

IRAN

A falling out of thieves invites intervention

by Nancy Coker

With Ayatollah Khomeini either dead or near death, an eruption of factional violence among the various warring ruffians comprising the clergy-dominated Islamic Republican Party could rapidly lead to the murder of the American hostages and spark a U.S. military invasion that could escalate into a full-blown confrontation in the strategic and oil-rich Persian Gulf.

Until now, Khomeini has been a sort of perverse unifying symbol among this following—a motley and corrupt band of cutthroat mullahs and their hangers-on. With Khomeini out of the picture and the population being acclimated to his demise, the various factions are preparing to fight it out—a brawl in which the hostages may become expendable political pawns.

The only coherent forces having the potential to take on the mullahs inside Iran are organized around the Soviet-connected Tudeh Party. The Soviets have no intention of sitting by as Iran continues to disintegrate further, exporting Islamic radicalism throughout the region and into the Soviet Union itself.

Under these circumstances the large community of Iranian émigrés located in the United States and Europe are preparing to make their move to establish some form of order against the corrupt and squabbling mullahs who are incapable of exercising power.

According to intelligence sources, the disintegration of Iran could well become the Gulf flashpoint between the United States and the Soviet Union, especially since Israel's Mossad intelligence service is actively fomenting such a confrontation. Last week, the Mossad-linked Voice of Lebanon, a private radio station controlled by the Israeli-linked branch of the Lebanese Falange Party, reported that five American hostages had been killed in



Ayatollah Beheshti

Teheran. The report could have provoked a U.S. military intervention into Iran, as it coincided with the Pentagon's announcement that 1,800 Marines had been dispatched from the Indian Ocean to the Sea of Oman area near Iran.

Whatever the various scenarios and deals that are being cooked up for Iran, one thing has become evident in recent weeks: The *EIR* and its exposés have thrown a monkey wrench into the operational feasibility of virtually all of the scenarios and deals. The *EIR* "has taken over the entire Iranian exile community in this country and abroad," University of Pittsburgh Professor Richard Cottam recently lamented to a colleague. As such, the *EIR* has now become a "wild card" in the Iran situation, crimping the plans of the Anglo-American gamemasters while at the same time affording the republican forces within the exile community and their sponsors a certain margin for their own operations to restore order and sanity to Iran. According to Cottam, who is one of the key figures instrumental in bringing Khomeini to power, the *EIR* has "changed the rules of the game."

"For example," Cottam recently pointed out, "it was the *EIR* that made British intelligence and its role in the Iranian revolution an issue. Every Iranian that I talk to is now convinced of Britain's dirty operations in Iran."

Last week, Iranian officials closed down the Anglican bishopric in Isfahan for carrying out espionage and terror in Iran. It was also revealed that the United States had financed the Anglican outpost to the tune of \$500 million, and that the Anglicans were working through the Bahai sect. The Anglicans and the Bahais' activities are known widely in Iran through circulation of *EIR*.

Iranian intelligence sources report that Ayatollah

INTERVIEW

Richard Cottam on his thwarted Iranian plans

A colleague of University of Pittsburgh Professor Richard Cottam has informed the EIR of Cottam's latest activities: "deprogramming" Iranian exiles into "accepting Khomeini and the Iranian revolution as a fact of life." Cottam is particularly concerned about the role of the EIR in breaking open the "controlled environment" that he and others have been trying to impose on the Iranian exile community—an environment of despair and helplessness.

Cottam, a former State Department official who spent years building the opposition to the Shah in Iran, was the personal contact man and controller of Ibrahim Yazdi and Yazdi's understudy, Sadegh Ghotbzadeh. Excerpts from the following conversation with Cottam have been made available to the EIR.

Q: Have you seen the recent charges by Empress Farah accusing Brzezinski of being behind the Shah's over-

throw in the interests of playing the Islamic card against the Soviets?

Cottam: No, I haven't seen those yet. Her charges sound to me like LaRouche.

Q: The presidential candidate?

Cottam: Yes. It's bizarre, but LaRouche's craziness has taken over the entire Iranian exile community in this country and abroad. LaRouche puts out this magazine, the *Executive Intelligence Review*, that comes out once a week. And the exiles read it like nothing they've ever read before. It's their Bible. As soon as it's off the press, they buy it up. Everyone reads it. And they believe all of it!

I've been trying to get it across to them that the elaborate conspiracy theories of the *EIR* are not true. But

LETTERS

EIR's Iran coverage draws responses

Dear Editor:

Recent copies of the New Solidarity Press Service have tied my name to some Iranian terrorist groups in the United States and a link supposedly between the two governments!!! A ridiculous fiction and a well-deserved scenario for the TV serials.

I cannot imagine how an instrument of the mass media could act in such an irresponsible manner, accusing people and creating damage to them in every aspect without the slightest investigation from the proper sources of both nations.

During my time in office, I severely dealt with corrupt elements. Talking to your office, it seemed the story is made out of information given by some of those elements cur-

rently living in the U.S. Unfortunately at this time the only option left is to prosecute it through legal channels.

