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## Iran

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# Secret letters reveal new terror command

by Thierry Lalevée

The first units of a new kind of Iranian terrorist brigade have arrived in Europe, just in time for the May economic summit of Western heads of state, intelligence sources report. The commandos are trained to launch, in Europe and the United States, the same kamikaze operations which have so far been used predominantly in the Middle East.

Information about the new terror squads emerged in January, when secret letters came to light from the Iranian Ministry of Islamic Guidance, which is headed by Hojatessalam Sayyed Mohammed Khatemi. The letters, 15-20 in number, covering the period from May to November 1984, give a new glimpse into the structure and aims of Iranian terrorism. The London *Times* published the first excerpts from the letters in January, and several intelligence agencies have confirmed their authenticity. The letters announce preparations for kamikaze operations in Europe this summer. And the plan which they outline may indeed be operational at the present time.

The terror onslaught was planned during a series of meetings in Teheran in May 1984. In a letter dated May 19, 1984, marked "*Strictly Secret*," Mohammed Khatemi announced that "upon instructions of His Excellency Ayatollah Imam Khomeini," a conference was to be convened at the ministry on May 24 to discuss the creation of "an independent brigade for war against hostile circles." The same day, a certain "Brother Mir-Hashem" of the same ministry, an assistant to Khatemi whose full name has never been ascertained, extended invitations to several Iranian organizations: the leaders of the various branches of the armed forces, under the leadership of the Chief of Staff; the Second Intelligence Bureau; the official responsible for the Bureau of Ideology and Politics within the armed forces; the head of the Revolutionary Committees, Hojatessalam Mohsen; Mousavi Khoeinia, a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and a representative of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, led then by Mohammed Bakr Hakim, replaced in July 1984 by Soyyed Mohammed Hashemi.

On May 26, "Brother Mir-Hashem" wrote a four-page protocol of the meeting, which quoted the proposals of "His Excellency, the Imam," as transmitted by Minister Khatemi. Mir-Hashem, who had so far been presented merely as an

official of the ministry, signed the letter as, "Director of the World Islamic Liberation Organization."

The meeting stressed that Iran is "committed to free all Islamic lands from oppression," and that such a fight should involve all military means—"by air, sea, and land." It then detailed the first operational plans, including "the creation of brigades . . . of between 10 and 20 persons, like in Lebanon." Their members "should have fought already in the four-year war against Iraq, and should not be more than 30-years-old." Three areas were defined as targets for these commandos: 1) the Gulf: Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and Bahrein; 2) the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan; and 3) France and other Western countries noted for their hostility to the "Islamic Revolution."

Operations to be directed by Mohsen Moussavi Khoeinia, were discussed for the summer of 1984, for intervention into the Gulf era, especially during the yearly pilgrimage to Mecca. It was later decided to create specific commando squads for Europe and the United States, to be operational by early summer of 1985. Special emphasis was placed, in Mir-Hashem's protocol, on the role to be played by the "Imams of the Friday Prayers," who were instructed to ideologically support the actions of the brigades. This was a reference to the creation in May 1984 of a worldwide organization of the Imams of the Friday Prayers, under the leadership of Khomeini's heir-apparent, Ayatollah Montazeri.

Subsequent letters developed further the outlines of this terrorist reorganization. On Sept. 6, Hojatessalam Hajebi of the Ministry for Islamic Guidance, wrote to Ayatollah Khoeinia, that his proposals for operations during the pilgrimage, presented to the Imam by "Brother Mir-Hashem," had not been accepted by the Imam. They were apparently too soft: "The Imam said . . . that all Islamic actions . . . are part of the Holy War. We are in a war against atheists. . . . Any Holy War alway has its martyrs. To save Islam, one must be able to spill one's blood. To be a martyr is the duty of all Muslims."

Hajebi concluded, that the first job to be done was to attack Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's "Zionist Baathist mercenaries"; second was "to broaden the operations without fear of martyrdom." Three tactics were defined: "1) Provoke fights [during the pilgrimage to Mecca], and there will be greater publicity, since the Saudis will come to the help of the Baathists; 2) unveil the inability of the Saudis to keep peace at the holy sites, especially during the pilgrimage; 3) if some of our brothers have the honor of becoming martyrs, then use this to denounce oppression and to demonstrate the legitimacy of the Revolution and to . . . ensure that journalists and photographers report on the events."

Another letter, dated Aug. 26, from Hajebi to Khoeinia, provides background to the December 1984 hijacking of a Kuwaiti passenger plane. It complained that the "reactionary leaders of Kuwait" had expelled the "responsible official of the financial department of the Islamic movement of Kuwait."