

# Resistance

*A publication of I.S.A.U.S., member of Confederation of Iranian Students (National Union)*

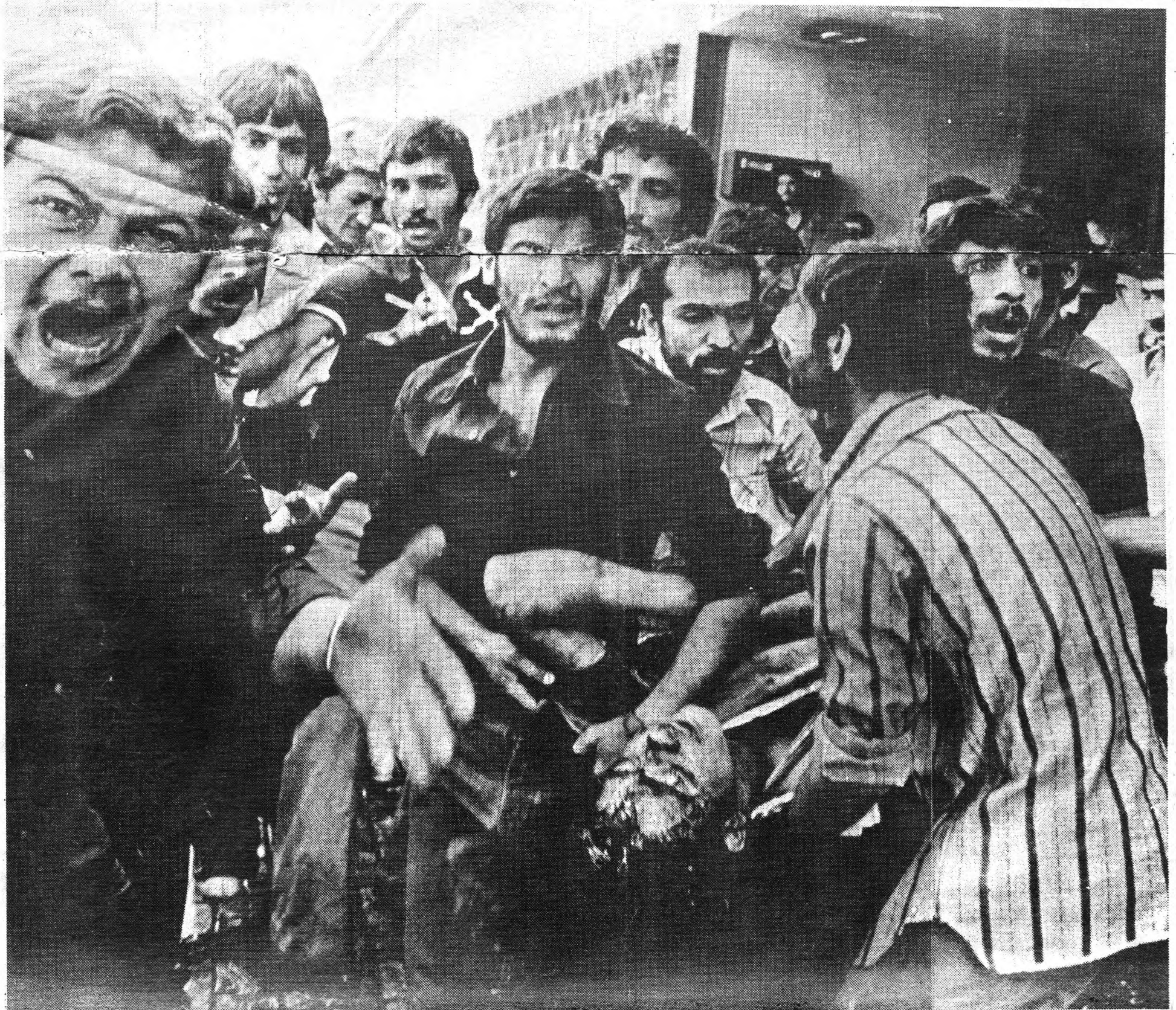
Volume Five

October 1978

Number Seven

## Black Friday

### Martyrs square - Sept. 8 - Tehran



The Iranian people will forever uphold the fighting spirit of those martyred on Friday Sept. 8, 1978.

**Black Friday . . .**

- On Sept. 7th and 8th over seven and a half million people filled the streets of Tehran and other major cities, bravely defying the martial law decree and demanding the overthrow of the Shah's regime.
- Jaleh Square in Tehran has been renamed "Martyrs Square" in commemoration of thousands who were torn to shreds by machine guns on Black Friday, September 8.
- Homes were filled with the dead and dying; doctors and nurses who tried to care for the wounded were arrested on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.
- Thousands have died from lack of medical help, simply bleeding to death in the streets or in nearby homes as they were brought there.
- Demonstrations spread throughout the southern and eastern areas of Tehran, virtually all sections of the city witness some protest during Friday—except the exclusive enclaves of the regime and its American executives in the wealthy northern section of the city.
- Everywhere there was protest, the streets were streams of blood.
- At one cemetery on Saturday, 4,500 bodies were buried.
- There are no more room for bodies and people organized funerals outside the city.
- Hundreds of teenagers and very young children were buried over the weekend in Tehran.
- Thousands of women had been in the front ranks at Martyrs Square and they were among the first to be gunned down.
- When troops hesitated at the Square, the commander of Martial Law, General Oveissie came personally to fire the first round into the crowd.
- General Oveissie is the same executioner who carried out the massacre of 15,000 on a single day in Tehran—June 5, 1963—fifteen years ago.

- Water supplies were cut off in the southern and eastern sections of Tehran on Friday—intensifying the suffering of the wounded and preventing further help to them, increasing the likelihood that they would die.

- In some areas, trucks came in and loaded up bodies while troops continued to fire on people who tried to claim or rescue the dead and wounded.

- Hundreds and hundreds of thousands were demonstrating all over Iran on Friday, September 8 when this martial law was imposed and the massacres throughout the country cannot possibly be put in numbers less than TENS of thousands.

No matter how we try to describe the suffering and agony of those who spoke from Iran, no matter how we try to report the truth from the people against whom these atrocities are committed again and again—this time it is beyond human description. Here are some fragments of what we have heard through phone conversations from Iran:

"We cannot even get outside to (the square) to reach the injured and no one can get the bodies; the shooting never stops."

"People are dying from the loss of blood in the streets; there is no blood for them anywhere. Nurses and doctors who try to help are being arrested and shot with all the others."

"There are hundreds of children dead."

"Thousand and thousands are dead, bodies are all over."

"Thousands more are dying every hour; they won't let doctors near them."

"If there is not medical help from outside, everyone who is wounded will die from loss of blood or infections or gangrene."

No one in the world who has read the newspaper accounts or seen televised films of the revolutionary upheaval by the Iranian people against the Pahlavi regime can escape the realization that history is being made in Iran. The questions have all been raised: Will the Shah survive? Where did this extraordinary mass of humanity pouring through the streets of Iran come from? What is going to happen? And what is the U.S. role in all this, since it supports the Shah?

We continue to make our views known concerning the reporting of events in Iran—that while the press has been forced to take into account the reality of gigantic demonstrations raising slogans of "Death to the Shah" and the fact that walls are

painted with similar demands and the call for arms by the people, while streets are bathed in blood—all of this is presented in the outrageous framework of a Shah bent on "modernization" and "liberalization" while the masses are stubbornly refusing to follow his "enlightened" path.

We encourage you to refer to previous issues of *Resistance* concerning the economic and social conditions of the vast majority of people in our country, the economic bankruptcy that has repeatedly devastated the base of Iranian economy and brought destruction to the lives of millions, and the staggering militarization of the Shah's regime under the programs designed by successive U.S. presidential administrations for the past 30 years.