There never was, at any time before and after revolution, any sympathy, not to mention connection, between me and any element of the present ruling group in Iran.

Throughout my life I have been an advocate of principled and moral character and I intend to stay that way.

**Admiral Kamal Habibolahi
Ex-Chief, Imperial Iranian Navy**

The Editor replies:

The best course of action for all parties concerned would be for Ad-

miral Habibolahi to come forward and give a frank and full account of the events in Iran in which he was a participant in the early months of 1979. The Admiral at that time had affixed his signature to an infamous document in which the Iranian General Staff proclaimed its neutrality in the contest between the then duly constituted Iranian State and Ayatollah Khomeini.

That declaration of neutrality was instrumental in bringing Khomeini to power and the Admiral cannot evade personal responsibility. Whether he and others of his colleagues were coerced into signing that declaration is not known. The Admiral will be performing a vital public service and assisting in restoring his military honor if he explains publicly the circumstances under which he was made to sign a document that was illegal from the standpoint of both military and civilian law prevailing at the time in Iran. If he was coerced by General Huyser or General Gharabaghi into dignifying that illegal action, both the Iranian

the problem is that they don't listen to me, because they see me as part of the conspiracy, as part of the Muslim Brotherhood. The reason for this is that the *EIR* targeted me once in one of its articles.

What the Iranians here don't realize is that, contrary to what the *EIR* says, Kissinger, Rockefeller, Brzezinski are their best friends, not their enemies. In going after the British, or the National Security Council, they are going after the wrong targets!

Q: What are you focusing on these days vis-à-vis Iran?

Cottam: Since I've become so much of a target, I've had to lay low. I'm now doing theoretical work on conspiracy theories—where they come

from, who picks them up, why they get picked up, how to get rid of them. What I am trying to figure out is how to preempt these conspiracy theories from taking root. If people are aware of their tendency to succumb to conspiracy theories, they become sensitized to them and resist them. It becomes a self-denying process, and the conspiracy theory is rejected.

Q: Have you had any luck with the Iranian exiles with this approach?

Cottam: Unfortunately, not too much. Most of them won't meet with me any more because of the charges put against me. This is because of the *EIR* again. What the *EIR* has written, and the influence it has in the exile community, cuts access for me. And access to Iranians is very impor-

tant for my work.

However, I have spent some time with some individuals in the exile community. I play around with them using the theory I'm developing. I show them that the U.S. did not put Khomeini into power, that the British were not behind the revolution. I tell them that maybe, in the past, the British were influential in Iran, but not any more. Eventually, they get convinced, and it depresses them. Because once they stop believing that the U.S. is behind what happened in Iran, they feel that the situation is hopeless, that there is no way out, and they give up. They realize that the U.S. has no leverage in the situation. They realize that the U.S. is helpless in the face of the Iranian revolution, and so are they.

nation and the world are entitled to know.

Unless the Admiral's position vis-à-vis this specific historical circumstance is clarified, it will be virtually impossible for the *Executive Intelligence Review* to reevaluate the nature of the Admiral's links with the terrorist networks run by the rug-merchant Bahram Nahidian and Mr. Nahidian's controllers, the banker Cyrus Hashemi and Captain Setudeh. Captain Setudeh, after all, was a Habibolahi appointee as the public record shows.

Should the good admiral assist us in clarifying these matters, this publication shall be more than pleased to publish the truth, especially if the truth does honor and justice to Admiral Habibolahi.

Criton M. Zoakos
Editor-in-Chief

Aug. 26, 1980

Dear Sir or Madam:

As counsel for First Gulf Bank

& Trust Limited for Dr. Cyrus Hashemi and for Mr. Reza Hashemi, we are herewith demanding a formal retraction of each and every reference to or naming of our clients published at any time by New Solidarity International Press Service, the U.S. Labor Party and or any affiliated or related organizations including but not limited to *Executive Intelligence Review*, *Investigative Leads*, *New Solidarity Special Report* and any other named and unnamed pamphlets, papers or publication.

References purporting to link our client with propaganda, terrorist activities, drug activities, protest or financial support thereof, or any related activities are wholly false, untrue and defamatory and have caused our clients severe damage, including damage which is as yet uncalculated.

We demand that this retraction be published in the next regular issue of each publication in which our clients' names have appeared and that such retraction appear in as conspicuous and public a manner as that

in which the defamatory statements were published.

O. Jackson Cook

The Editor replies:

Please be advised that before this publication printed any account of your clients' reported activities on behalf of terrorist networks in the United States—accounts based on numerous responsible reports—it visited Mr. Hashemi's offices in New York City for the purpose of verifying or refuting the reports at hand. Mr. Hashemi refused to meet personally with our representative and he instead delegated the interview to a gentleman claiming to be Mr. Hashemi's attorney at the time.

