage treatment department were arrested on bribery charges.

Israeli radio, Mar. 9 - In an open letter, 135 Majlis deputies revealed that Bank Melli Iran, which operates under the direct supervision of the Ministry of Economy and Finance, has illegally withdrawn 70 billion rials (\$17.5 million) from the budget of the Iranian National Gas Company.

Kayhan, Feb. 27 - Director General of a department responsible for distributing sugar in the northern Mazandaran province was sentenced to five years in jail, 30 lashes and a fine of \$8,300. He had tried to sell 270 tons of subsidized sugar in the open market. Eight of his colleagues were fined and sentenced to seven years in jail.

Iran Zamin, Feb. 23 - The head of Iran's Aluminum factory was arrested for embezzling 880 million rials (\$220,000). During his trial, he was given a meager fine which he promptly paid and is now free.

Payam-e *Daneshjuy-e Bassiji*, Feb. 28 - The weekly reported that the head of a Sepah Bank branch in Tehran has embezzled 3.6 billion rials (\$650,000). The court sentenced Mohsen Zandieh and his wife to pay a fine of \$125 and spend 35 days in jail. He is now free and living lavishly in north Tehran.

High prices

Iran Zamin, Mar. 2 - In the two months since the start of the campaign to fight high prices, the price of a kilo of poultry has risen 41%, three dozen eggs 42%, a kilo of lamb 50%, and household appliances 25 to 30%. The price of freezers has doubled. The cost of a television set has increased by 45% and a telephone call by 70%.

Kayhan, Feb. 28 - The Supreme Economic Council and the Department of Agriculture raised prices for domestically produced tea by 100%. A kilo of butter rose by 50% to 21,000 rials. Last week it sold for 14,000 rials.

Poverty

Salam, Mar. 12 - Do you know that 127 people intend to sell their kidneys to provide for their children, wed their daughters and pay for the overdue rents? They hope that after years, their children can for once smile and have enough food to eat.

Education in crisis

Jomhuri Islami, Mar. 1 - The head of the Education Department in the city of Kahnouj, southern Iran, said that 70% of classes are held under the trees and inside tents. Only 30% are able to use what is called the new educational environment. The city has only one make-shift girl school. Out of the 2,200 elementary students in

1980-81 school year, only 58 made it to high school and 12 to universities. The rest dropped out because there were no schools near their villages.

FOREIGN

Rights abuses condemned

UPI, Mar. 8 - The U.N. Commission on Human Rights adopted a resolution Wednesday condemning Iran for human rights violations, specifically citing assassinations against Tehran's political opponents and Iran's failure to protect religious minorities. It was the 34th resolution adopted by various U.N. organs against Iran.

The National Council of Resistance welcomed the strongly worded resolution and called on the international community to take stiffer action against Iran. Massoud Rajavi said in a statement from Paris that "While the adoption of resolutions condemning the regime are quite necessary, they will prove effective only if accompanied by practical and specific measures and punishments. It is not a coincidence that the mullahs have taken maximum advantage of the world community's inaction and become more brazen in continuing their crimes." Rajavi urged the Security Council to implement an arms and oil embargo against Tehran and to prosecute the "leaders of this evil regime" in an international tribunal for crimes against humanity.

International Women's Day

NCR Secretariat, Mar. 8 - Expressing hope for the liberation of Iranian women from the mullahs' oppression, Mrs. Maryam Rajavi, the Resistance's President-elect, congratulated International Women's Day to the Iranian people and women.

She said: For women throughout the world, this day conveys the message of resistance for freedom and symbolizes the struggle against gender-based discrimination. Owing to their unique status, women of Iran must cherish this day more than others. They are engaged in resistance against a regime whose distinct characteristic is enmity toward women.

Mrs. Rajavi added: Women's magnificent role in the Resistance movement coupled with the need to compensate for Khomeini's oppression, make it imperative that Iranian women take on the role of guiding the society for an era. This will guarantee their emancipation from the age-old sexual oppression and the evil effects of Khomeini's rule. Women, along side men, will rebuild the ruins left from the reign of the clerics.

