

CARI BULLETIN

Committee Against Repression in Iran

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10 Pence

**More than one Iranian out of every
thousand is a political prisoner**



GHANI BOULOURIAN
Kurdish nationalist



VIDA HADJEBI-TABRIZI
sociologist



AYATOLLAH MONTAZERI
religious leader



ASEF RAZMDIDEH
printworker



MAS' OUD RADJAVI
student



FATEMEH SHAYEGAN

... and 40 000 others are in prison
because they oppose the Shah's dictatorship

**FREE ALL IRANIAN
POLITICAL PRISONERS!**

COMMITTEE AGAINST REPRESSION IN IRAN

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HELP US BUILD CARI

CARI has now been active for a little over a year. The aim we set ourselves from the beginning was to build broad-based campaigns on various aspects of repression in Iran, particularly the question of political prisoners, with the support of the British trade union, labour and student movements; campaigns which would be able to give real and significant support to those who are struggling within Iran to bring an end to the repressive system which exists in the country at the moment. We realised that we had a difficult task ahead of us. We still have a long way to go, but we can now confidently say that we have firmly established ourselves on the right road. The response to CARI over the last year has been excellent. The number of organisations affiliated to CARI increased from six to nearly thirty. Local CARI groups were set up in seven places outside London and more are being formed at the moment. We organised or sent speakers to at least fifty meetings throughout the country over the last year. Our first publication Iran: the Shah's Empire of Repression was published last November. Within three months we had sold almost every single copy of the first 3000 we had printed, and there are only a few copies of the second 3000 left now. Our second pamphlet The Iranian Working Class is also selling very well. The first issue of CARI Bulletin was published last spring and within ten days we had sold 1000 copies. Starting with this second issue we hope to be able to produce it in this improved form regularly every three months.

We would like to thank all those individuals and organisations which have supported us in various ways over the last year. Without their help and support we would not have been able to achieve any of the things we have achieved so far. But we need more support and particularly more financial support if we are going to build CARI even further. We need money to produce publicity material on political prisoners, to organise meetings, to produce more pamphlets on other aspects of repression in Iran and produce this Bulletin regularly. The Iranian dictatorship has billions of pounds of oil revenues every year with which to build up its machinery of repression and propaganda. We do not own even a single oil well. We only have our supporters. We therefore appeal to you as our supporters to help us build CARI by sending us the money we need to continue to build our activities.

DEFEND IRANIAN POLITICAL PRISONERS

Anyone who has been following the political situation in Iran over the last year will have noticed a certain change in the regime's attitude. A number of unprecedented events have taken place which appear to suggest a gradual move towards more liberal policies on the part of the regime. The most important of these has been the release of 500 prisoners reported by the government-controlled press as "anti-security" prisoners - in other words political prisoners. A number of changes have been proposed in the procedural rules of military tribunals which deal with political cases. The reaction of the regime to a number of critical open letters which have been circulating in Iran in recent months has also been very different from what would have been expected previously. (Apart from the two open letters from the writers printed in this bulletin, there have been a number of other open letters). A year or two ago many of the signatories of these open letters would have immediately found themselves in jail, but so far as we are aware none have been arrested this time.

The regime's attitude towards criticism from international humanitarian organisations appears to have also changed considerably. The extremely hostile and inflexible attitude exemplified by the bitter attacks on the Amnesty International conference on Iran last year seems to have given way to a slightly more responsive and co-operative attitude. For the first time in years foreign observers have been allowed to inspect prisons and interview political prisoners. Yvon Toussaint, a reporter for the Belgian daily Le Soir, was allowed to interview eight political prisoners in February. A delegation from International Red Cross led by Alexander Hay was invited to inspect 20 prisons in April. Also for the first time in recent years international observers were allowed to attend a political trial in April.

It was not long ago when the Iranian regime seemed to be totally unconcerned about its image over the question of human rights. In interviews with foreign reporters, such as the Panorama interview on BBC television last December, the

Shah was prepared to admit to the existence of political prisoners in Iran, the surveillance of Iranians abroad and even the use of psychological torture, and try in his clumsy way to justify these practices. His response to critics was a very blunt "mind your own business". The regime's present attitude thus represents an important change. But what is the significance of this change? Is the regime really moving towards more liberal and tolerant attitudes, or is it all just a propaganda exercise? A closer look at the facts shows that little more is involved than an attempt to polish up the regime's shabby image on the question of human rights.