Given the opportunity to review our charges against Mr. Hashemi, that attorney refused to either confirm or deny those charges. We are therefore justified in claiming that the burden of disproving our charges falls upon you.

Criton M. Zoakos
Editor-in-Chief

Khalkhali, who has recently surfaced on the side of Iranian President Abolhassan Bani-Sadr, is drawing from old *EIR* exposés of former Foreign Minister Ibrahim Yazdi as the source material for his charges that Yazdi is a creation of British and American intelligence. Yazdi has been the ringleader of efforts inside Iran to persecute Iran's Jewish minority and was personally responsible for the ouster of Jewish leader Esmail Farmandpur from the parliament.

Tensions run high

The likelihood of a U.S. military move to exploit the Iran crisis as an international hotspot is being heightened by the recent—and deliberate—flareup of tensions between Washington and Teheran.

Last week, the Iranian militants holding the American hostages provoked a heated exchange with the U.S. State Department by issuing a public statement that “all hostages and the attackers will be sent to hell if the United States attempts the slightest military action.” The militants declared that they are on “full alert” and have decided to transfer some of the hostages to new secret locations “in order to thwart any possible plot.” The militants announced that they are bracing for a raid to occur some time prior to the Nov. 4 presidential election in the United States—the one-year anniversary of the embassy takeover in Iran.

The State Department responded that the United States will hold Teheran responsible for any harm to the hostages. The statement was worded to imply that Washington will use force.

Last week, President Bani-Sadr announced blackout drills in three of Iran's western provinces in light of “the faint possibility of an incursion into Iranian airspace.”

Reports persist that a deal to avert a military intervention may be in the works. Foreign Minister Sadegh Ghotbzadeh—Richard Cottam's personal protégé—has begun to send out signals that the faction in Iran around himself and Bani-Sadr may be interested in working out some sort of arrangement on the hostage situation, an indication that a comparatively realistic faction inside the Anglo-American intelligence establishment wants to put the lid on the crisis. The deal is contingent on Ghotbzadeh's commitment to maintaining Iran in an “anti-Soviet” mode. On cue, Ghotbzadeh blasted Iran's communist Tudeh Party and the Soviet Union for being responsible for the turmoil in Iran.

Khomeini: on his way out

Whether dead or alive—rumors from Teheran have it that he is very much dead—it is clear that Khomeini will not be a factor in Iran much longer. In a statement he purportedly made last week, Khomeini said as much. “The nation exists in my absence and the people know what they must do,” Khomeini said. Earlier, Ayatollah Montazeri, the expected successor to Khomeini, had

announced that Khomeini was too sick to receive visitors and too sick to speak, an announcement interpreted by Iranians to mean that Khomeini had died.

In this situation, anarchic upsurges can explode from Iran's tribes and minorities, all of whom have been rushing to make contacts with the intelligence agencies of Israel, Britain, the U.S., and others to build up their assets for a civil war.

Alluding to this “Frankenstein” aspect of the Iran crisis, former Prime Minister Shahpour Bakhtiar, in an interview with London's *Now!* magazine, stated that he sees “a real danger that the fanatics now in power could just blow up the oil wells.” Other intelligence sources report that the chaos could spill over into the Gulf countries of Kuwait and Bahrain, igniting radical student unrest now simmering there.

Beheshti: a Carter administration agent

Inside Iran, attempts to put together some kind of government have failed repeatedly because of intense feuding within the Islamic Republican Party and between IRP and the anti-IRP opposition congregated around Bani-Sadr. Prime Minister Mohammad Ali Rajai, the puppet of the IRP, and Bani-Sadr, the IRP's adversary, have been at loggerheads over the formation of a cabinet. No immediate end to the impasse is in sight.

In the eyes of the State Department and the National Security Council, the formation of a cabinet was viewed as the beginning of a new era of stability in Iran and the instrument for working out a deal over the hostages. In expectation of such a cabinet, the State Department has been stepping up direct and indirect contacts with Ayatollah Beheshti, the real power broker in the IRP. According to unconfirmed rumors circulating in Washington, Beheshti surfaced in Washington last week for consultation with Carter administration officials.

In addition, a source close to Bani-Sadr in Europe has turned over scandalous material to the *EIR* revealing that Beheshti is being secretly played as “the American card” by the Carter administration. “Beheshti is being covertly pushed by the United States as the best to work with,” the source reported. The source revealed Beheshti's work in Europe with SAVAK, the Shah's secret police apparatus. “Along with Ibrahim Yazdi, Beheshti has terrorized and killed his opponents in Iran who have the goods on his seedy past,” the source stated to *EIR*. Rumors are surfacing that Bani-Sadr's allies will soon unveil Beheshti's ties to Israel's Mossad.

Ghotbzadeh is likewise zeroing in on the IRP fanatics in a tacit alliance with Bani-Sadr. “Those who, seeking to wipe out all traces of approval of the Shah's regime, declare that science and specialization must take second place behind the Islamic religion are simply trying to impose their domination using the Koran as a cover.” ■