Mullahs prepare for attacks on NLA

Voice of Mojahed, Mar. 12 - According to a plan under consideration for sometime in the Supreme Security Council, the mullahs are preparing to launch a large scale offensive into Iraq from several fronts.

In the Council's latest session last week, officials stressed that the operation must be undertaken at the first possible opportunity, emphasizing, "The Mojahedin must be finished, otherwise the system's foundation will be endangered." The objective is to attack the Resistance's bases and occupy parts of Iraqi territory.

The regime has amassed large contingents of the Guards Corps forces and set up artillery units along the Iran-Iraq frontier, in the Qasr-e Shirin region. It has also stationed forces in Ilam, Mehran and Dehloran in the west. Ali Aqa Mohammadi, Khamenei's representative and head of the office on Iraqi affairs, has gone to Ahwaz in the south.

FEATURE

"Iran's high octane blood money," *The Boston Globe*, March 2, 1995;

By Jeff Jacoby;

Excerpts:

Who bankrolls Iran's worldwide campaign of terror? How does it pay for its domestic regime of repression, torture and state murder? Whence comes the money to fund its stockpiling of chemical and biological weapons and its crash program to build nuclear bombs? Where do the mullahs find an investor willing to underwrite their bloody drive to export Islamic revolution across the Middle East?...

The United States, more than any other source, supplies the wherewithal that the butchers of Tehran use to sustain their homicidal jihad against the west.

Blowing up US Marines, hijacking airlines, acquiring Scud missiles from North Korea, a bounty on the head of Salman Rushdie, detonating car bombs in Argentina, hunting down and killing Iranian dissidents in Europe, running terrorist training camps in Sudan, persecuting religious minorities, promoting fundamentalist Muslim sedition in Egypt and Algeria, killing Jews, sponsoring Hamas and Hezbollah, oppressing women - these things don't come cheap. They cost money...

US oil companies in 1994 purchased nearly a third of Iran's oil exports, pumping \$4.2 billion into the mullahs' treasury. Add to that more than \$700 million worth of computers, engineering supplies, electronic components, helicopters and other sophisticated technology sold to Iran by American corporations last year and the total volume of US-Iranian trade reaches nearly \$5 billion. The United States, the country Iran's rulers abominate above all others, is now Iran's No.1 trade partner...

Iran is happy to let Americans supply the rope that will be used to hang them. Or in this case, to let Apple and Hewlett-Packard supply the computers, to let Chrysler build the Jeep plant, to let Motorola export the hard discs, to let Boeing sell the jetliners...

And Iran is not merely happy but desperate to sell the lion's share of its oil to Exxon, Texaco, Mobil, and other US companies. Iran's economy is in extremes. Inflation is running at estimate 70 percent, 15 million workers are unemployed, and incomes are so low... that more than 60 percent of Iranians now live below the poverty line. Tehran's short-term debt is massive, its credit worthiness in tatters, and its shortage of hard currency acute. The tormented people of Iran are sick of the despotic clerics. Already a few riots have broken out. If it were not for Exxon's dollars, the regime, might collapse tomorrow.

Do we care?

When US officials discuss Iran they mince no words. Secretary of State Warren Christopher calls it "an outlaw

state" that "sows terror and subversion across the entire Arab world." President Clinton's senior advisor on Near East affairs labels Iran "the foremost state sponsor of terror and assassination across the globe." House Speaker Newt Gingrich calls for a US policy "designed to force the replacement of the current regime in Iran."

Tough talk - and hollow. It is backed up by nothing. Washington should be doing everything it can think of short of military invasion to crush the Islamic dictators - from supporting the Iranian resistance movement to grounding Iran's airline to shutting off its access to credit to declaring its oil illegal contraband.

Instead, we proceed with business as usual. We cluck about Iran's global crimes but preserve a perfect silence about Iran's global markets. Our hypocrisy is deafening.

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