

of Bakhtiar's acceptance of the Shah's offer to form a government and govern Iran conjointly with the monarch, the Front leadership immediately expelled Bakhtiar.

Bakhtiar has, however, stated publicly that he is confident of splitting the Front and has the support of the very influential Dr. Ahmed Mossadegh, the son of Mohammed Mossadegh, founder of the National Front. The key to Bakhtiar's strategy rests with silencing the bellicose Khomeiny, who operates out of Paris, and continues to insist upon violent overthrow of the Shah. There are strong indications that the French are playing a critical behind the scenes role in aiding Bakhtiar in his efforts.

Both Bakhtiar and General Djam have longstanding ties to the French. Djam was educated in the French military academy and Bakhtiar at the Sorbonne, after which he fought in the French resistance during World War II. Both French diplomatic and press sources have looked favorably to Bakhtiar. While the French government has agreed to extend Khomeiny's visa, French intelligence again last week warned the 73-year-old Ayatollah against his revolutionary actions. Informed sources indicate that the French have agreed to keep Khomeiny rather than see him return to Iran where he could be more of a direct problem for the Shah and Bakhtiar.

According to *Le Figaro* of Jan 2, Bakhtiar is conducting ongoing talks with the more moderate Shiite leaders in Iran in order to build a consensus and isolate Khomeiny. At the same time he has offered Sanjabi command of a regency council which will rule in the Shah's place while he is away — a clear ploy to reunite the Front around a new Bakhtiar government.

Bakhtiar already has made it clear that Iran's foreign policy will take some drastic changes. Most importantly, he has called for the creation of a viable intelligence service by reconstructing the secret services, SAVAK — known for their brutal police repression — as a political intelligence agency. He has also announced that Iran will pull out of the London-created Central Treaty Organization, a clear indication that he is not interested in playing any cold war games against the Soviets.

With these body blows to British regional policy, Bakhtiar has added that Iran might halt the shipment of oil to Israel and South Africa. In an interview with *Le Figaro*, Bakhtiar has likened himself to the late French President Charles de Gaulle suggesting his struggle against British imperialism. In this light he has already shown himself to be a nationalist in the tradition of the anti-British Mossadegh, in whose cabinet he served 25 years ago. If this proves to be the case, Britain's longstanding domination of Iranian affairs through the presence of British Petroleum and Royal Dutch Shell will be curtailed.

— Judith Weyer

Turkish riots tied to 'international conspiracy'

Turkish Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit stated emphatically last week that the outbreak of sectarian violence in south-eastern Turkey was part of an international terrorist conspiracy. "Terrorism in every country originates from abroad," said Ecevit, "and it is a universal fact that it is not created by a single country. Turkey's situation is not different from any other country."

The bloody religious riots erupted on Dec. 26 in the southeastern provincial capital of Kahramanmaraş near the Syrian border, as a result of deliberate provocations by extremist commandoes linked to the neo-Nazi Nationalist Action Party. The leader of the Action Party, Col. Alparslan Turkes, maintains close ties with British, Chinese, and Israeli intelligence as well as with West German fascist Franz Josef Strauss. More than 100 people lost their lives in the violent clashes that took place between Sunni and Alevi (Shiite) Moslems in Kahramanmaraş. The incident marked a dramatic escalation in the series of bloody confrontations that left at least 1,000 dead in 1978 and many thousands wounded. To quell the violence and restore order, Ecevit declared martial law in Kahramanmaraş as well as in 12 other strife-torn provinces.

The outbreak of religious unrest, on top of the vicious left-right violence that has been steadily intensifying over the past several months, is a deliberate attempt by British intelligence to weaken Turkey's central government and transform the country into another Iran.

Expanding on this theme, terrorist specialist J. Bowyer Bell of Columbia University is pushing the line that Turkey is as unstable as Iran was one year ago, and that "prospects for further deterioration in 1979 should not be discounted." According to a report issued by the British intelligence-connected Probe International research firm, Bell "also expects a continuation of the revival of Islamic orthodoxy with significant implications for several Islamic countries."

Target Turkey

Turkey's impoverished southeast has long been the locale for British-run destabilization operations against the Turkish government. Since the founding of the Turkish republic by Kemal Ataturk, the British, through their networks in the Moslem clergy and through reactionaries like Turkes, have played upon Sunni-Alevi, Kurdish-Turkish, and left-right differences in the population.

It is clear that a prime goal of the unrest in Turkey is to provoke the military into carrying out a Chile-style generals' coup, whereby an army faction committed to NATO's confrontationist strategy and IMF austerity will take power in Ankara. So far, however, the military, even with martial law in effect, has given little indication that it

is interested in taking over, and instead is keeping a low profile.

The threat of new provocations continues. Four days after imposing martial law, Ecevit met with military leaders to work out a strategy for containing new outbursts of terrorism threatening his regime. "There is a possibility that terrorists may shift their activities outside martial law areas," Ecevit stated, announcing that troops would be reinforced in the 54 non-martial law provinces.