**STATE OF SEIGE**

Since Sept. 8 the following cities are under martial law: Tehran, Abadan, Isfahan, Tabriz, Qom, Ahvaz,

continued on next page

I.S.A. (member of CISNU) is an open, democratic and anti-imperialist organization of the Iranian students abroad that aims at the exposure of the reactionary nature of the Shah's regime among the people of the world. I.S.A. raises the voice of the Iranian people who are struggling against tyranny and oppression and echoes the cry of the mutilated political prisoners who courageously withstand the torture of the Shah's executioners. Through demonstrations, conferences, cultural programs and distribution of literature, I.S.A. struggles to make the people of the world aware of the plunder of Iran at the hands of the U.S. and other corporate powers. It works to mobilize international public opinion in support of the just struggle of the Iranian people for liberation and their aspiration for a free and independent Iran. *Resistance* is a monthly publication of the I.S.A. in the U.S. which aims to serve the above purposes. We urge all I.S.A. supporters and *Resistance* readers to subscribe to this publication through the mail. The annual subscription rates are \$3 in the U.S. and \$5 abroad.

Meshad, Kazerun, Ghazvin, Jahrom, Shiraz, and Karaj. Streets are filled with U.S. tanks, British tanks, armoured personnel carriers, and troop trucks. The wail of police sirens and the constant buzz of helicopters pierce the tense atmosphere; bursts of machine gunfire crack through from separate corners of densely populated and teeming sections of the every city. Night patrols of SAVAK squads around the neighborhoods raiding homes and searching for violators of the 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. curfew.

"Anyone convicted of crimes against the constitutional monarchy will be executed." Gen. A. Oveissi, Military Commander of Shah's forces, Tehran.

"We hope . . . political liberalization will continue." Carter to Shah, Sept. 10.

"The Shah is . . . on balance a force for the kind of world most Americans would like to see." *Wall Street Journal* editorial, September 13, 1978.

"SAVAK's role is 'the equivalent of 'Operation Phoenix' which, in 1968 in Vietnam, purged Siagon of its opposition.'" *Le Monde*, September 14, 1978.

Early Friday morning, September 8, 1978, the orders were handed down—from the U.S. commanders to the Iranian Generals. The Shah met with the Cabinet. There was an advance notice that demonstrations were planned for Jaleh Square, Friday morning.

The previous Monday, Sept. 4, millions of people poured like an ocean into the streets of Tehran. "Death to the Shah!" and "We Want Khomeini!" reverberated throughout the capital. Meshad, Isfahan, Shiraz and Tabriz held massive demonstrations through the week.

Thursday and Friday, September 7th and 8th, had been declared the days of general strike and national mourning for the thousands who have been killed in the holy month of Ramadan in the struggle against the regime. The world press was on hand both days and reported their amazement to the astonishing coordination and the organization, the unity of purpose and high spirits of the demonstrators.

Such gigantic processions were repeated in major cities all over Iran on Thursday. One astonished French correspondent reported this:

"It was an ocean! Never, in 25 years of reporting, have I seen such a tidal wave of humanity unfurled in one city . . . By the end of the morning, 300,000, 500,000, maybe more, an orderly procession as far as the eye could see in the main arteries of the capital." *Le Figaro*, September 8, 1978.

These are the same masses that the U.S. press would have you believe are crazed "fanatics" and "rampaging mobs" which retaliate apparently for no reason when such demonstrations are viciously attack-



Part of the historical demonstrations of Sept 7th and 8th which totaled over 7½ million people throughout the major cities of Iran.

ed by police and troops.

These are the dimensions of the Shah's opposition which mysteriously was reported to you, quoting the Shah himself, as a "mere handful" only months ago. How is it possible that such vast millions have so "suddenly" become so "disloyal" to their "liberalizing" dictator?

These are the same Iranian people that the press would have you believe are not only demonstrating against "liberalization," but are even a source of the chaos under the regime.

How do you explain "liberalization" to those who gathered in Jaleh Square, Tehran on Friday morning, September 8? "Army gunfire sliced through a crowd of several thousand" "led by teenagers, and women in veils," "spraying the demonstrators with round after round" "literally mowing down scores of people;" "bloodsoaked demonstrators fell to the ground and were hauled away in trucks after the two-hour battle."

Perhaps one can explain it the way the State Department did: "The security forces are attempting to react with restraint." (Reuter)

How do you explain "liberalization" when the massive outpouring

of millions in two separate days of oceanic processions—described everywhere as "peaceful"—were met with massacre and martial law?

We would like to know how these "commentators" and "analysts" would explain "liberalization" to the grieving families and friends of the thousands and thousands of people who have been machine-gunned, executed by firing squads, roasted on hot beds, gassed and burned alive, beaten, mutilated, and put in chains for fighting against this abhorrent regime??

**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 8TH,**

Early in the morning, people poured into Jaleh Square. Thousands of them. As they rallied, women and young teenagers took up the front ranks, facing straight into a solid wall of troops.

With submachine guns heavy in their hands, bayonets fixed, the soldiers stared tensely under their orders. They raised their rifles, officers roared out orders to disperse. Shots cracked the air. The crowd kept coming. Again officers shrieked at the advancing crowd. Troops fired in the air, tear gas grenades were launched straight into the rows of advancing women.

People closed their ranks and

marched steadily forward. The troops lowered their sights. A deafening roar. Screams. A relentless barrage of gunfire. A hail of bullets ripped into the crowds, felling hundreds within minutes.

Blood soaked placards demanding "Death to the Shah!" went flying as people tried to save their mothers and sisters and brothers from this mass murder. Still the machine guns roared. For two hours the guns tore into the people. Jaleh Square was soaked in blood. Friday evening, NBC News said it had been "a bloodbath."

All day Friday, the attack continued in merciless slaughter.

Saturday and Sunday it raged on. The film coverage disappeared. The statistics took over.

There is no possible way to know how many are dead. Thousands lay bleeding in the streets as people were shot down trying to pull them out of the streets and into shelter. Homes for blocks around were splattered with blood as people finally were able to bring the bodies into the safety of the people. No doctors or nurses were allowed to care for the wounded in the streets; many were arrested as they tried. Lack of blood meant that thousands were doomed from treatable wounds. Water was cut off in the southern and eastern sections of Tehran where the worst casualties were.

On Saturday, at one burial, over 4,500 bodies were put in their graves. There were thousands of women and hundreds of children among the slaughtered. Wailing sirens continued all day and night as thousands were being arrested.

The army commandos under direct control of the Military General from the Shah, are massed in the streets. SAVAK patrols in cars and helicopters stalk the neighborhoods.

This is the way it is today in Tehran. And people have not stopped their struggle. It should be clear to peoples all over the world that there is a monstrous power at work in the palaces and barracks and bases of Iran—and we cannot reverse reality and ignore the history of direction for these massacres from the U.S. Embassy in Tehran.

While the State Department arrogantly claims that their "information is incomplete" and makes the astounding statement that this bloodbath in Iran is "an internal affair"—we do not need to remind anyone that there are 50,000 U.S. military advisers in Iran and a U.S. Ambassador, Mr. Sullivan, who engineered the U.S. war in Vietnam. □

**Down With The Shah; Puppet of U.S.!**

**No U.S. Military Intervention in Iran!**

**End To The Martial Law!**

# Eyewitness report from Martyrs square

*This is a translation of the eyewitness account, by Yves-Guy Berges in Le Figaro, of what took place at Jaleh Square on Friday morning, September 8th. It appeared in the September 9-10 issue of Le Figaro.*

*We reprint this article not because we think that this particular newspaper is progressive — as a matter of fact it is not — but to show the discrepancy between the coverage of news in the U.S. as compared to other countries.*

## BLACK FRIDAY IN TEHRAN — THE ARMY CRUSHES THE DEMONSTRATORS

### The Massacre at Jaleh Square:

\* 8 o'clock, a.m. — Jaleh Square

On this Friday, the Islamic Sunday, it was here, according to information passed by word of mouth by the opposition, that the day's demonstration would be held. This time, the army is there, visibly in position, armored, lining all access to the Square which itself is occupied by several cordons of soldiers, faceless, gas masks extending from their helmets, rifles aimed, bayonets glistening in the morning sun.

