

with a nuclear industry, a defense industry, various advanced electronic systems, and so forth.

In the Arab world, Jordan, Kuwait, Yemen, and the United Arab Emirates, have officially supported Iraq while Saudi Arabia, though silent, is widely known to support Iraq's action against Khomeini. In addition, Saudi Arabia and Jordan are trying to persuade Syria, which has opposed Iraq and tilted in favor of Iran, to join now with Baghdad against Khomeini.

### U.S. paralysis

As for the Carter administration, which put the Khomeini regime in power, it is the belief of most U.S. analysts that the United States has no choice but to do nothing and watch the Iraqis defeat Iran. Although some limited options do exist, for the most part any American intervention runs the risk of touching off a direct U.S.-Soviet confrontation.

Since August, Carter has been working out a scheme to bring about a rapprochement with Iran, including the supply of American military spare parts and U.S. military advisers to Khomeini's regime, in exchange for freeing the U.S. hostages. Now, with the Iraqi offensive, that deal is shattered—and the U.S. is left without a policy.

Sept. 25 President Carter convened an emergency meeting of the NSC to discuss U.S. options.

According to Iranian military sources opposed to Khomeini, the chief U.S. contingency under consideration is the following.

First, in secret communication, the Carter administration will arrange for the Khomeini regime to launch a blockade of the crucial Straits of Hormuz in the Gulf. That action, which would halt the flow of two-thirds of the world's oil imports from the Persian Gulf countries, would then provide a pretext for direct U.S. naval action to break the blockade. With the conflict thus "internationalized," both Carter and Teheran hope they can halt the Iraqi advance. But such a strategy is dangerous in the extreme because of the likelihood of Soviet intervention, including possibly a direct Soviet military move into Iran.

Another U.S. option under consideration involves a U.S.-backed coup in Iran bringing to power the Iranian military loyal to President Abolhassan Bani-Sadr, at the expense of the more extreme Muslim Brotherhood leaders. Such a strategy presumably would allow Teheran to free the hostages and then ask for American assistance. But most analysts also believe that this strategy is not viable.

At any rate, Israel is leading the outcry against the Iraqi advance. Prime Minister Begin, General Mordechai Gur, and other Israeli officials have branded Iraq as a "Soviet puppet" and warned that an Iraqi defeat of the Khomeini regime would create a new Arab super-

power. Gur said that Iraq was an "extremist, hard core member of the Rejection Front" and demanded action to stop Iraq.

A top Reagan adviser, Joseph Churba, a radical Zionist, stated his belief that Washington should immediately supply all the military spare parts Iran needs to defeat Iraq in exchange for the release of the American hostages!

Among more sober U.S. analysts, such as the *New York Times'* James Reston, the conclusion is that Washington must try to prevail upon Moscow to issue instructions to Iraq to halt the fighting. Regardless of whether such Soviet demands on Iraq would be heeded, Reston declared in a column entitled "Where is the Hot Line?" that even though there is the "possibility that Moscow might not agree" the Carter administration ought to ask the Soviets to restrain Iraq and cool down the fighting.

At best, Reston is reflecting the dawning realization that the United States, which once earlier this year had said it would use force to defend the Persian Gulf, is now reduced to asking Moscow to restore tranquility to the region.

That, if nothing else, is a measure of the blunders of the Carter-Brzezinski administration.

## Iraq shatters U.S.-Iran pact on the hostages

by Judith Wyer

Iraq's invasion of Iran this week has left in shambles a months-long diplomatic venture launched by the Carter administration to free the American hostages in exchange for recognition, and arming, of the outlaw regime of Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini. Carter calculated that a release of the hostages on the eve of the Nov. 4 presidential elections would greatly enhance his chances of reelection.

So stunned was the administration over the Iraqi invasion that neither the President nor administration-officials have formulated a coherent response.

During a California campaign tour, President Carter told the press, "We have been monitoring the situation very closely. . . . We are doing everything we can to contribute to a peaceful resolution." A few hours afterwards Secretary of State Edmund Muskie gave a press conference from the United Nations which brought into question what intelligence the Chief Executive was "monitoring." A beleaguered Muskie stated: "Our resources in Iran are not all they were. . . . This is a serious

matter and we are trying to get the best intelligence possible, as we must not jump to conclusions.”

