

In a parallel move, the last vestiges of freedom of the press within Iran were sacrificed this week with the Council's decision to confiscate the offices of the two largest dailies in Iran, *Kayhan*, which was until recently reportedly pro-Khomeini, and *Ettalaat*.

Bazargan, according to European press sources, has been unable to halt an ongoing purge of various of his ministries, a process which began in July when a "deal" was worked out between Khomeini's Council and the Prime Minister to merge the two bodies.

The Council of Experts, a body almost totally composed of pro-Khomeini Shiite Islamic clergy which was fraudulently elected two months ago to revise Iran's constitution, is making drastic changes in the document, erasing totally the power of secular government in Iran. European press sources report that the Council of Experts has elevated the power and authority of Iran's leading Ayatollah (grand priest) to a position superceding that of the newly created position of president.

It is no coincidence that Khomeini's band of mullahs and extremist ideologues released to the public their rewrite of Iran's constitution following the death of Taleghani and following the successful repression of Khomeini's opponents. Both Taleghani and the National Front were emphatically opposed to a pure theocratic system and supported establishing a republic along the lines of that fought for by the Iranian revolutionary leaders of the early 1950s Muhammed Mossadegh.

Phase two of Iran's revolution

Since Khomeini's takeover of Iran in February, U.S. based sources with an inside track to the National Security Council have predicted that Khomeini's stay in power would be blunted by a military coup, probably run by a "little-known pro-Islamic officer of Iran's now splintered military." The National Security Council, despite public statements to the contrary, in fact played a critical role in clandestinely backing the Khomeini takeover of Iran working closely through U.S. citizen Ibrahim Yazdi to achieve this goal.

Khomeini's regime is however, only a stepping stone to the creation of an even more repressive Islamic military government for Iran modeled on Pakistan's Zia regime which both London and Washington view will be the eastern counterpart of the western Egyptian-Israel military axis that is to form the backbone of the long sought after Anglo-American dream of a NATO-linked Middle East Treaty Organization.

Khomeini and company have served their Anglo-American controllers in successfully cleaning out their opposition, which represented a balanced outlook toward both the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. as represented by Taleghani and the Front. Just prior to his death, Ayatollah Taleghani met with the Soviet Ambassador Vinogradov, and told the press that the Soviet Union had no role in provoking internal unrest in Iran, referring to the Kurdish unrest against Khomeini. Taleghani's

statements directly contradicted those of the anti-Soviet Khomeini and coincided with a strong anti-Soviet speech delivered by Foreign Minister Yazdi at the Havana Nonaligned Summit.

Earlier this month, Sayed Marei, a close confidant of Egyptian president Sadat predicted a general's coup in Iran, and in the same statement warned of the spread of Islamic fundamentalism to Syria and Iraq.

Ironically, Khomeini and his allies may soon find themselves in the same condition as Taleghani, the victims of their Anglo-American string-pullers in the wake of a London and Israeli backed military coup.

—Judith Wyer

The network of the Muslim Brotherhood

The takeover of Iran by the inner circles of the Muslim Brotherhood apparatus has given new momentum to the implementation of the so-called "Bernard Lewis plan," named after the Oxford University orientalist who, working in collaboration with British and Israeli intelligence, developed the Anglo-American program for balkanizing the Middle East along tribal, ethnic, and religious lines. From North Africa through Syria, Iraq, and the Arabian peninsula, the secret Muslim Brotherhood apparatus has been reactivated, as the following survey shows.

Although to the casual observer the pattern might not seem obvious, what is in fact happening is that the Muslim Brotherhood network is emerging as the skeleton of the proposed, NATO-linked Middle East Treaty Organization (METO), and at the same time, the governments which have so far resisted the METO concept—such as Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and so forth—have been targetted for destabilization by "Muslim fundamentalist" movements.

1. The Persian Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula

The most immediate threat to the stability in the Middle East arising out of the Khomeini regime comes from the substantial Shiite Muslim communities in Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the Persian Gulf states. Ayatollah Montazeri, the newly appointed head of the Islamic Revolutionary Council in Iran, last week openly threatened all neighboring Muslim countries to "learn a lesson from the fate of the Shah." At the same time, Foreign Minister Ibrahim Yazdi, one of the leading

architects of the fascist revolt that brought Khomeini to power and a leading member of the Muslim Brotherhood, said that Iran is unable to prevent insurgents in the Arab countries from carrying out acts of sabotage and terror to bring about revolutions modeled on the Iranian putsch.