Where are they, the demonstrators? One looks for them. After the triumph of the previous day's processions, it is impossible that they aren't coming. After all, processions were forbidden the day before also.

There they are, in the alleys, at the start of Shah Reza Street. At least a thousand, not more, at this hour. Their expressions are visibly hard, steady, decisive, conscious of what they risk. But with no other arms but their own hands, their voices, and the muslim banners that they wave.

Quickly, they take up their places in the middle of the avenue, about 150 meters from the army.

Today, no cries of "Khomeini." Instead, newspapers, clothes stained with the blood of the victims of previous riots, displayed sacredly from poles.

Something else new: the banners that they carry are covered with slogans in English. They had thought

of the foreign press and the impact of propaganda in international magazines.

Some students of the "service of order," who are obviously expert at public relations, take me aside and announce, with an air of confidence, that "three hundred Israeli military advisors arrived yesterday evening in Tehran to help save the Shah."

\* 8:15 a.m. — A tear gas grenade just exploded at the back of the demonstrators who scattered in confusion into the alleys. But, handkerchiefs over their mouths, they quickly resume their positions, defying the soldiers, shaking their banners in front of them.

From the military camp came a harsh voice, amplified by a loud speaker: "This is martial law; you are ordered to disperse; do not force us to shoot."

The crowd replied: "We want an Islamic government! Shah is a murderer!"

\* 8:30 a.m. — The tension is building. The crowd grows denser. Cries of joy greet the arrival of Ayatollah Nouri. Courageous, arms raised, he goes in front of the military, speaks for a second with an officer, returns, a fragile silhouette in this formidable no man's land, and, with a firm gesture, asks the demonstrators to sit down. Which they all do, without a murmur.

\* 8:35 a.m. — Another tear gas grenade is launched several meters from the peoples' front line. The crowd, instead of retreating, rises and bravely advances. Mechanically,



On Black Friday Sept. 8, at least 10,000 people were killed in Tehran's Martyrs Square. The picture shows some of the martyred people in Behesht Zahra morgue. On Saturday Sept. 9, 4500 death certificates were issued at this cemetery alone.

the soldiers across the street do the same.

\* 8:40 a.m. — I am sheltered by a passageway, weeping, coughing (from tear gas). Outside, the demonstrators, to combat the effect of the gas, light torches made from old newspapers and set fire to tires and crates.

Right next to them, several bursts of machine gun fire roar past. The crowd scatters, screaming.

False alarm, just firing into the air, no one hurt.

But in that short space, one instant left free, straight in front of this wall of lined up robots, two men stand their ground, ready for sacrifice. Thirty meters from the soldiers, they face them defiantly.

One awaits death, his arms extended, offering his chest. The other brandishes a placard. A woman in black, heavy, runs up to join them, throwing vehement insults at the army.

The wall stands, unmoving.

Then, little by little, the demonstrators, emboldened, draw near, close ranks, advance. They have gained ten more meters. Impassive, this wall of military with mechanical steps, advances the same distance.

The adversaries now are separated by scarcely 20 meters and the contrast is dreadful between these mechanical robots and the nervous but disciplined crowd which raises its fists, waves its banners, repeating its slogans in measured cadence — and which throws not one weapon at the troops.

How many are there now of these demonstrators? From the roof of a car, I estimate around 5,000. From the midst of the street, an athletic looking man signals to me. I join him. Aided by 10 friendly hands, he hoists me on his shoulders from

where, for several seconds, I am able to photograph the two groups face to face with each other.

\* 9:15 a.m. — From the other end of the Square, a cannonade of gunfire. I leap to the ground, barely have time to reach the righthand sidewalk when the soldiers in the front ranks open fire on us point blank, without stopping.

There is panic. Pushed, swept along, I am hurled to the ground, losing a camera, squeezed by those who had the same idea, while the hail of bullets — automatic weapons perhaps? — passes over our heads.

This lasts only 30 seconds, seeming as many minutes. Against the crowd with no weapons, with no defenses, it is easy game. They aim to frighten them, dissuade them, have to hit hard. Once as a lesson.

This is not a fight; this is a massacre. A firing squad at its work.

Rising out of an inhuman silence that follows this fusillade, moans, death rattles echoing, amplified by the nearby alleys.

The street, one minute beforehand darkened with people, is strewn with bodies, shoes, trampled banners, the wounded crawling towards each other, struggling to reach each other. I count 30 to 40 dismembered bodies.

The army has retreated some 100 meters, but continues to fire sporadic bursts.

Despite this, men throw themselves forward in no time to carry away their new heroes. Soon, the Square is cleared. On the sidewalks, voices, deeper than before, the pain breaks out, explodes: "Allah! Allah! See what they have done!" "They have dared! They have dared!"

In their heart, no one believed that the army was going to shoot. A sturdy unshaven man falls to his

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The crowd valiantly approaching the troops; troops giving warning, which lasted no more than 8 seconds — seconds later the historical bloodbath of Martyrs Square is made.

# Military - Shah's only base - in chaos



Tehran: Armed Iranian soldiers — moments before shooting into the crowd of millions of demonstrators on Friday, Sept. 8th.

We have said elsewhere that the U.S. rulers and the direct advisors of the Shah are engaged in "debates" about the use of all-out military suppression in periods of crisis, as opposed to everyday tyranny which has been proven "insufficient" to suppress the total hatred of the Shah among Iranian people and their continuing struggle for freedom and real democracy and independence.

In the past weeks, since the

**PRESTIGE MUST BE FACTOR-ED INTO ANY ASSESSMENT OF IRANIAN ARMS PURCHASES."**

[p. 104, "Access to Oil — The United States relationships with Saudi Arabia and Iran," U.S. Senate publication No. 95-70]

The point is that if two weeks of so-called "democratization" yield several MILLION in the streets of Tehran, PEACEFULLY demanding an absolute end to the regime and

*There is strong belief among the people of Iran with mounting evidence that the Israeli soldiers participated in the massacre of at least 10,000 people in Tehran on Friday, Sept. 8, 1978.*

*The following is the translation of a leaflet which was widely distributed in Iran on the eve of "Black Friday." (Also see Le Figaro eyewitness report as well as the article on this page regarding the situation of Shah's armed forces.)*

## The Beginning Of Israeli Military Intervention in Iran

In the early hours of Tuesday morning, Sept. 5, three Israeli airplanes landed at Tehran's Jay Airport. These three airplanes carried hundreds of Israeli soldiers and officers shipped to Iran for direct intervention in the repression of the Iranian people's popular movement. We strongly protest the overt intervention of the Israeli Army in Iran. We warn the Iranian people of the danger of these military units used directly in the battle arena to silence the freedom-seeking voice of our people as a continuation of 25 years of Zionist support for the Shah's regime.

The Voice of the Iranian People

horrifying massacres carried out at point blank range against hundreds of thousands in Tehran along with the same policy in effect in 11 other cities, there have been yards of copy in print speculating about the "loyalty" of the Iranian soldiers.

We refer to the analysis presented to Senator Jackson's Energy Committee in 1977:

"The military and internal security forces represent an essential element of support for the regime . . . The military is supplied with the latest weaponry and is generally treated as a privileged group . . . The aim is go keep the military content, occupied and incapable of political action against the regime. THE NEED TO KEEP THE MILITARY SATISFIED AND THE ELEMENT OF

"Death to the Shah!", the situation is clear to everyone: There isn't a shred of popular support whatsoever for the present ruler.

So what does the power of the regime depend on if it has not a shred of support from the people? The military, obviously.

The demonstrations that erupted during August and the first weeks of September all over Iran, with millions in the streets of Tehran, were inevitable. They were brought into even greater intensity and even more gigantic dimensions of mass support by the grief and anger from the Abadan atrocity when 25 years after the CIA coup, August 19th, the regime deliberately burned alive at least 900 people.

The enormous impact of this monstrous act by the Shah unleashed the

The following is a translation of a leaflet clandestinely distributed all over Iran; it depicts the mounting opposition against the Shah's regime within the armed forces.

