

different aims. First, to be sure that the Iraqi army, which was a threat, could no longer be operational. That is now the case. After all that has happened between Iran and Iraq, neither the Iranian army nor the Iraqi army is operational. Israel had other aims too: to help the Iranian army defeat the Iraqi army, which it considered its enemy, as far as possible, then, they intend to tell the Iranians later, "we helped you, don't forget!" I don't think that the Israelis can remain friendly with Khomeini for very long—unless Khomeini is really pro-Israeli!

I think there is no doubt that Khomeini knew that spare parts were coming from Israel. The Israelis did this mainly to put the Iraqi army to the test, which they have done, and also to infiltrate the Iranian army, to have contacts, relations, and so on. Whether they have succeeded or not, I don't know.

EIR: How do you see the situation inside Iran?

Bakhtiar: One thing can be said. Given the problem of Lebanon, and other problems, neither the United States nor England has a plan to solve the problems in Iran. They said to themselves, "After all, there is a mullah, the county may be suffering, but we don't care!" The communist danger is not immediate for them. Evidently, there is communist infiltration which started some time ago. But it is not yet obvious, it is not yet urgent, they think.

Resistance is crushed inside Iran, by Khomeini's terrorism. It is unimaginable. I lived in France during the German occupation. There was the Gestapo, and I knew what it was, as a soldier in the French army. I don't think the Gestapo ever acted like the Pasdarans [Revolutionary Guards]. . . .

Now, Khomeini says, "Whoever I, or any other mullah, declares impious, or agnostic, could be executed without trial by anyone." You can see what results this can lead to.

Therefore, it is simply not possible for the Iranian people to make any signs of insurrection at the moment. That has to be organized from the outside, but with armed elements inside the country. Otherwise, there is no solution. Countries like the United States or England have no plan to help us, to send an expeditionary corps, which we do not want, as it would cost us dearly later.

EIR: What are your own plans for the future?

Bakhtiar: I can answer all your questions, except to talk of my plans! It is our duty to fight Khomeini with all our means. Someone asked me one day, "Now that there is peace, what are you going to do?" I said, "This is their business. I never agreed with this war, never. Now, if Mr. Saddam and Mr. Khomeini have no arguments with each other, or if they want to shake hands, that's their business. I have another task—to fight Khomeini. We will continue, we have to fight, there is no other solution. We must live fighting or disappear.

EIR: What do you think of the Iranian exile movement?

Bakhtiar: There is a lot of romanticism in all this. There are two groups that I distinguish completely, at least two groups.

I am leaving aside those who are described as the fervent supporters of Reza Pahlavi. In principle, those people were not very clean. They have their interests; they want to return to loot the country. Let's leave those people aside, as well as the communists, who simply execute orders received. For the rest, there is one group which I call "dissidents," and another I call "opponents," those who said no to Khomeini from the very first day, or even before. The dissidents are those who collaborated with Khomeini, and somewhere along the road, they said, "I don't like that." But in principle, these people were expelled by Khomeini, they did not resign. Look at Bani-Sadr. I must admit, I find that Khomeini's government has done one legal act in the last two years . . . the ouster of Bani-Sadr, in conformity with the constitution. . . .

There is one problem in Iran, you know. People say that the mullahs are indecent. But the children of mullahs. . . .!

Interview: Dr. Mehdi Rouhani

Islamic leader declares that Khomeini will fall

The following is an interview with Dr. Mehdi Rouhani, the spiritual leader of the Shiite community in Europe, and an important opponent of Ayatollah Khomeini. The interview was conducted in Paris by Mary and Thierry Lalevée, on July 8 1982.

EIR: How do you view the events of the last three years in Iran?

Rouhani: According to our tradition, the Shiite clergy represents a symbol of popular will, and it took the leadership of the revolution. The clergy wanted to take power and eliminate the civilians. I think that this was a danger for the Shiite clergy, and this danger still exists. Even faith and good will can never replace experience, which is necessary to run a country. This is what is happening in Iran. It is the result of political ignorance and the intolerance of the Shiite clergy, religious and political intolerance. I think that sooner or later the regime will be overthrown. There is no doubt about that. If you talk about the revolution, a popular movement, it does not exist any more. Those who used to support the revolution are now against it. Once they have power it is difficult to take it from them.

EIR: If the Khomeini regime is overthrown, there will probably be a big anti-religious movement. How do you see that?

