

The Mideast stakes in the war between Iran and Iraq

by Robert Dreyfuss, Middle East Editor

American, West European, and Israeli arms and military intelligence aid are being rushed to Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini for a second Iranian offensive to be unleashed this summer under the overall control of the British Secret Intelligence Service, which installed the Khomeini regime in 1979. London, Tel Aviv, and their friends in the Reagan administration, led by Secretary of State Alexander Haig, intend to put maximum pressure on Iraq between now and September. The ultimate goal of this support for Iran, which was shamelessly proclaimed by the London *Times* and the *Washington Post* the week of April 12, is to topple the Iraqi government of Saddam Hussein before the summit of the Nonaligned Group in Baghdad, Iraq, in September, and to spread the "Khomeini disease" into the rest of the Middle East.

Should Iraq collapse the entire area will be plunged into chaos—as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and other Arab states know.

Israel makes no apologies for its overt backing of the Khomeini regime, including supplying military equipment. "Saddam Hussein is another Hitler," said one Israeli official. "Anything that we can do to destroy him, we will do." Among other actions, the Israelis are pressuring President Reagan—whose mind is by no means made up—to reject requests from Iraq, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia to halt the flow of Israeli and American weapons to Iran.

According to information from London specialists on the Persian Gulf, confirmed by U.S. military sources, Khomeini's Iran does not have the ability to sustain an armored drive into Iraqi territory or to defeat Iraq decisively. But, they argue, continued Iranian advances toward the Iraqi border, eventually pushing Iraq back into its own territory, would so disrupt Iraq politically that it would trigger a coup d'état against President Hussein. "The armed forces of Iraq will not accept a humiliation by the Iranians," said one British SIS area specialist. "They will blame Saddam for their defeat."

In the following report, the *Executive Intelligence Review* intends to separate fact from fiction in regard to the war in the Persian Gulf. Despite American media

reports and Anglo-Zionist accounts of the war, vital American interests are threatened if the Israel-Iran combination is successful. President Reagan, who tolerates State Department and Justice Department gun-running to Iran, is currently being misinformed by the CIA on the nature of the conflict between Iraq and Iran.

The reality of the Gulf war can be summed up as follows:

First, London's banks and oil companies support Khomeini's Iran in an effort to reorganize the oil industry in the Persian Gulf; specifically, this means the elimination of the American "Aramco mafia" from Saudi Arabia and the replacement of the pro-U.S. Prince Fahd by the British SIS allies in the Saudi royal family. Part of this design includes the reduction of Saudi oil production from its current 7 million barrels per day to somewhere around 3-4 million bpd.

Second, the destruction of the Iraqi regime as the standard-bearer of republican nationalism in the Middle East, and the spread of "Islamic fundamentalist" ideology is a conscious aim of the British and Israelis. The fall of Iraq as a force for modernization would weaken every country in the area.

Third, Iran's offensive against Iraq is being conducted literally as a campaign of national suicide by the mullahs. No losses, even staggering ones that would stun any other nation, will deter Teheran from pushing fanatically toward its objective.

The suicide war

The Iranian military strategy in the Gulf war carries the putrid stench of the suicide cult of Jim Jones's Jonestown. What was portrayed in the United States by corrupt media as an "Iranian victory" in the March offensive cost Iran 100,000 dead and wounded and the backbone of its entire armored corps.

"Thousands and thousands of Iranian youth came at our forces, almost unarmed in some cases, and ran directly into our fire," said one Iraqi official. "Our fighters could not believe what they were seeing. They just kept firing into crowds of people until their ammu-

nition was exhausted. It was awful, unbelievable.”

According to some Iraqi accounts, Iran massed up to 2 million ragtag soldiers, of all ages and without military training, across a narrow front of 150 kilometers south of Dezful, an Iranian city strategically vital for its communications center and air base.

“They just marched their forces across densely packed minefields, blowing up the mines with their bodies,” said the source.

Detailed reports from American correspondents brought to the front by the Iranian authorities did not report these facts. Nor, in their accounts of the Iranian offensive, did the U.S. reporters find it important to mention that the Iranians failed to capture even a single Iranian city held by Iraqi forces.

Iraqi accounts of the fighting were blacked out of the American press. During the period of the heaviest fighting, from March 20 through early April, not a single American newspaper filed a battlefield report from the Iraqi side or quoted communiqués from the Iraqi High Command. According to Iraqi reports, cross-checked with neutral intelligence sources, the following is a rough account of what actually transpired during the March-April fighting.

