

The Shah's cleanup—BP and Shell next?

Countering London with a purge of Iran's corrupt Bahai elite

The Shah of Iran took decisive action last week to end the crisis tearing apart his country, imposing a military government on the country for the first time in 25 years and expediting an unprecedented anticorruption campaign that has resulted in the arrest of some of Iran's most prominent political figures.

The Shah's actions have halted an orgy of destruction and bloodshed, which has been led by exiled Iranian religious leader Ayatollah Khomeini. Acting as an agent of Israeli and British intelligence, Khomeini, in connection with urban terrorists and Iranian students, called last week for a holy war against the Shah in order to establish a reactionary "Islamic Republic."

Underlying the Shah's imposition of military rule is the powerful backing of the prime movers of the European Monetary System — West Germany, France, and Japan. Since the Nov. 6 announcement of a military government, the Shah has broadened his crackdown against powerful royalists associated with the Bahai sect, a secret society created by British intelligence and headquartered in Haifa, Israel. The arrest of former Prime Minister and Minister of Court Amir Abbas Hoveida Nov. 8 is the latest in a roundup of numerous political and business figures over the last 48 hours on charges of corruption. Numerous figures associated with the Iranian secret police SAVAK, including its former strong man General Nassiri, have also been detained.

British colonial domination nears end

The Shah's current crackdown is seen by Iranian diplomatic sources as the opening to finally completing the 1953 "first phase" of Iran's oil nationalization, by expelling both Royal Dutch Shell and British Petroleum, the majority holders in the 14-company consortium that still markets most of Iran's crude oil. Well-placed sources reveal that numerous powerful Bahaiists still have close contacts with BP; some, such as Hoveida, are still on BP's payroll from the days before the nationalization.

According to a source in West Germany's Economics Ministry, Iran could easily complete nationalization within a 24- to 48-hour period. But, the source warned, the key to the success of the move would rest on whether other oil companies with large international marketing capacities would make the

political commitment to aid the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) in marketing its crude. The danger in forcing out BP and its sister company Royal Dutch Shell, he said, is that the two companies would organize an international boycott of Iranian crude.

Iranian sources concur that the Shah could instantly rally tremendous support behind his regime and undercut the opposition, if he were to announce to his nation a move against BP and Royal Dutch. Such an action would solicit the strong nationalistic sentiment of most Iranians, who still strongly resent the dominant presence of British Petroleum advisors and managers in Iran's oil-fields, as a vestige of the intensely hated period of British colonial domination of Iran. It was in that era that many of Iran's most corrupt oligarchical families first established their predatory relationship to the nation.

European diplomatic sources say that Iran has been hit unsparingly with one destabilization after another precisely in order to destroy "the model of Third World development." While the same London-centered political and financial interests have maneuvered to undercut the European Monetary System are running the anti-Shah campaign, participants in the EMS have made no secret of their intentions to expand their aid to Iran's modernization campaigns as a crucial priority.

Both the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe are also working behind the scenes to support the Shah, and have publicized their concern for the Shah's survival in numerous press statements. Significantly, *Pravda* last week likened the Shah's current domestic policy to his "White Revolution" of the early 1960s, when the feudal religious and landed aristocratic classes were expropriated through land reform. Since then these interests have maintained power through both speculative business ventures and high government and military positions. Now the Shah's anticorruption purge is forcing these figures out of power. In this connection, both *Le Figaro* and the *New York Post* report an exodus of prominent wealthy Persian Jewish families, who are known to have a longstanding alliance with Iran's decadent royalist families.

Arab and Soviet support for the Shah

According to Arab diplomatic sources, the heads of state that recently attended the Arab summit at

Baghdad discussed support for the Shah. Iraq and other Arab states agreed to take behind-the-scenes action to ensure the Shah's survival. In particular, the Arabs are fearful that a full-scale Shi'ite Muslim "holy war" in Iran would spill over into the vital oil-producing region of the Persian Gulf. Iraq has a large Shi'ite population which would easily be affected, and a growing population of Muslims resides on the Soviet southern border.