Dear struggling brothers,

We are a group of military men in the armed forces. In this present repressive atmosphere, the decadent Pahlavi regime has attacked the youth in our country like a blood-sucking leech that continually bows to the foreigners. These foreigners, who have never any sympathy towards any country, are always trying to turn them into their colonies by plundering their wealth and using them to their own advantage.

We, who are wearing these uniforms, can no longer call them "holy military uniforms." We declare that like you, struggling brothers, we are looking for ways and means to destroy this fascist regime which seeks to continue its rule by oppression. We want to establish an Islamic state under the leadership of the great leader of Islam, Ayatollah Khomeini. And we uphold the principle of equality similar to that in practice at the time of the Prophet of Islam and Saint Ali. We expect from you, struggling brothers, not to judge us as lackeys of the foreigners because we, like you, are also suffering from a repressive state in which several of our brothers and sisters are martyred everyday. We are suffering more than you because you can escape, whereas we are forced to stay — this in itself is the worst torture for us.

But we have hopes of destroying these animals as long as we are among them since this is the best opportunity for us to struggle against the enemy from within. We anticipate the day of sacrifice when we may water the Islamic gardens of justice with our blood. And the enemy should know that we are not afraid of death. Our only fear is that we may be destroyed before accomplishing anything in struggle. Let us not forget the historical memory of the martyrs of Qum, Tabriz, Yazd, Jahrom, Tehran, and also our beloved university students. Let us not stop until the blood of the martyrs is written in the pages of eternal history as a final lesson to the oppressors.

Our country as well as your brothers in the military anticipate that you will unite to overthrow the traitorous Pahlavi Dynasty.

Long Live The Unity Between The Military Men In The Armed Forces And The Militant People of Iran!

Down With The Fascist Pahlavi Dynasty!



Flowers are being laid on the grave of a soldier who refused to open fire on the demonstration on Friday, Sept. 8. Instead he shot and killed his commanding officer and then committed suicide. On his grave at the Behesht Zahra cemetery in Tehran, written in blood — Majid Kianejad: Fighting Soldier.

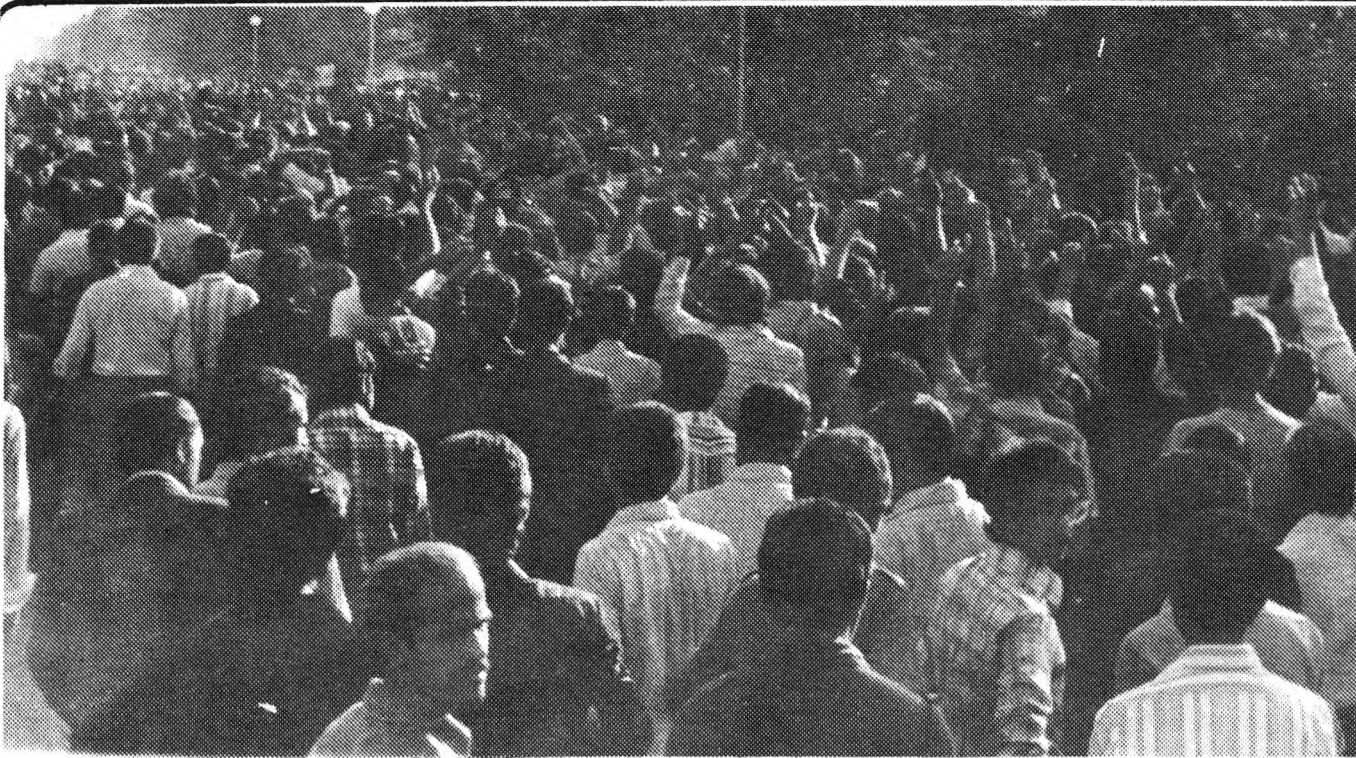
millions and millions who poured like oceans into the streets of all major cities. For months, in countless demonstrations the soldiers had been forced by military commanders in the Iranian army — on orders from the Shah and his U.S. advisors — to fire their submachine guns against their own brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers. And in some

instances, not only individual soldiers, but some officers as well, had refused to obey the orders. In some instances, they turned their machine guns on their commanders rather than kill their own people.

Actions like these and the astounding attitude of the masses towards the army created panic in the palace.

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# IRAN: NEXT



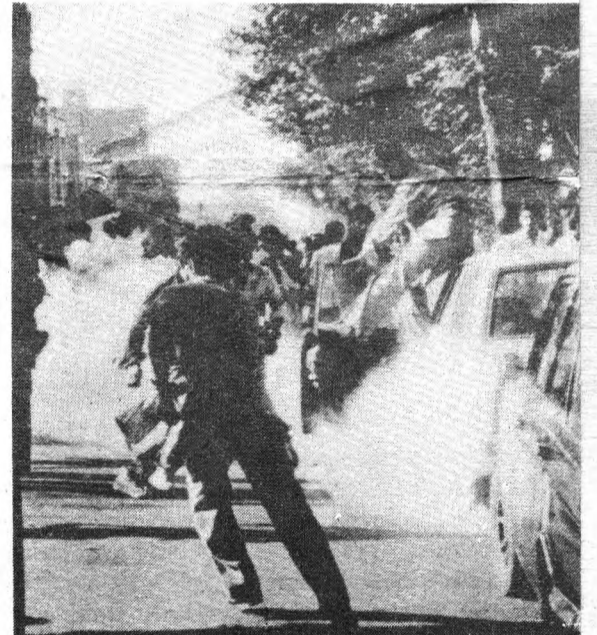
Millions march with clenched fists toward Martyrs Square on Friday, Sept. 8.



The people promise revenge as they carry the coffin of a martyr.



At every street thousands more join the demonstration.



The troops attack with tear gas and water cannons.

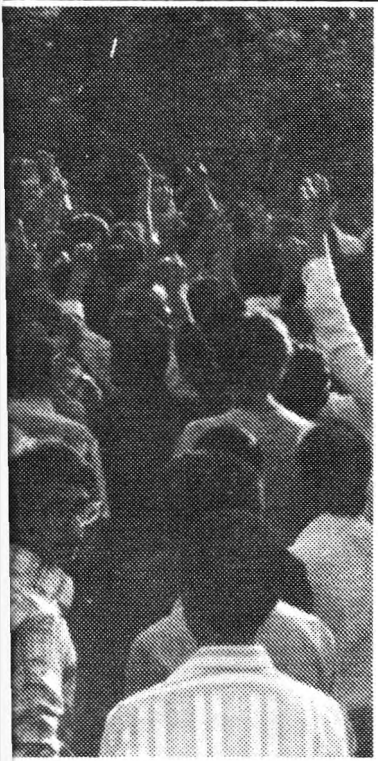


The people's hatred for imperialist domination is expressed as they bring Coca-Cola Co. to total ruin.