In mid-March, Iraqi intelligence confirmed reports of a major Iranian offensive to be launched on March 21. On March 20, to preempt Iran, Iraq launched a large-scale attack on Dezful, surrounding the city and forcing Iran to divert its planned attack to defend Dezful instead. After extremely heavy fighting, with both sides suffering heavy casualties, Iraqi troops fell back to absorb the brunt of the now-weakened Iranian attack. Abandoning the siege of Dezful, whose capture was never an Iraqi objective, the Iraqi forces withdrew back to more defensible positions along an elevated ridge, rather than at their more exposed front lines that had been located in a valley-like area west of Dezful.

Although Iraq suffered heavy losses, including perhaps 200 tanks, its losses were miniscule in comparison with the tens of thousands of Iranian dead and wounded. In addition, Iran lost at least 250 of its 700 tanks.

Intelligence sources now report that Iran has begun an extensive rearming and reorganization effort for its next human-wave assault. This time, Iran is expected to make use of sophisticated anti-aircraft devices being supplied by the United States and the Israelis, in order to prevent Iraqi air superiority from coming into play.

Egypt, Saudis, Jordan back Iraq

Syria, allied to Iran, is threatening to open a second front against Iraq, to prevent Baghdad from throwing its entire force against Iran. Syria has closed the border with Iraq, shut the Iraqi pipeline carrying oil to the Mediterranean, and repeatedly violated Iraqi airspace with its jet fighters.

Saudi Arabia and Egypt, in late March, decided to provide more extensive support to Iraq to prevent Iran from gaining ground in the war. According to intelligence sources, the White House and the CIA—though opposed by the State Department—are quietly supporting the Egyptian-Saudi effort on behalf of Iraq. As a signal of that support, muted as it is, on April 13 the Reagan administration announced the decision to sell 6 to 12 L100 transport planes to Iraq, the first such sale with potentially military applications since 1967. In February 1982, the Reagan administration took Iraq off the list of countries supposedly implicated in terrorism, thus clearing the way for the L100 sale.

In March, two Iraqi delegations visited Egypt to talk to Cairo about purchasing weapons, although Egypt and Iraq nominally do not maintain diplomatic relations.

According to Egyptian sources, at a meeting of the Egyptian Cabinet in late March, Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak made a decision to materially support Iraq. An arms deal was concluded, which, according to Israeli sources, involves the shipment of tanks and heavy war equipment, including artillery, to Iran. The *Christian Science Monitor* reported that the value of the Egyptian-Iraq deal is more than \$1.5 billion.

The Egyptian shipments to Iraq, carried in both Egyptian and Saudi vessels, have already begun to be loaded at Red Sea ports, and the entire deal is financed by Saudi Arabia, which has loaned billions of dollars to Iraq's war effort already.

“We will help Iraq in any way that we can,” said an Egyptian official. Asked whether the decision by Reagan to sell transport planes to Iraq was significant, the official said: “Of course! It is crucially important. Besides that sale, there will probably be other sales, through arms brokers and third countries, to Iraq.”

Conspiracy to support Iran

Despite some emerging support for Iraq, American weapons are flowing steadily into Iran. And, more and more, “opinion makers” in the United States are demanding that Washington side with Iran. Leading the support for Iran is the British aristocracy, the SIS, and Israel. “The Israeli embassy in Washington is working overtime to get the American press to carry only the pro-Iranian side of the story,” said one Middle East CIA veteran.

According to intelligence sources, the arms for Iran—including anti-aircraft missiles and other sophisticated weapons—are being shipped from three American ports: New York, Houston, and Los Angeles. Using a network of arms smugglers and Bahamas-based operatives, the smuggling apparatus is based in London, the international capital of the arms traffic. At least a portion of the arms from these three ports is being

shipped from warehouses stockpiled with American weapons but held under Israeli control! These arms depots, supposedly a strategic reserve for Israel, were set up in arrangement with the State and Justice Departments following the 1978 Camp David accords, as part of the secret protocols attached to Camp David's public side.

President Reagan either does not know of, or does not care to stop, these deliveries.