The Arab oil-producing states have, moreover, acted forcefully to quell all fears of an international oil crisis as a result of widespread labor strikes, which had closed down Iran's oil fields up until Nov. 8. Saudi Arabian Oil Minister Zaki Yamani, in a statement that went almost entirely unreported in the Western press, vowed this week to increase Saudi production to offset Iran's diminished output. The Saudi move was meant to throw cold water on oil-crisis-mongering both from Britain's Foreign Secretary David Owen and his cothinkers, U.S. Energy Department head James Schlesinger and Henry Kissinger.

According to French radio in a Nov. 7 broadcast, a close confidant of the Shah announced that it was neither the Soviet Union nor the U.S. which was destabilizing Iran, but a "third force." This is as close as the Shah has come to openly naming Zionist and British intelligence for their crimes against Iran. The quick expulsion of BP and Royal Dutch Shell would assuredly get the message across.

— Judith Wyer

Who's protecting Khomeini in France?

French diplomatic sources say that there is an intense fight on between "various intelligence services in France" over the continued presence of Ayatollah Khomeini there.

A clue to who's sponsoring the anti-Shah religious leader is the solid support which France's daily *Le Monde* has given him since early this year, while also consistently publishing propaganda against the Shah. *Le Monde* is closely associated with powerful French Zionists, in particular the Rothschild family. And significantly, the director of the N.M. Rothschild Bank, John Loudon, was until last year the head of Royal Dutch Shell. Another link in the chain is the fact that it was Morocco's King Hassan who personally arranged for Khomeini to seek exile in France; Hassan is known for his longstanding ties to the same French Zionist networks.

Zionist support for Khomeini may at first seem paradoxical, given Iran's close ties to Israel. But these Zionist circles, and their friends in the City of London, have been publicly demanding the establishment of an anti-Soviet military pact dominating the Mideast, conforming to Henry Kissinger's scheme for an Israeli-Iran military axis. Khomeini is providing one way to either force the Shah into line or replace him with someone more amenable to the Kissinger gameplan.

French, Soviets warn Khomeini

In his "Letter from Baghdad," Philippe de Bausset, Le Figaro's Mideast correspondent, warns Khomeini that his provocative organizing, which the French government is closely monitoring, may result in his expulsion from France:

The Baghdad government is astonished by the fact that the French government has granted asylum to Ayatollah Khomeini. Iraq had taken care of him by expelling him, "manumilitari." Whatever the cost, the Baghdad government wants to preserve its relations with Iran for economic as well as political reasons.

Baghdad especially wants the Shah to remain in power, consi-

dering on the one hand, that if the army were to replace him (the lesser of two evils), it would lead in the short term to a resurgence in tension between Teheran and Baghdad, probably through some Kurdish uprising. And, on the other hand, a fanatical religious Shi'ite revolution — a holy war — would engender indescribable economic chaos in Iran, which would fatally devolve into political warfare....

In such a situation, there are question marks concerning the French attitude. Even though he was put under close surveillance at his residence, Ayatollah Khomeini succeeded, from the holy city of Nadjai (Iraq), where he was living for 15 years, in publishing incendiary messages, which passed through a very organized network of Mullahs....

Teheran had asked, after the events of August, that the Ayatollah be more closely surveilled, which

was done, but without success. It was then decided in Iraq to expel him, but allow him the choice of his exile. Kuwait was asked but refused. Turkey delayed its answer. Algeria and Libya offered, on the contrary, to grant him asylum, and the Ayatollah refused.

It was finally through the mediation of Morocco and a special envoy of King Hassan, a man who is interested in playing a role in the present evolution of this region of the world, that Ayatollah Khomeini landed in France, with, it appears, only a three-month, but renewable, visa.

Gaullist: Expel Iranian provocateur

Gaullist RPR Party Deputy and member of the National Assembly Foreign Affairs Commission, Didier Julia has asked the French government to throw Ayatollah Khomeini out of the country.