Their wrath is transformed into powerful might as they destroy police cars.

# IRAN: NEXT VIETNAM



, Sept. 8.



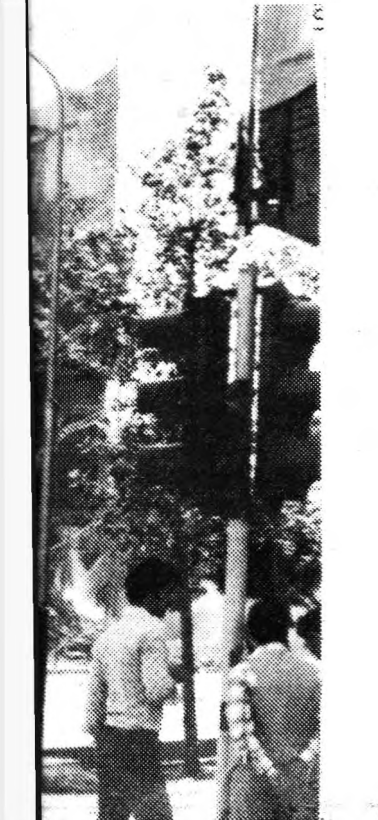
The people promise revenge as they carry the coffin of a martyr of recent struggles, shouting "Down With The Shah".



The troops attack with tear-gas into the crowd.



No "show of force"— police, t:



Their wrath is transformed into powerful might as they destroy police cars and anything in their way belonging to the regime.



After the bla

ruin.

# VIETNAM



tyr of recent struggles, shouting "Down With The Shah".



They arm themselves, preparing Molotov cocktails to battle the troops.



as into the crowd.



No "show of force"— police, troops, Savak— can stop these people who are determined to struggle until this regime is overthrown



e cars and anything in their way belonging to the regime.



After the bloody massacre at Martyrs Square, rows of graves were dug at Behesht Zahra cemetery.



# Shah's 25th anniversary "gift"

On the eve of his 25th anniversary of reinstatement to power through a CIA coup, the Shah gave the Iranian people a "gift." He committed one of the most horrendous crimes of the century on Sept. 19, 1978 by setting fire to a movie theater in Abadan. This mass murder of hundreds of men, women, and children was supposed to serve the purpose of discrediting the Iranian people's just struggles for independence and democracy by labeling it "fanatic," and "terrorist" in Iran and throughout the world.

But these desperate and fruitless attempts backfired immediately and the people throughout Iran waged massive demonstrations exposing the regime as the one and only criminal responsible for such barbarity. And the people still have not forgotten the death of their countrymen for even on the 40th day of commemoration ceremonies for the martyrs, Sept. 28, thousands upon thousands met at the gravesite in Abadan not only to commemorate the dead but more so to stage a militant demonstration with cries of "Down With The Shah" ringing through the cemetery.

Following is a list of some of the highlights of the unforgettable Abadan fire.

*What follows is the translation of a letter, exactly as written, from Abadan to a member of the Iranian Students Association. The name "Ali" is a pseudonym for security reasons; elsewhere, several dots (...) indicate names deleted for their protection.*

Abadan, Iran August 22, 1978

Dear Ali,

As I am writing this, it is three days since this painful event has happened in the Rex Theater. And I'm leaving the town in half an hour

go up and had not attacked us with wooden clubs, at most a hundred or two hundred people would have died. The rest would have been saved.

By the way, just before we got to the cinema, eight people had come out of the cinema. Three of them, who are our neighbors, try to go back to rescue their wives and children.

When they got back, they see that the door is locked and no matter how much they pound on the door, police won't let them in.

At the back of the cinema, people were pounding against the outside of the door trying to rescue people. Outside people rushed against the locks and they broke the locks with a crow bar. Fifteen people poured out.

One of the people went inside and shouted, "Is there anyone inside the cinema? If anyone is here, come out!!"

As he was shouting, suddenly several police officers lunged at the door, closed it, and locked it.

Dear Ali, I swear the smell of burning flesh was just pouring out. And even though smoke had engulfed the whole street and police were attacking people, everyone who was with us was telling police, "Let us go and save the people!!"

And the police would keep attacking us with clubs.

Then they brought soldiers with machine guns in front of us and stopped anyone who tried to rush to save the people.

Ali, they were at ease just shooting people.

Ali, do you realize what I'm saying?

After exactly one hour, the Fire Department truck came. We and other kids were standing aside. With whatever deceiving it was, the truck went and brought ladders. That is when we saw that the fire truck of Abadan Fire Department had no

of Abadan Fire Department does not have any water.

Ali, I swear, by now one could only cry. Everyone is burning inside. What is the the mother of... supposed to do?

After 20 minutes another fire truck came. In those 20 minutes, of course, the mother of... could do nothing and could only wait for the next trucks.

Anyway, the fire truck came. And on this one, the hose nozzle wouldn't open.

Ali, these things that I'm saying, I witnessed them myself.

After two to two-and-a-half hours, the fire truck of the oil company came and by then, I swear to you Ali, the fire had burned itself out and there wasn't any longer much of a fire to be put out.

Then the Chief of Police came—the same person who had previously ordered the massacre of 300 of our

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- Between 750 and 1,000 Iranians, nearly all of them younger than 25 years of age, were burned to death.
- From eyewitness accounts, it is evident that police and military forces were organized not to protect the health and safety of nearby crowds in front of the burning theater, but rather were at the scene in order to actively and forcefully prevent rescue and to destroy potential witnesses who might escape to tell the story.
- According to these accounts, people were shot from the roof as they tried to jump and others were beaten to death with wooden clubs by police.
- Police clubbed people who managed to jump from the roof or struggled through crumbling walls during the first hour of the fire.
- Troops were seen from outside re-locking doors that had been broken through from the inside, and shoving people back into the burning theater.
- Descriptions of the scene inside the theatre by people who entered when the blaze has been extinguished included the grim observation that most of the bodies remained seated in their chairs, showing no signs of struggle.
- Additional testimony from people who escaped from asphyxiating gas fumes prior to the outbreak of the fire itself was set in order to make sure there would be no survivors and no witnesses to the facts.
- One survivor reported that before the fire broke out, dozens of people had tried to escape gas fumes and were machine gunned by waiting troops before they could get outside. Their bodies, riddled with bullets and not burned, were discovered at the cemetery by relatives searching for victims. They were identified and known to have been in the theater.
- Contrary to official statements that trucks couldn't get to the theater because of the smoke, couldn't see the entrance, or that hydrants wouldn't work, several trucks did arrive after the fire was raging—one had no water, one refused to use the oil company's hydrants, one had a broken nozzle, and one that hooked up couldn't make the water reach the flames. After several hours, fully working fire equipment finally arrived—from a city well-equipped and a station less than 350 yards from the blaze. By this time, everyone was dead.

to go back to the service. My vacation is over and, dear Ali, how can I tell you, I wish I had never taken it.

Ali, I'm writing this because I witnessed the criminal fire from the time it started. I was there. From just a little before 10 (p.m.) until 7 in the morning, I witnessed the whole thing. The story is like this:

I was with some other kids in the city when we heard people saying, "Cinema Rex is on fire." We ran towards the theater and there we saw that smoke is coming out of the cinema.

They told us that all the people were in the theater. And we rushed to go upstairs. Then suddenly, several officers closed the main entrance to the cinema and didn't let us go in. There was even a heavy vehicle someone had brought in that would have been able to completely pull the door out—but police would not allow it.

