

But for now, Bani-Sadr is just trying to stay alive politically. This has taken him so far as to defend the army and the air force when members of the IRP noted that the U.S. helicopters on the ground in Iran, abandoned after the aborted American raid, were bombed by the Iranian Air Force, thus destroying precious papers and evidence concerning the raid.

The Stanford mafia

In the pages of the Iranian press, the IRP has taken to attacking the so-called "Stanford mafia" around Bani-Sadr. This group derives its name from the fact that many, if not most, of them have been trained at Stanford University in California. Bani-Sadr is well-known for statements following the Iranian Revolution that "Teh-eran is a monstrous parasitical city ..." which "I propose to depopulate." He called for the Cambodianization of Iran "by persuasion and not by force." Bani-Sadr's prime intelligence contacts in Europe are with the anthropology and sociology departments of the Sorbonne and the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes of Paris. He is a protégé of French radicals, Jean Pierre Vigiers, Rene Dumont, and Michel Foucault who worked with Jean Paul Sartre in running French environmentalist and terrorist networks. In Britain, Bani-Sadr is associated with the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation and in Italy, with the Lelio Basso Foundation which works closely with the Mujaheddin.

According to travelers recently returned from Iran, numerous government ministries are presently staffed with young Iranians who were educated either at Stanford University or Georgetown University in Wash-ington.

For every step that he takes toward bringing Iran into alignment with the Anglo-American camp, Bani-Sadr is thus further tarred by the IRP-Beheshti crowd as an American "agent."

According to sources close to Bani-Sadr, the Iranian president is also seeking to form an alliance with the Mujaheddin. Recently, the leader of the Mujaheddin, Massoud Rajavi, served as a mediator between Bani-Sadr and the rebel Kurds, although the mission failed to reach any positive result. Rajavi's international connections reveal his close links to the same political circles that, in the days before the revolution, backed Bani-Sadr. Attacking the U.S. raid into Iran last month, in an interview in an Iranian newspaper, Rajavi made an argument that sounded exactly like something that Cyrus Vance might have said just before he resigned. The hostage-taking episode in Iran "enabled some forces in the United States to overcome the public's Vietnam complex, push moderate elements aside, ensure that Brzezinski's line prevails over Vance's, isolate Iran ... and blackmail the European allies."

Iran embraces Afghan rebels

by Judith Wyer

The Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers ended this week sharply divided over the issue of challenging Soviet military presence in Afghanistan. Iranian Foreign Minister Sadegh Ghotbzadeh led the call for an Islamic opposition to the U.S.S.R., with Pakistan's military strongman General Zia ul-Haq supporting him. They were opposed by Syria, Algeria, Libya, South Yemen and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Ghotbzadeh issued the most virulent anti-Soviet diatribe at the conference and stunned the participants from the 38 Islamic nations when he paraded eight Afghan Muslim insurgents into the conference hall as part of the Iranian delegation. Ghotbzadeh called for full backing by the Islamic nations of the Muslim rebels' insurgency against the Soviet-backed government of Babrak Kar-mal. In his speech to the gathering he called the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan "a flagrant violation of inter-national law carried out in total disrespect for the sov-ereignty and territorial integrity of Afghanistan." Ghotbzadeh later told the press that "for us the liberation of Afghanistan is not less important than the liberation of Palestine." He warned that if the hostilities do not cease between the Muslim rebels and Soviet occupying troops, "we have no choice but to help them with every-thing we have. ... We will go all the way" with the Afghan rebels.

Western diplomats were surprised by Ghotbzadeh's vitriolic denunciation of Moscow in view of a newly agreed upon Iranian-Soviet trade package. One source noted that Iran "has never taken such a blatant public stance against the U.S.S.R."

Also a little unnerved by Ghotbzadeh's performance was Pakistan's General Zia, whose country hosted the affair. In his keynote speech, Zia issued a more low key denunciation of the Soviet occupation of Pakistan's neighbor and in this context urged the conference to back his plan to create an "Islamic Army" to contain "the Soviet threat" to the region. The Islamic govern-ments of Pakistan and Iran are the prime client states of Great Britain in its effort to forge a NATO-controlled

Islamic military pact against the U.S.S.R. Britain's Foreign Minister Lord Carrington made public such a plan last month in Washington following talks with President Carter. Britain and its Islamic friends have attempted to use the "threat of superpower aggression" in the strategic Persian Gulf-Indian Ocean region as justification for the Islamic pact scheme.