Rouhani: I don't agree, for the reason that there are many well-respected religious representatives inside Iran who are leading the opposition to events in Iran. If the clergy were

unanimously supporting Khomeini, perhaps you would be right. I have proof that 90 percent of the Shiite clergy today is against Khomeini. If they do not show their discontent, it is primarily because they are not able to do so. And, of course, they risk the death sentence.

There will, of course, be an anti-religious wave after Khomeini, but we hope to be able to brake it, especially because our people are very religious after all. [On June 30] in Meshed, there was a demonstration on the occasion of the anniversary of the assassination of Beheshti and his friends. Afterwards, they hanged, in public, a condemned man. When I heard this news, I was shocked. Do you organize a ceremony to condemn terror, and then at the same time assassinate someone publicly?

EIR: It is like human sacrifice.

Rouhani: Indeed. The ceremony was to condemn terrorism, and they did the same thing! That is what is happening now in Iran. This does not correspond at all to our religion, to our tradition, or to logic. This is something quite separate, and I don't know really how they stay in power. I don't think they can stay in power very long. In one year at the most, Khomeini will be overthrown.

EIR: Do you have any news of the Ayatollah Shariatmadari, who is now under house arrest for his opposition to Khomeini?

Rouhani: I learned recently that the trial of those implicated in the plot against the Islamic revolution was supposed to start next Sunday. Shariatmadari has been named in this plot. [The trial has been cancelled—ed.] I think it is a crime to prosecute such an important religious leader. It is a severe blow to the feelings of unity between followers of the religious leaders, in Azerbaijan, Teheran, or elsewhere. According to our Shiite law, the religious leader has a certain infallibility. He is considered as a doctor. When a doctor errs, he is not really responsible. Religious infallibility is similar. If he has committed an error in his analyses, he is not really responsible. Here it is the concept of infallibility which is in question. If the trial goes ahead, I intend to take a position against what they want to do.

EIR: Khomeini's taking power has recreated ideas in the West, associating Islam with the Mongol hordes, with intolerance, and so forth. You have been involved in work with other religions. Could you tell us more about it?

Rouhani: The Islam I know respects other religions. At each period, there has been a prophet. The prophets succeeded each other, in order to perfect knowledge and divine law throughout history. With this philosophy, for the same reason that we believe that Abraham, Moses, and Jesus were prophets, I think that Mohammed was also a prophet. He came to perfect older religions, and at the same time he recognized previously existing religions.

I think that religions are something like caravans, each different team heading in the same direction and with the

same fate. We all believe in a single God, and we believe in the resurrection. On this road, even if we are equipped differently, we ought to collaborate together to avoid misunderstandings.

I think that if there were a religious council, where the great religions could really collaborate together, sincerely, this could very easily help solve international problems. Each religion has its own influence on its followers, and if they joined together, this could help resolve international problems.

Five years ago, in Iran, I formed a group of monotheists, where people from different religions took part, especially Catholics. Unfortunately, the revolution took place, and I could not continue my project.

EIR: Do you see a role for the different religions in the Lebanon situation?

Rouhani: The fraternity of Abraham—I agree with them, I collaborate with them, but I think religion is not only theories, discussions, and speeches. I think you have to *act*. Of course, I don't think that religion should be at the center of the administrative power, but I do think that religion should be a force which can intervene at the necessary moment in the interests of humanity.

What I reproach the fraternity of Abraham for, is that they do not have an active role, and they content themselves with talking. That is not enough.

I would like to create an active monotheist movement, which could intervene. It could even have a seat at the United Nations.

EIR: Six months ago, the Vatican issued a new encyclical, called *Laborem Exercens*, which opposed the Malthusianism that is spreading in present society.

Rouhani: That is very good, I entirely agree. Religion for me is not simply a relationship between man and God, it is more than that. Religion means the way man can contact man, and man, society, and together a relationship to God. Once I have said that, it means I have to intervene in the social, cultural, and political affairs of my country, and of humanity. What the Pope is doing is therefore excellent.

I would only ask the Pope to be a little more objective and impartial. The Pope should place as much importance on the question of Lebanon, as he does to Poland. This is the only thing I criticize the Pope for. I can make this reproach as I am his friend. Unfortunately, he does not act in the same way [on both issues—ed.].

EIR: Do you intend to write to him or to meet him to discuss this?

Rouhani: I was very close to Pope Paul VI, and he invited me to visit him several times. Unfortunately, these relations have not continued with the present Pope. My relations with Pope Paul VI were based on total collaboration—it is not simply a question of a meeting. We hope that the Pope will be a man for the whole world.