Ali, you know how selfless our people are and the extent of sacrifice. If police would just have let us

# 171 arrested in L.A.

## Scores severely injured by Police



• LOS ANGELES—SEPT. 1, 1978

It was a long procession of nearly 300-strong men, women and even children who marched from the Federal Building through downtown on Broadway St. and on to the LA Times building. Who could guess that what began as a peaceful demonstration waged by the Iranian Students Association and other progressive Iranian groups, would end in one of the most vicious and bloody attacks by the LA police.

From the start there was tension in the atmosphere as police began hassling the demonstrators about all sorts of things such as traffic, chanting, bullhorn noise, etc.—everything short of breathing.

But the demonstrators took no heed of the attempts to break up the line and cried even louder than before, "Down, Down, Down with the Shah" and "Shah burns hundreds alive in theatre fire" in condemnation of the burning of close to 800 men, women, and children in Abadan, Iran on August 19.

But this was no simple demonstration—the LA Police had other tricks up their sleeves. As the chanting demonstrators, banners and placards at hand, approached the LA Times building, they were soon to discover that all streets were being closed to traffic behind them. The vicinity of the LA Times was cut off to cars, and only paddy wagons, police vans, cars, buses as well as ambulances rolled through the streets. Dozens upon dozens of helmeted police—batons in hand—ready to attack crawled around the place.

Shortly after 1 p.m. the police began their all-out attack. But it was not that easy—the demonstrators actively defended themselves. Over 150 police trained liked animals

swung their billy clubs into every face, head and neck they could reach.

"... several witnesses reported seeing downed demonstrators being struck repeatedly by officers using batons." (LA Times, 9/2/78)

"It took three cops to arrest a woman demonstrator." (SF Examiner, 9/2/78)

With more than six LAPD divisions whose "tactical alert" rapidly changed into outright fascism, it is no wonder that after the bloody melee many demonstrators—young and old—were sent to hospitals with broken heads and a wide assortment of serious injuries. And the streets became filled with broken glass, lost shoes, torn banners, thousands of leaflets and lots and lots of blood.

Hundreds who had crowded in the streets were shocked at what was going on right before their eyes and immediately shouts of "Down with the Shah!" "Shah Burns the People—LA Police Helps the Shah!" and "Take them to the Hospital!" spontaneously broke from the crowd. The baffled police—under pressure from every side—retaliated by attacking an American woman bystander and then a Chicano man who later needed stitches at the hospital.

And so dozens upon dozens were hauled off to the new, "bright and shiny" LA jail where they were booked on charges from misdemeanor to felony. To the dismay of the police the prisoner's spirit strengthened—they immediately waged a hunger strike.

On the following Wednesday—the first day scheduled for the arraignment—more than 350 people were back to demonstrate through the streets of downtown LA and in

front of the Police Dept. and the Federal building. There were over 300 uniformed police ready for action and over 50 FBI and plainclothed police on duty. This time they had learned a hard lesson—and with public opinion much in their disfavor—all they could do was make a nuisance of themselves. But the demonstration, which condemned the recent arrests, was able to get widespread coverage through the news media and tremendous support from the people. It is no wonder that the court arraignment was postponed

for 10 days. Apparently the police department was having a hard time getting a case together.

And once again on Sept. 23 the Iranian students staged a demonstration larger and more powerful than ever—there were nearly 90 protesting against LA police brutality and martial law in Iran.

Many people, American and other nationalities belonging to different progressive organizations, actively participated in the demonstration to express solidarity with the Iranian people's movement. □

### Shah's 25th Anniversary . . .

continued from page 8

people (in Qom\*) and who had gotten two promotions in rank from colonel to general. He had ordered all the doors locked at the theater. He came then and ordered the streets evacuated and refilled half the area with machine guns.

We were standing there until 3 a.m. No troops or police dared go in and bring the people's bodies out. Anyone who would go in—most of them would retch or get sick at the sight.

Finally, I and some of the kids from the bazaar went in.

Ali, what can I tell you? I swear to you, no matter how much I want to picture the scenes I saw and describe them to you, I am not able.

Ali, one thousand people were just burned to death. These things that they say in the newspapers that 377 or even 700 were burned are all lies. Because everyone is lying.

Ali, 830 tickets were sold. And that's not including people who stayed from the first showing and were still in the theater.

Ali, we went in to take out the bodies of one thousand young people—all except three were under the age of 25.

Ali, most of these burned people were burned while sitting in their chairs and it was something strange—wouldn't all these people who were all young and strong—so heavy and strong-built that when three or four of us tried to take the bodies to put them in bags, even though the head and arms and legs of these youths were completely burned and the only the body was intact, we couldn't move them. Several other people would have to come to help us. That's how sturdy some of them were.

Ali, I want to know—if someone is burning, would he or she just keep sitting on a chair?? That is, wouldn't they climb the wall for fear of death?

And except for the main door, basically the rest of the doors needed only one kick to open them. That is, couldn't these poor people with just one kick take the door right out? And there were 1,000 of them?

Then, how could it be they just burned while sitting on the chairs??

Couldn't this be a fact that from the air conditioning vent they sent gas all through and the poor and innocent people were knocked unconscious before burning?

Ali, they say most of the people were just burned sitting in chairs. Even several mothers, while holding their children, were burned like that.

To make it brief, Ali, I saw scenes such as these:

For example, those that the gas had affected less had all piled on top of each other like a small mountain near one door and had burned.

Ali, I swear to you, we picked up a mother and we saw that this poor mother had dropped herself on top of her child but they had both burned and were stuck together.

And a pregnant woman whose stomach had burned—her child inside her had also burned. And, Ali, a burned body of a woman with only shreds of clothes remaining.

Ali, there were so many girls and boys, all young, burned, that their relatives will not forget it for the rest of their lives.

When we wanted to pick up their bodies, just flesh would come into our hands and most of them would turn to dust in our hands. They had been burned so much that they had turned to ashes.

I could stay only until 7 a.m. and I was gradually getting sick from the smell of burned flesh.

Ali, no matter how much I describe it, it's useless unless you see it yourself.

Many, many people, in the cemetery, when they would see the corpses, would faint or vomit.

Ali, the majority of the burned people were never recognized and they would pour them into holes with bulldozers and then smooth the dirt over.

Dear Ali, I'm saying this from the bottom of my heart that I wish I had burned too and would never have seen these scenes.

Anyway, these are the things that I saw with my own eyes. Ali, this is a reality, a historical reality because, Ali, if we look at history in any society, when a movement is just getting started, the government would create fear and terror by mass murder and setting fires and committing assassinations. And we have seen this in the history of many countries. □

\*The Chief of Police of Abadan is General Razmi who was previously the head of police in Qom and was promoted two ranks for carrying out the massacre on January 9th and 10th of over 300 people in Qom.

# Delegation of Observers Visits Iran

on June 1st, 1978, a delegation of two American International observers was sent to Iran by ISAUS in anticipation of June 5th uprisings. Their purpose was also to observe first hand the political repression in Iran, the living conditions of the people and the impact of the recent wave of uprisings on the regime and the entire society. The delegation sought, as well, to learn the opinions and aspirations of the many different movements and groups and individuals who have been waging an all out war against the rule of the Shah. The delegation had conversations and interviews with scores of people from all classes and strata of Iranian society. They talked with workers, students, intellectuals, university professors, families of political prisoners, liberal groups and individuals who have been active in the movement and particularly in recent mass uprisings. Members of the delegation travelled to several cities where people's uprisings were particularly strong and widespread.

One of the objectives of the delegation was to explore deeply into the extent of U.S. government's involvement in Iran and what impact it has had on the Iranian society. For this they had interviews, or conversations with dozens of Americans employed by different agencies and companies.

Members of the delegation were Margot White and Richard Eiden, both had visited Iran previously with separate delegations. They are back in the U.S. now and are preparing their reports which will soon be published. They will also hold conferences across the U.S. to speak about their experiences in Iran.

The following is an initial report of one of the members of the delegation, Richard Eiden, which upon request has been submitted to ISAUS for publication.