Since the beginning of September, both Kuwait and Bahrain have been hit by Shiite Muslim rebellions. In both countries, the personal representatives of the Ayatollah Khomeini were arrested by police for making subversive speeches in mosques, along with several hundred followers. In addition, direct connections were established proving that Iran's revolutionary komitchehs were involved in the trouble. The twin crises had been building up ever since the start of the Khomeini revolt in Iran. Recently, Iran's Ayatollah Rouhani—who has set up a secret network of intelligence contacts throughout the Arabian gulf states—reasserted Iranian imperial claims to the island nation of Bahrain, which has a substantial Iranian minority.

Meanwhile, further south at the bottom of the Arabian peninsula, another crisis is developing. For the second time in two months, the Sultanate of Oman—perhaps the world's most British-dominated nation, with all of its chief military and intelligence personnel still British citizens—sent a delegation to Qom, Iran, to meet with Ayatollah Khomeini. The Arab press has reported that Oman is seeking Iranian military assistance. Now, according to Arab sources, the United States and Great Britain are beginning to implement a large-scale military buildup, in secret, in Oman. At the beginning of September, a 12-man task force from the U.S. Department of Defense visited Oman to study the issue.

The consolidation of an Oman-Iran alliance is the first step in London's Grand Design for a Middle East Treaty Organization, eventually to align itself with the Camp David partners. To accelerate the scheme, the spectre of a Soviet threat to the oil fields of the Persian Gulf has been raised. West Germany's *Die Welt* reported on Sept. 9 that the Soviet Union was concentrating an alleged force of 40,000 soldiers, comprised of Cubans, Palestinians, Ethiopians, and Yemenese, in the tiny nation of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY). The charge, not substantiated, came only days before a trip to Ethiopia and the PDRY by Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin. At the same time, the State Department charged that the Soviet Union was sending weapons, including Polish tanks and possibly advanced Soviet weapons, to conservative North Yemen.

A crisis either in one of the Arab gulf states or in the southern Arabian peninsula could easily provide the grounds for the deployment of Secretary of Defense Harold Brown's 100,000-man Persian Gulf "strike force" to secure the oil fields—possibly resulting in World War III.

2. The Assault on Syria

In Syria, mass demonstrations took place in several major cities last week in support of President Hafez Assad. The rallies were organized to demonstrate the population's rejection of the terrorist Muslim Brotherhood forces in Syria, which, in the past two years, but especially in recent months, have unleashed a wave of assassinations and violence.

In July, on the eve of a crucial state visit by Assad to Iraq, the Muslim Brotherhood assaulted a military training base in Aleppo and brutally massacred over 60 Syrian cadets. Since then, despite a nationwide crack-down against its leadership, the Brotherhood has managed to stage a series of incidents. Earlier this month, following sectarian violence provoked by an assassination of an Alawite minority leader, the port cities of Latakia and Tartus—the latter the location of a critical oil refinery—were put under curfew, and a brigade of 1,000 troops was rushed to the scene to keep order.

Last week, a Syrian intelligence colonel and five officers were murdered by the Brotherhood.

According to the London *Observer*, the situation in Syria is so serious that President Assad may have to resign. French newspapers have said point blank that Syria might become "another Lebanon." Although such talk is in fact wildly exaggerated, there is no question that an extremely dangerous situation has arisen, and Syrian sources have warned that the assassination of Assad himself cannot be ruled out. What is clear is that a basic threat has been mounted to the country that has become the focal point of opposition to Camp David. Last week, on Syrian television, the arrested vice-chairman of the Muslim Brotherhood stated bluntly that his orders were to disrupt Syria, carry out assassinations, and provoke a civil war.

Syrian Information Minister Ahmed Iskandar replied bluntly that the Brotherhood is acting as an agent for the Camp David axis.

3. Egypt, Sudan, and Saudi Arabia

Besides Iran, the other pole of the Muslim Brotherhood axis in the Middle East is Anwar Sadat's Egypt.