The London *Times* in an April 13 editorial entitled "The Trembling Thrones of Araby," demanded that the West refrain from aiding Iraq, despite the "desperate" plight of Baghdad. "Should the West join in this general rallying of pro-Western Arab states behind Iraq? The answer must surely be no. Mr. Saddam Hussein is a sanguinary dictator, not worth helping in himself." The consequences, the *Times* admits, might be "an Iraqi Islamic republic, Iranian style," and asks: "And would the contagion stop there, or would it spread to Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, and the eastern provinces of Saudi Arabia—all areas where Shi'ism, like oil, is a subterranean force now bubbling to the surface?"

And the *Washington Post*, taking its cue as always from London, published the same day an editorial called, "Iran Is Winning." That piece called Iran the "principal regional military power" and said that it "remains the strategic prize in the Gulf." Rather than "plunging after Arab favor," the United States should return to Jimmy Carter's Iran policy, citing Carter's infamous quote in 1980, at the very height of the hostage crisis: "We have no quarrel with the government, the revolution, or the people of Iran."

Such editorial policy is also reflected in the news coverage.

In that direction, not only have the principal American news media refused to cover the war from an unbiased standpoint, preferring instead to report the Iranian military communiqués, but *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, ABC-TV, and so forth have gone out of their way to portray a mythical "pro-American" faction among Iran's insane mullahs.

The *Washington Post*, for instance, reported on April 13 that Iran is trying to "pose as an anti-communist bulwark" in the Middle East, citing recent Iranian pacts with Turkey and Pakistan as evidence that Iran wants better relations with the "West." Gratuitously, the *Post* quotes *Islamic Republic*, the daily newspaper of the ruling mullahs' party, attacking the Soviet Union as proof of Iran's continuing loyalty to the Western world! Such idiotic non sequiturs are hardly comforting to Riyadh or Cairo, who know that the "West" Iran supports is the fascist British SIS creators of the Muslim Brotherhood who installed the Khomeini regime in the first place.

Because of the critical nature of the next few weeks and months, there has not been a lack of diplomacy to seek an end to the war.

Mediation and realignment

At the end of March, Iran's Foreign Minister Velayati paid a surprise visit to Abu Dhabi, U.A.E., to discuss the Gulf war. After meeting Velayati, U.A.E. President Sheikh Zayed flew to Baghdad to explore a possible mediation effort, and an effort was made to bring about a meeting between the foreign ministers of Iran and Iraq at the non-aligned meeting in Kuwait in early April. That effort failed.

Then, two weeks later, Saddam Hussein declared Iraq's willingness to withdraw its troops from the territory of Iran provided guarantees could be found that Iran would not cross the Iraqi border again, as it did in September 1980 when it started the war. India, Cuba, Zambia, and the PLO—of the non-aligned group—were reportedly prepared to station forces between Iran and Iraq, but to no avail. Iran also rejected that offer. The stalemate continued. The British backers of Khomeini will, it appears, insist on *at least* a perpetual stalemate to bleed Iraq and weaken the Gulf states over a prolonged conflict.

Diplomatically, Iran seems intent on building up its relations with Pakistan and, through that Muslim fundamentalist nation, to Peking China. Indeed, the emergence of an Israel-Iran-Pakistan-China axis is very possibly on the immediate agenda of the London controllers of the Muslim Brotherhood. A key aspect of that operation is the rapprochement being sought between Iran and the U.A.E.

In March and April, two major Iranian delegations visited Pakistan and, before returning to Iran, also stopped in the U.A.E. Among the first delegation was Iran's blood-judge Ayatollah Khalkhali, who has ordered thousands to be shot or hanged in his "Islamic courts." Because the emirate of Dubai in the U.A.E. is the headquarters of the British SIS in the Gulf, it is not surprising that Iran would seek allies there. And Pakistan, backed by London and the Israelis, is looking for a peacekeeping military role in the Persian Gulf states, including Saudi Arabia.

Aiding the Iranian-Pakistani effort to outflank Iraq in the Gulf itself, through Dubai, are the Israelis and Chinese. Several top Israeli financiers, including the Mossad's Shaul Eisenberg, have been to China recently, and Armand Hammer—another Mossad collaborator with close ties to Libya and the Soviet KGB—signed a major deal in Peking, brokering some diplomacy for the Chinese Communists as well. According to some accounts, Eisenberg and Hammer envision Israel and China working together in the Gulf with Iran and Pakistan.