Unlike Ghotbzadeh, Zia, however, has not flaunted his support for the Afghan rebels, knowing such a cavalier action might yield direct Soviet military reprisals against his shaky regime. Iran got a taste of such reprisals yesterday when Soviet helicopters flew across the Iranian-Afghan border and attacked a border village in northeastern Iran. This was the first military adventure launched from Afghanistan since the December Soviet invasion and the first time since the 1946 Soviet occupation of northern Iran that the Soviets have made any incursions there.

Iran's border with Afghanistan has been one route for smuggling logistical support to the Muslim insurgents in Afghanistan. And Pakistan has become a prime conduit for Chinese arms shipments since Zia worked out an agreement with Peking during a recent visit there.

A cosmetic reconciliation

During the last day of the conference Pakistan made a proposal to the conference that a committee of Islamic Foreign Ministers be formed to help resolve the Afghan crisis by facilitating a Soviet troop withdrawal. Earlier, there had been reports in numerous European newspapers that Iran and Pakistan would jointly attempt mediation in Kabul.

But according to senior diplomatic sources, the only country with the credibility to work out such an agreement with the Kabul government and Moscow is India. The Indian Foreign Minister Ram Sathe arrived in Kabul for talks of the 22 or May, the same day the Indian Information Minister met with Gromyko in Moscow. The French government is known to be heavily involved behind the scenes in such a diplomatic effort, the baseline of which is a four-point plan for neutrality and peace in the Indian Ocean region worked out jointly by India's Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and French President Giscard d'Estaing earlier this year.

Pakistan's proposal is primarily aimed not at resolving the Afghanistan problem, but at unifying the conference. Arab sources noted that Pakistan was even reluctant to make the Afghanistan situation such a vital issue at the conference, knowing it would seriously factionalize the participants and make Pakistan's key proposal, the Islamic Army plan, that much more difficult to sell. Syria and the PLO, who reportedly almost walked out following Ghotbzadeh's display of the Afghan insurgents, called on the conference to recognize the government of

Babrak Karmal. Pakistan's Foreign Minister Agha Shahi and other speakers made a concerted effort to center the conference on the issue of the Arab-Israeli conflict, Palestinian rights and returning the city of Jerusalem to Islamic control in order to rally the conference to unity.

The Afghanistan rebels were met with reserve by most of the attending Islamic delegations. Abdul Rahsoul Sayaf, the head of the Islamic Alliance for the Liberation of Afghanistan, spoke to the conference's plenary session but later told the press that "unfortunately, the conference did not do what we expected." He also bemoaned the fact that the wealthy Islamic oil producing nations such as Saudi Arabia and the other gulf states have not been forthcoming in financially backing the rebels. At this conference, unlike the January conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers, there was no resolution condemning the U.S.S.R.

A strong undertone of the conference was the building rivalry between the Iranian regime and its neighboring Arab states. Ghotbzadeh backed up his call for a Pan-Islamic challenge to Moscow's presence in Afghanistan with threats to the leadership of the Arab world. Ghotbzadeh threatened that Iran will export revolution to moderate Arab regimes, notably Saudi Arabia, who refuse to back the Afghanistani insurgency as well as fund a Pakistani military build up. Riyadh's hesitation has brought strong criticism from the London *Times* May 19, a cloaked statement from the Thatcher government.

Le Figaro reported May 19 that Ghotbzadeh had announced that Iran is prepared to export Islamic revolution through the Persian Gulf "from Kuwait to the Straits of Hormuz" if the Arab world does not back up his anti-Soviet stance. Last month he toured several Arab nations. The trip, just days following the U.S. invasion of Iran, was calculated to provoke strong anti-U.S. sentiment and with it, militance against the Arab gulf regimes traditionally associated with Washington.

Coincident with Ghotbzadeh's warnings, Iran is currently conducting naval maneuvers in the gulf and the Oman Sea. European sources report that Iranian vessels were seen close to the Shatt al Arab area off Iraq's coastline, a region which until 1975 was a source of conflict between Iran and Iraq. Iran launched these maneuvers from the Abu Musa island in the gulf, the center of dispute with the Arab emirate of Bahrain, a strong ally of Saudi Arabia.

It is said that the swashbuckling Ghotbzadeh nearly provoked a fist fight with the Foreign Minister of Iraq at the conference. Tensions have been high between Baghdad and Teheran in recent months, since Iraq, with covert support from Saudi Arabia, has been backing various anti-Khomeini movements in Iran.