Muskie also brought into question just how capable the U.S. may be in contributing to “a peaceful resolution.” He responded to a question on what initiative the U.S. would propose at the United Nations Security Council by stating that the U.S. had not talked to either Iran or Iraq.

### **Recognizing Khomeini's 'revolution'**

The day before, Muskie, in an address to the U.N. General Assembly, became the first administration official to publicly acknowledge the legitimacy of the Khomeini regime. Muskie declared: “As a new chapter opens, we emphasize that we recognize the reality of the Iranian revolution, and we respect the right of the Iranian people to choose their own form of government without intervention of any kind.”

Muskie's obsequiousness was part of an effort to legitimize the Islamic revolution in return for the hostage release. The intention is to stabilize the Islamic government with U.S. arms supplies to maintain the Khomeini regime as the centerpiece of a policy known as the “Islamic card.” A creation of U.S. security chief Zbigniew Brzezinski, the Islamic card policy ostensibly aims at containing Soviet influence along the southern flank of the U.S.S.R., but is chiefly designed to abort economic development in the region.

Muskie's overture to Iran came too late. Days before Iranian President Abolhassan Bani-Sadr and other Islamic leaders began a bitter propaganda campaign calling Iraq a “U.S. agent in its aggression against Iran.” The Iraqi invasion then made it impossible for Bani-Sadr, considered to be the man in Iran amenable to a deal with the U.S., to heed Muskie's call.

The White House has tried to salvage its deal with Iran by feebly calling for both Iran and Iraq to halt the war. But efforts to obtain a U.N. Security Council demand for a ceasefire were watered down by the Soviet Union during hours of deliberation over the crisis. American Ambassador to the U.N. Donald McHenry complained that the Soviets had deliberately thrown up “procedural and substantive objections” to U.S. efforts to secure a more forceful call for an end to the fighting.

### **U.S. military left without options**

Few strategic planners in Washington think the U.S. has any military options to play in the Gulf. Former National Security Council staffer William Quandt, now a Middle East analyst at the Brookings Institution, observed that “If the Soviets are clever, they may be able to turn the Iraq-Iran conflict to their advantage.” University of Virginia-based Professor R. K. Ramazani,

who often advises the administration on the Gulf, was aghast at the degree of the Iraqi assault: “There has been armed conflict in the past, but the mutual vulnerability of both sides has kept it at the level of skirmishes and brinkmanship. . . . This time I'm baffled. Apparently this mutual restraint does not exist. It is unprecedented that it has gone as far as it has.”

Nationally syndicated columnist Jack Anderson issued a story on Sept. 22 which stunned the White House and State Department. According to “leaks” he claims he got from the National Security Agency, the Soviet Union is now prepared to counter a U.S. invasion of Iran. He reports that Moscow is already well-advanced in redeploying nuclear howitzers, SA-11 missiles, and other hardware to the Iranian border from its borders with China and Europe.

A military strategist at Georgetown University concurs that “there is no way” the U.S. can counter the Soviet Union in the Gulf region: “The Soviets hold all of the logistical cards, the U.S. Rapid Deployment Force is years away from being able to deter the Soviets.”

As a result, the U.S. is being forced to scrap a plan which has been in the making since just after the November 1979 seizing of the American hostages, to effectively condition the American population to accept the Iranian revolution. Only last week was it revealed that the State Department had written a 60,000-page document to be presented to the Khomeini regime admitting U.S. “guilt” in its wrongdoings towards Iran under the Shah—a key demand for release of the hostages. Muskie had even sent a letter to Iranian Premier Muhammed Rajai expressing U.S. willingness to accept the Islamic regime.

### **Christopher waves FLAG**

State Department Undersecretary Warren Christopher has played a central role in a twofold process aimed at conditioning Americans to accept the Khomeini regime. First he was working with a State Department task force and a group formed from the families of the hostages called the Family Liaison Action Group (FLAG) to forge a “reconciliation” with the Iranian regime in order to free the hostages. And second, he and other State Department officials were complicit in an effort being run in cooperation with various anthropologists and linguists to popularize a view of Iranian “culture” which was aimed at creating an “understanding” between the American people and the revolutionaries in Iran.

The public response of the administration to the Iraq invasion has shown the American people and the world the bankruptcy of the White House policy toward Iran and its inability to deal with international forces committed to challenging that policy.