

FACTS BEHIND TERRORISM

Terror wave set for Persian Gulf oil lanes?

Over the past 2 weeks a series of incidents have occurred in the oil rich Persian Gulf which suggest that a terror wave aimed at sabotaging the gulf's 20 million barrel a day (mbd) oil flow has begun. Last week 2 oil tankers exploded and sank within 24 hours of one another after departing from the terminal at Abu Dhabi. The week before a mysterious explosion ripped through a section of the Saudi oil tanker terminal at Ras Tanura. Shortly thereafter, the Saudis announced a cutback in oil output of 300,000 bpd because of damage from the explosion.

In both cases neither the governments of Abu Dhabi or Saudi Arabia were admitting to sabotage as the cause of the mishaps. The oil producing nations have been particularly sensitive about sabotage of oil flows for fear of a possible invasion into the region by the U.S., which both Secretary of Defense Harold Brown and former Secretary of Energy James Schlesinger have openly threatened.

Simultaneously, Iran's oil output was reported to have dropped over the same time period by nearly 1 mbd. The official explanation for the drop from the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) is bad weather, but oil industry and Iranian sources link the sudden drop in output to sabotage. Over

the recent weeks there have been numerous reports of bombings and machine gun attacks on Iranian oil pipelines, which have set back the refining of products for domestic use. As a result, the U.S. has offered to sell Iran 1.5 mbd of heating oil, an offer which was later refused.

The Lloyd's Connection

Less than a month prior to the outbreak of these incidents, on July 22, the U.S. Mapping Agency of the State Department predicted an outbreak of terrorism in the gulf. Shortly thereafter Lloyds of London announced it was raising all insurance rates for tankers going into the gulf, terming the area a "war zone." At the same time an international conference took place in Jerusalem where similar predictions were put forth. In attendance were some of the Anglo-American establishment's top agents whom this publication has documented to be linked to international terrorism, notably Henry Kissinger, British journalist Robert Moss, Georgetown University thinktanker Ray Cline, plus prominent leaders of Israel.

Lloyds of London's rate increase was met with unanimous outrage by the gulf oil producers. The head of the Kuwaiti Chamber of Commerce and Industry termed the move "psychological

warfare" designed to build up anxiety within the oil consuming sector over the future stability of the gulf.

According to European sources, Lloyds' involvement in spreading an atmosphere of instability in the Gulf linked to future terrorism is reminiscent of Lloyds' alleged involvement in Italian terror. The London firm is still under investigation by the Italian law enforcement authorities for alleged involvement in murders and kidnapping. A high number of kidnap victims in Italy were found to be insured by Lloyds, leading to suspicion that kidnapers might have obtained inside information on victims' security arrangements available to Lloyds.

The Iran trigger

NIOC chief Hassan Nazih last week warned of cutbacks in Iranian oil output due to brewing conflicts within the oil producing region of Khuzestan between leftists and followers of Iran's theocratic leader Ayatollah Khomeini. The conflict between the Kurdish minorities and Khomeini is also mooted to spark further violence within the Khuzestan region where militant Iranian Arabs are too at odds with the Islamic regime. Iranian sources warn that elements within the Palestinian movement are working closely with the Khuzestan Arabs who comprise a sizeable percentage of the Iranian oil workers. As well, numerous radical European organizations such as the London-based Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation and the Amsterdam based Transnational Institute, both known to have strong British intelligence links, are cultivating the militancy of the Iranian Arabs. A shutdown in Iran's oil output could easily trigger a renewed crisis such as that which Iran prompted in early 1979.

—Judith Wyer