By declaring martial law, Ecevit has exposed himself to attacks from both the right as well as the left, including leftist factions within his own Republican Peoples Party. As a result of this pressure, Interior Minister Irfan Ozaydinli, who is coordinating the deployment of troops with the military command, was forced to resign Jan. 2.

Ecevit looks to EMS

Ecevit is making it clear that the political crisis in Turkey is tied to the country's economic problems, and that if economic stability is brought to Turkey, political stability will be ensured. "Our allies should be closely concerned with Turkey's economic difficulties," said Ecevit last week following the Kahramanmaras rioting, "and I hope that the U.S. will show solidarity and friendship in this time of difficulty."

The Turks are doing more than just hoping. At the Guadeloupe summit, a Turkish proposal is expected to be put forth requesting that a politically motivated loan mechanism be set up for Turkey to stabilize the economy. "The political will for forming this fund is there," Finance Minister Ziya Muezzinoglu stated last week—an oblique reference to the European Monetary System and the commitment of France and West Germany to use the EMS for the benefit of economies like Turkey's which are beleaguered by IMF pressure and debt obligations. The loan mechanism that Turkey is seeking is described as a five-year fund between \$1 and \$1.5 billion for financing Turkey's ambitious fourth five-year plan. The IMF has stubbornly opposed Turkey's import-based, growth-oriented plan, and has withheld credits for Turkey until Ankara decides to follow IMF austerity dictates.

—Nancy Parsons

Oil crisis danger is inflated

Last winter it was the coal strike that triggered the U.S. energy crisis; the previous year it was the even more severe natural gas crisis. Will this winter bring an oil crisis? Evelyn Rothschild's London *Economist* thinks so and in its Dec. 30 issue tries hard to convince Americans that a combined dollar and oil crisis is looming.

At first blush the argument for an oil crisis might look sound: Iran is the second largest oil exporter in the world, accounting for 10 percent of global oil exports. And everyone knows that current Iranian production has fallen

to a bare trickle. On Jan. 2, British Petroleum, the largest Western oil producer in Iran, announced a 35 percent cut in supplies to its customers for the first quarter of 1979, while Shell Oil's shipments have fallen by 10-15 percent.

In a late December meeting, the International Energy Agency, the consortium set up by former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger in 1974 to allocate oil in event of crisis, agreed, over Japan's protest, to consider a rationing program. In the U.S. on Jan. 2, a top spokesman for Mobil Oil said that IEA rationing was imminent and that rationing would take supplies from the U.S., causing shortages here.

Yet what is being made to look like a crisis by the *Economist* and certain co-thinkers in oil companies is in reality no crisis at all. This reality is so strong, in fact, that U.S. Secretary of Energy James R. Schlesinger — a perennial prophet of energy catastrophe — was forced to admit in a Jan. 3 Washington press conference that the Iranian oil cutoff was "serious but not critical" for at least the first quarter and "possibly through the summer." Further, Schlesinger said, the situation is under control in any case — barring other Iran-style "shocks."

There are three reasons why no oil crisis is objectively a probability at this time: increased Arab and other production, huge world stockpiles, and the immediate possibility of resumption of Iranian production.

On Dec. 28, Saudi Oil Minister Sheikh Zaki Yamani announced that Saudi Arabia would lift its 8.5 million barrel per day (mbd) production ceiling if the Iranian crisis continues. Saudi Arabia is currently pumping over 10 mbd; Kuwaiti output has jumped from its 1978 average of 1.5 mbd to over 2 mbd, and Iraq has expanded its output while other producers are gearing up to follow suit.

Meanwhile countries like West Germany, whose top crude supplier is Iran, point to massive stockpiles to weather the Iranian shortfall. Bonn's crude oil stockpiles are presently at 24 million metric tons, nearly twice the amount of crude supplied by Iran for the first three quarters of 1978. Of the two other economies where shortages could trigger an IEA allocation arrangement, Japan and Holland, only Holland has small stockpiles, but, as one disgruntled oil analyst said, "They should beggar Shell."

On Jan. 3, a spokesman for the Fuels and Energy Office of the U.S. Department of State said that under present circumstances, "it would take a very long time to trigger IEA."

In sum, the oil crisis threat at present is little more than press scare-mongering. The main danger is if this "big lie" gains sufficient credence, as in the 1973-74 oil hoax, to make another such hoax plausible. This could occur if the Iranian oil shutdown continues, or, in the context of broader, British-triggered crises in the Middle East. But the strong behind-the-scenes peace initiatives by the Saudis, Soviets and the French appear to augur poorly for continued destabilization of the Persian Gulf, as Soviet Premier Brezhnev's "let's talk" telegram to Saudi King Khalid indicates.

— Leif Johnson