## INITIAL REPORT OF RICHARD EIDEN — July, 1978



*Richard Eiden*

One of the things I saw on a perceptual level was the tremendous change that has taken place in the last few months in the mood of the masses of Iranian people. I was in Iran on one other occasion in January and February of 1976. At that time it was very difficult for me to get into conversations with Iranians about how they felt about the government. Those people that did speak out, did so in very guarded terms.

June of 1978 was drastically different. Many people opened up completely about their undying hatred of the Shah and of imperialism. People talked about their own experiences, their families' experiences, friends that were active in the opposition movement, and the state of the economy.

One of the things that struck me was that people were expressing their dissatisfaction in terms of very openly talking about overthrowing the Shah. There also were people, the liberals, who were calling for liberalization, for mere political reforms. But even many of these people, they said, did so from the standpoint of eventually overthrowing the Shah. They felt that reforms would give the anti-Shah forces time and room to maneuver and more freedom to struggle with each other

for leadership of the movement that would eventually lead to the overthrow of the Shah.

When I explained to people why we were there and that we were part of a large and active movement in the world supporting the struggles in Iran, people were in some cases moved to tears to think that this kind of activity was going on—that people all over the world were supporting them in concrete ways. They expressed appreciation and in spite of the danger to themselves, offered to help us in our efforts to find out as much as we could about their country. People helped us contact activists in the opposition movement and one cab driver drove us all around while acting as an interpreter for us.

There are many other outward signs of the sharpening contradictions, even within the regime itself—signs that were not so clear in 1976. For example, the parliament is made up of members personally selected by the Shah. Since the regime came to power in a 1953 coup, virtually every vote in this parliament has been unanimous unless it was a minor issue on which the Shah's position was not clear. In 1976 they were saying that there was only need for one political party and they were pushing the one party system very hard. They were saying that everybody in Iran agrees with the Shah so there is need for only one party and all others are outlawed.

Already that party has been divided into two wings. The Shah has recently floated the idea of creating still another wing of the party. But even his hand-picked leader of this third wing has been dragging his feet and saying that if there is no need for it and if it will serve no purpose, then it shouldn't be formed.

Recently, when the Shah sent an elections bill to parliament—a bill he

strongly supported—several members of parliament voted against it and ten more abstained. This is not to say that these characters oppose the Shah in any real sense, more the case of seeing the handwriting on the wall and trying to cushion their own downfall that is sure to come.

## REGIME — SENSATIONAL LIES AND VICIOUS REPRESSION

When I was in Iran in 1976, the government told me that there were only 60 people in the whole world who were opposed to the Shah. They told me this to my face and told me that half of those 60 people were Arabs posing as Persians. They said that those people were so well financed by international communism, by Moscow or someplace, they had so much money that they could go from Washington to Paris to Munich to Sweden, you know, all over the world to make it look like there was all this opposition to the Shah when there really were only 60 of them going from place to place.

I remember that in 1976, a key demand of the International Iranian student movement was for an international inspection team to tour the prisons, notorious for the torture of political prisoners. The Red Cross, Amnesty International or somebody like that was suggested. The struggle was so successful that the Shah was forced to let a Red Cross team tour one of the prisons this year. But here is what they did.

SAVAK, the Iranian secret police, formed a phony group of Red Cross inspection people that went to the prison prior to the real Red Cross team. They pretended to be the Red Cross investigators. They interviewed people, and anyone who told the truth about conditions in the prison was taken out and tortured and moved to another prison. Everyone was so intimidated and afraid that the next group of people might be more SAVAKs, that the real inspection team didn't really find out the truth about what goes on in the prisons.

## IRANIANS LEARN HARD LESSONS ABOUT U.S. IMPERIALISM

One other thing that I found is the incredible awareness of the relationship between the Shah and U.S. imperialism shared by many of the Iranian people. I knew some things about this relationship before I left, but I was surprised to find out some things while I was there. For example, despite people's knowledge of the connection between the Shah and U.S. imperialism, some people (the liberals) were fooled by Jimmy Carter. When he ran for President and talked about wanting to insure "human rights," many of these liberals thought that he really meant it. They got very hopeful that things

would be different. I was told that people were by their televisions when the elections were held and in many places they cheered when Carter won.

They have been very embittered by the understanding that it really doesn't matter who sits in the White House, that imperialism is governed by the inherent economic laws of the system and it has nothing to do with the policies of one president or another. If U.S. imperialism can't afford human rights in order to hold its empire together, that it isn't about to give anybody any human rights. They'll talk plenty about human rights in the Soviet Union, but they aren't about to give any human rights in Iran, Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Thailand or any other country they control or influence. So people are very bitter about that fact, they are bitter about what they've learned and this has contributed to the high level of militant hatred.

This tremendous and deep-seated hatred the people have for the Shah's regime grows primarily out of the conditions that the masses of people are forced to live under. It is a neo-colonialist country where the wealth created by the labor of the Iranian people, the land, oil and other natural resources are robbed by the imperialists, primarily U.S. imperialism, and their puppet regime—the Shah and Co. Over 1/2 of all arms exports from the U.S. go directly to Iran to prop up the fascist regime. The U.S. imperialists have interests in maintaining the Shah in power that go beyond the tremendous profits ripped off the Iranian people. The Shah plays the U.S. hand in OPEC, a completely reactionary role, and Iran is strategically located on vital shipping lanes between the Middle East and Europe, adjacent to the Soviet Union. Control of these waterways is key to superpower contention over Europe.

One of the questions I always asked people was "what do you think is going to happen now?" Everybody I talked to was thinking that it is not going to end here. People are just as unhappy, they are more unhappy, they are more determined than ever to overthrow the Shah. People were saying that "We need leadership—the movement needs good leadership." People are willing to lay down their lives, to risk their lives, to demonstrate, to overthrow, to do whatever is necessary to change their country.

Recently the Shah blustered (with an unmistakable undertone of worry), "No one can overthrow me—I have the power." But while a number of obstacles remain in the way of the final overthrow of the Shah's fascist regime and imperialism, including massive U.S. military backing, the deep economic and political crisis is and will continue to propel the masses of people forward. And this, together with the further development of genuine revolutionary leadership in the heat of the struggle of the masses is increasingly threatening to shatter the Shah's claim. □

## Eyewitness report . . .

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knees in agony, and roars, tears open his shirt. Children dazed, wandering absently, beyond understanding, their games shattered. Women in black chador, the predestined widows, clutch themselves, sobbing. A man storms me, hatred in his eyes, menacing me with a knife drawn from his belt: "American! American!"

Two students hail a motorcyclist for me and put me on the seat: "Leave! Leave! Tell what you have seen!"

\* 12 noon — despair, in town, shows on the faces. How it should have been expected, alas! The army, yesterday humiliated, has taken its revenge. Today, it was the army which scored the points. But at what price? More than ever, Jaleh Square has earned the name that the residents of that quarter have already given it: "Martyrs Square." But this willful assassination of hopes is heavy with menace. Here blood calls for blood. □

## Military . . .

continued from page 5

The military, in fact the army, is the only pillar of support remaining for the Shah within Iran. Enormous resources are spent on the army, and U.S. training is provided for selected troops, carefully selected for their loyalty to the Shah. Rewards in cash and privileges depend on the willingness to kill when ordered. But, even with all those privileges and the tonnage of weapons supplied by the U.S. and the vast programs of U.S. training and logistics that are the core of the mission of 40,000 "advisors," the loyalty of the army to the Shah was still being questioned. Considering the fact that the Air Force is even more pampered and carefully selected and trained than the army, and that the Air Force officers are considered the elite of the Iranian military, drawn from the upper classes, while the army recruits are largely from peasant and working class backgrounds, this report from one correspondent in Tehran was significant:

"There was speculation that the 12 day-old government of Prime Minister Jaafar Sharif-Emami did not deploy more troops because military leaders did not want to risk mutinies by some units.

This view was shared by a U.S. trained Iranian Air Force sergeant in a street-side interview. He said he himself would disobey orders if he were told to fire on fellow Iranians. 'I would sooner kill myself,' he added." (*Washington Post*, 9/9/78)

Thus the concern is real. Especially among the recruits from the poorer families in Iran who have no basis for changing their natural of the Shah just because they are in the army.

