

A de Gaulle for Iran?

The government of France, according to informed Iranian sources, has made a strategic decision to overturn the feudalist regime of the Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran, and install in its place a republican government led by Prime Minister Shahpour tiar. This is the significance of the well-publicized press conference held by Bakhtiar in Paris July 31, where the exiled leader emerged from six months' hiding to denounce the dictatorship of the mullahs as leading to economic catastrophe.

Comparing himself to the late Charles de Gaulle, Bakhtiar declared that Iran is under the influence of a foreign ideology which he would eradicate in the short-term future—having organized a resistance movement like de Gaulle's Free French. The success of the French-backed Bakhtiar initiative could have very far-reaching consequences in stemming the international drive for a return to a low-technology, genocidal Dark Age that is being led by the British oligarchy.

Like the survivors of Pol Pot's hideous Maoist experiment in Kampuchea, and like the triumphant revolutionaries in Nicaragua, the 35 million Iranians could thus be salvaged for a human future. Given the enormous strategic importance of Iran, a "Gaullist" success there could deal the oligarchists a mortal blow.

The French decision to support Bakhtiar reflects a more comprehensive commitment by President Giscard d'Estaing to challenge U.S. Middle East policy—including throwing full support to the Arab opposition to the Camp David pact. Under the headline, "President Giscard's Arab Plan," the French daily *Le Matin* reported Aug. 1 that France is now taking Western

leadership in relations with the Arab world. Author Henri Lauret, who confirmed his information with Arab diplomats, French government officials, and industrialists, reports that France is leading the European Community into a virtual alliance with Saudi Arabia, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, and perhaps Kuwait.

The basis of the policy is massive exports of nuclear plant and equipment to create a Euro-Arab zone of economic and energy prosperity and military security. Lauret concludes by "wondering" why Europe doesn't bill these exports in ECUs, the gold-backed unit of account of the European Monetary System.

France's diplomatic offensive coincides with the purge of British intelligence-linked agents under Iraq's new President Saddam Hussein that has included in its sweep Communist Party members, Khomeini-linked Shi'ite Muslims, Kurdish rebels, and a leading British businessman. The purge is expected to consolidate Iraq's alliance with Syria and Saudi Arabia and strengthen the Paris-

Baghdad ties. Moreover, according to highly placed Arab diplomatic officials, it will not have deleterious effects on relations with the Soviet Union, which is expected to support Hussein's crackdown.

It has also been learned that a purge is imminently expected in Syria of similar elements, opposed to the projected Syria-Iraq union. The axe will fall, sources report, on President Assad's brother Rifaat Assad and Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs Mohammed Haider—both among the most corrupt of Syria's officials.

Our information from Paris is that Bakhtiar's press conference evoked an "electric" excitement in the Iranian exile community throughout Western Europe and in the U.S.A. De Gaulle, whose Free French were driven out of the Middle East by a treacherous "ally" Winston Churchill during the Second World War, would be pleased at this turning the tables on the British Empire.

—Nora Hamerman

The Week in Brief

Former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger is running an operation to "domesticate" the Palestine Liberation Organization, using the Socialist International as his tool, the official Soviet daily Izvestia charged July 9. Kissinger who recently returned from the Middle East, will be traveling there again in the near future.

The Izvestia article is the first public signal from the USSR that it is aware of the Anglo-American plan

to split the PLO and bring a Palestine faction into the Camp David agreement to extend NATO hegemony throughout the Mideast. The "domestication of the Palestinians" was undoubtedly sounded out during the recent talks between West German Social Democrat Willy Brandt, Austrian chancellor Bruno Kreisky, and PLO chief Yasser Arafat. The U.S. is trying to "erode" the PLO by provoking divisions in it, Izvestia point-