Last week, President Sadat held an unprecedented meeting, at a public dinner, with the head of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. "I have no disagreements with you," said Sadat, elaborating publicly that the Egyptian government finds the Muslim Brotherhood useful. At the same time, an officially encouraged resurgence of the usually underground Brotherhood is taking place in Egypt, symbolized by the showing of the film "Alexandria: Why" in theaters in Cairo. In one of the film's scenes, Sadat is shown with former President Gamal Abdel Nasser going to visit Sheikh Hassan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood—a scene which has reportedly drawn loud applause in Egyptian movie houses.

Immediately after Sadat's meeting with the Brotherhood, the French daily *Le Matin* reported that Egypt has agreed to send armed "volunteers" to fight alongside Muslim Brotherhood rebels fighting the Afghanistan regime of President Hafizullah Amin. That decision places Sadat squarely in the Khomeini camp, which, along with the Pakistan of General Zia, is the leading backer of the civil war in Afghanistan.

The crucial figure in the Arab world for the Brotherhood is shadowy Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, the commander of the Saudi National Guard and one of the leading Anglophiles in the Saudi royal family. Abdullah is closely involved in funding the Muslim Brotherhood, including its exile networks in Western Europe.

In early September, Prince Abdullah and Crown Prince Fahd held a meeting with Iranian Minister of National Guidance Nasser Minachi, a close associate of Foreign Minister Ibrahim Yazdi. Although no details of the meeting were released, it is not unlikely that the Iranian visit was a feeler to the Saudis on joining the Khomeini-led *jihād*. Abdullah also plays a key role in Saudi internal security, and reportedly is considering an Egyptian offer to have Sadat's troops serve as the gendarmes of the Arabian peninsula. Already, Egyptian troops have been sent to Oman and Sudan.

Also in Sudan, the Muslim Brotherhood has just entered the government in a recent Cabinet shakeup there.

The role of Abdullah is critical in extending the METO idea. Most likely, Abdullah is the chief Saudi figure involved in the ongoing covert contacts with Israeli intelligence and Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan. And, last week, following an offer by Anwar Sadat to sell Egyptian arms to Morocco—despite the official break in relations between Cairo and Rabat—it was Abdullah who paid a quiet visit to Rabat, Morocco, to explore the Egyptian offer, and perhaps to finance it. After Abdullah's visit, King Hassan II reportedly accepted the offer. That would link Egypt to both Morocco and Oman: the core of METO.

—Robert Dreyfuss

'Weizman option' for Israel

If London policymakers have their way, Prime Minister Menachem Begin of Israel is going to be dumped and replaced by a British-backed government headed up by Defense Minister Ezer Weizman, Labour Party leader Shimon Peres, and Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan. According to one top American Zionist official, a Weizman-Peres-Dayan configuration will "transcend the usual party politics" and work for a deal with the Palestinians and Jordan, that is, Phase II of Camp David.

The intensifying governmental crisis in Israel and Britain's proposed "solution" reflects the intense political fight in top international Zionist circles over how to deal with the fact that the Nonaligned countries and nations of Western Europe are moving steadily toward recognizing and working with the Palestine Liberation Organization. European states and the Nonaligned group are seeking to undermine the Camp David framework as one which will lead to Mideast war, and pull together in its place a comprehensive and durable solution centered on the establishment of a Palestinian state.

The European-PLO connection was symbolized by the Aug. 13 arrival of PLO chairman Yasser Arafat in Spain at the invitation of the Spanish government. Arafat was greeted by favorable Spanish press coverage and held lengthy meetings with top Spanish officials.

The unprecedented welcome received by Arafat in Spain is paralleled by the steps being taken by the European Economic Community toward the PLO. At the EEC meeting of foreign ministers earlier this month in Dublin, a push was made to formulate a resolution calling upon Israel to "negotiate with the representatives of the Palestinian people, including the PLO." Attempts to block the resolution were made by the British and the Dutch. The EEC has already come out with a resolution backing the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon and condemning foreign—that is, Israeli—intervention there.

Two options for Britain

Hemmed in by Europe's overtures to the PLO and the "containment" policy against Israel, Anglo-American-Zionist strategists have two options. The first is to sit tight and continue to back the Camp David fiasco and