There are troops killing thousands in the present massacres and martial law clearly could not be carried out without it. But it is also true that enormous plans have been made by

# Khomeini under house arrest

Reports received from various sources in Iran as well as the international news media confirm that the Iraqi regime has put Ayatollah Khomeini under house arrest, barring him from outside contacts, with attempts of deportation against him.

Ayatollah Khomeini, a Shiite Moslem leader and one of the distinguished political personalities who has persistently called for a staunch, anti-Shah movement aimed at overthrowing the Shah's regime, enjoys vast influence among the Iranian people. He was sent to exile by the Shah's regime after the bloody massacre of over 15,000 people on June 5, 1963. He has since lived in Iraq with close ties to the Iranian people's movement.

The fascist Iraqi government's measures against Ayatollah Khomeini and other progressive individuals in Iraq clearly follos the collaboration between the Iraqi and Iranian governments against the Iranian people's movement for independence and democracy.

The Iranian people cannot and will not keep silent when one of their leaders is being harassed by anyone—including the Iraqi government. Whatever happens to Ayatollah Khomeini's health and well-being is solely the responsibility of the Iraqi government which will pay for it.

We appeal to all progressive organizations and individuals to condemn this fascist act on the part of the Iraqi government. We ask you to protest by sending letters and telegrams of condemnation to the Iraqi U.N. Mission in the U.S. as well as the Iraqi embassies in other countries demanding an immediate end to Ayatollah Khomeini's house arrest and the harassment of other progressive Iranian individuals.



Hundreds of thousands of people, carrying the picture of Ayatollah Khomeini, demanding his return to Iran and the overthrow of the Shah.

the Carter Administration to move in with U.S. troops—if all else fails them in their desperate and deadly actions in defense of autocracy in Iran, and the U.S. banks.

### ISRAELI TROOPS IN IRAN?

Short of sending U.S. troops, there are already other "alternatives" that the U.S. military advisers have apparently chosen. While we do not have photographs to prove it, there is abundant evidence that Israeli troops were sent in to assist the massacres under martial law.

"Wild rumors circulated among the local populace that the Shah had brought in Israeli troops to put down demonstrations because he could no longer count on his own army . . . many of the troops deployed in recent days have been seen wearing unfamiliar gas masks." (*Washington Post*, 9/0)

It is certainly no secret that "the West, notably the United States, has been his (the Shah's) chief arm supplier and supporter" (*Manchester Guardian*, 9/10/78) and

"In return, Iran has supplied oil to Israel and South Africa which would otherwise have had great difficulties in meeting all their requirements." (*Manchester Guardian*, 9/10/78)

In other words, this pillar of

reaction in the world, the Shah's regime and its bloodsoaked military advisers have made the obvious political trade-off: U.S. 'tilt' toward Israel if Israel will send troops into Iran to shore up the U.S. stronghold while the U.S. figures out what to do with its rotten ally, the Shah. □

## Forces of Nature . . .

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spare 700 soldiers for the disaster sites whereas tens of thousands of troops are used regularly throughout Iran to machine-gun mass street demonstrations and enforce martial law. And troop "help" at the earthquake-struck areas was throwing a few shabby blankets out into a crowd of grief-stricken people and pulling out bodies — after it was too late to save them.

As is usually the case in Iran, the regime wanted to take advantage of the situation by launching a propaganda campaign to gain public support. And so the master of the "great civilization" — the Shah along with his wife — paid a two-hour visit to the ruins to express "concern." But the people in Iran would not be fooled. They knew that the regime could not be trusted. During the 1968 earthquake, as well as others throughout the years, the people had poured millions of dollars from all over Iran for earthquake relief in order to rescue those suffocating under the rubble. Not only did the Shah and his family use this money for gambling, but they bulldozed the entire area only to put a stop to the rising death toll which was becoming a cause of greater and greater embarrassment.

The people will not be duped by this show of "modernization," they are taking the situation into their own hands. Many people have poured into Tabas to help their countrymen:

"Iranians are coming in from far off to help. One youth has come from Meshed, some 200 miles away. . . ." (*LA Times*, Sept. 19, 1978)

In the heaps of all this rubble, the Shah's "modernization" exposed itself as a hypocritical lie. So now, as tens of thousands more lay dead under the ruins of mud huts they lived in and perhaps hundreds of thousands more are left injured and homeless, the people of the world will better understand the sham nature of the regime's claims to "modernization." □

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## Earthquake buries tens of thousands under rubble in Tabas:

# Forces of nature or Shah's "Modernization"

A devastating earthquake hit eastern Iran on Saturday Sept. 16, flattening the town of Tabas and destroying about 100 surrounding towns and villages. Up to now the Iranian government has estimated the death toll to over 25,000 and some reports even estimate the loss to be much higher — possibly up to 50,000. AP reports:

"The same region was struck by a quake August 31, 1968 that killed 12,000 people. That quake had a 6.5 Richter-scale reading."

That was exactly 10 years and 15 days ago. After that severe quake the Iranian regime, using the propaganda bugles of "modernization" promised to rebuild the area with homes and buildings that could withstand major disasters.

That was 1968 and in 1978 a quake recorded 7.7 on the Richter scale proved a repetition of history. While the earthquake was the result of forces of nature, the massive death toll as well as the extensive level of injury and damage caused are a direct result of the existence of the Shah's backward, feudal regime which has continually kept the population in a state of poverty and underdevelopment.

The LA Times reporter (Sept. 19, 1978) covered the story directly from Tabas:

"The town simply does not exist anymore. It was wiped out in 90 seconds — virtually all the buildings in this palm-fringed oasis were built of mud bricks. All of them crumbled into instant rubble under the terrifying shock, burying alive three out of four of Tabas' inhabitants. The only structures still standing are a few modern institutional buildings, such as the bank and two schools, which were built with fired bricks and steel frames. In some of these buildings, even the windows are still intact."

This is not surprising if we take a look at past quakes. For example, the San Fernando, Calif. earthquake, which struck on Feb. 9, 1971, was marked 6.5 on the Richter-scale; it killed 65 people. And even the San Francisco earthquake of April 18, 1887, which recorded 8.25 on the Richter-scale resulted in a death toll



Of the 18,000 population of Tabas only 1,500 survived; the earthquake flattened another 100 villages with thousands more dead.

of 700. Compare the figures 65 and 700 to nearly 50,000! (It should be noted that an earthquake of 8.0 is ten times the intensity of an earthquake showing 7.0 on the Richter-scale.)

The relationship between poor housing and the number of deaths, was further shown on a SF TV broadcast where a reporter asked a geologist, who specialized in earthquakes, that if this earthquake had taken place in San Francisco, how many people would have been killed. The geologist commented: 600.

And almost a week later people were found alive under the rubble:

"The baby girl was found with four other members of a family that lived on food and water from a refrigerator buried with them beneath the rubble of their home." (SF Chronicle, Sept. 25, 1978)

Thousands of people injured under the rubble could have been saved if the proper rescue equipment teams and medical facilities had been on hand. Out of a 500,000 man army, the "benevolent" Shah could only

The following is a chart showing the intensity and damages of some of the earthquakes in Iran compared to similar ones in other parts of the world. The death tolls reported in Iran are "official" Iranian government figures. The real death toll in each of these quakes is at least twice as many.

YEAR	REGION	DEATHS	MAGNITUDE
August 18, 1906	San Francisco, California	700	8.25
February 9, 1971	San Fernando, California	65	6.5
June 17, 1973	Near East Hokkaido, Japan	0	7.6
Sept. 1, 1962	Northwest Iran	14,000	7.3
April 10, 1972	Southern Iran	5,374	6.9
November 1976	Northwestern Iran—USSR Border Region	5,000 Reports of deaths in Iran	7.3
April 6, 1977	Iran (Area south of Shahrkvd)	348	5.9
September 1978	Southeastern Iran	over 26,000	7.7

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## RESISTANCE Editorial

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