The release of 500 political prisoners may sound a lot, but it must be put in perspective. Some estimates put the total number of Iranian political prisoners at 100,000. Compared to this number 500 is like no more than a drop in the ocean. Furthermore, most of the prisoners released had probably been imprisoned for extremely trivial "offences". Some may indeed have been people arrested by mistake or simply because another member of their family was thought to be politically active. Taking these points into account and also the fact that hundreds of prisoners are still being held after the completion of their prison sentence and more people are being constantly arrested, one can easily see that the recent release of 500 prisoners does not represent a fundamental change in the regime's attitude. It does not mean that the regime is now prepared to tolerate opposition to any significantly greater degree. The Shah made this point quite clear in a speech on "democracy" given on the occasion of the 72nd anniversary of Iran's Constitutional Revolution. He said that the kind of "democracy" that exists in Iran today is not only the best in the world! but also the only form acceptable to him. "Democracy combined with anarchy" he stated "is unacceptable to us". (Ettela'at, 7/8/77) For the Shah "anarchy" means people doing and saying anything other than what he orders them to do or say. The great deal of publicity given to the release of political prisoners also shows that it was primarily a propaganda exercise.

The amendments in the procedure of military tribunals also look much less significant when studied more closely. They require military trials to be open to the public, the military prosecutor to complete preliminary investigations and either issue charges or release the accused within 24 hours, and civilian defendants to be allowed to have civilian defence lawyers. As for the first two points, these are not "amendments" as such but the reassertion of rights which already exist in the country's Constitution but which have been violated in political cases as a matter of routine. There is no guarantee that they will not continue to be violated as before whether any "amendments" are made or not. As for the question of civilian defence lawyers, past experience has shown that if any defence lawyer, civilian or military, tries to defend the accused properly then he himself is likely to face prosecution too.

The present procedure of political trials, which has been described in detail in a number of Amnesty International publications and also our publication, Iran: the Shah's Empire of Repression, can best be described as a perfect formula for the secret police, SAVAK, to get people convicted on whatever charges it wishes. It will take far more than these "amendments" to turn Iranian political trials into anything resembling "fair" trials.

The visits to Iranian prisons by journalists and the Red Cross, were very obviously propaganda exercises. Reports indicate that the Iranian authorities had made elaborate preparations for the Red Cross visit. Prisons had been decorated and evidence of the use of torture hidden. There are also reports that before the arrival of the delegation, agents disguised as foreign visitors were taken around the prisons to interview prisoners so that those who were likely to complain about prison conditions and torture could be found and temporarily removed elsewhere. SAVAK agents disguised as prisoners were then put in their place. The Red Cross report on prison conditions can only be made public with the consent of the Iranian government which so far has not given such consent.

The highly publicised open trial was also clearly a propaganda exercise. It has been widely criticised as a "show case" (The Guardian, 28/6/77.) The 11

defendants accused of belonging to an outlawed communist organisation were obviously well prepared by SAVAK before the trial since they had nothing to say in their own defence but to admit "guilt" and ask for "mercy" from the Shah. On the eve of the arrival of the American Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, in Iran, when there was obviously a considerable amount of international press attention focused on Iran, the sentences were reduced. But even so SAVAK's attempt at staging a "show trial" was far from perfect. International observers found that the defendants were never informed of the charges against them in writing and most of them did not even know what the specific charges were until between two to four weeks after arrest (The Guardian, 28/6/77.)

Even though all these recent events are nothing but gestures on the part of the regime, it is quite significant that the regime has had to make such gestures. It is important to ask why it has had to resort to such gestures. The press's favourite explanation is of course President Carter's "human rights campaign". The election of Carter to the presidency of the United States almost certainly has something to do with the recent changes in the Iranian regime's attitude, but not in the same way as the press would claim, nor is it the full story. What the press has ignored is the effect that growing opposition in Iran and abroad has had on forcing the regime to make such gestures.

Jimmy Carter's "human rights" campaign has little to do with human rights and much to do with the White House's own political problems - problems created by the United States' disastrous military intervention in Indochina, by revelations about the CIA and most of all by the "Watergate affair". Along with all the other gimmicks of the new US administration, Carter's "human rights" campaign is part of the attempt to give a "human" face to the White House after the dirt into which it was dragged by the Nixon administration.

Despite all the recent shadow-boxing over the sale of sophisticated US arms to Iran, the Carter administration has made it quite clear that it is not going to put any real pressure on the Iranian regime over the question of human rights. Iran is too important an ally and the stability of the Iranian regime too

dependent on a strong repressive state. Just to give the Iranian dictatorship his seal of approval Carter is now planning to visit Iran on his forthcoming world tour. As we shall no doubt see, he will have many fine words to say about the Shah and little about human rights when he arrives in Iran.

But of course it wouldn't look too good if Carter keeps attacking the Soviet Union about violations of human rights when one of the United States' closest allies, Iran, is guilty of far greater human rights violations than even Carter's imagination could conjure up for the Soviet Union. What would be even more embarrassing would be the Shah continuing to publicly boast about his prisons, his SAVAK, and his torturers as he has done in the past. So, no doubt the Carter administration has quietly advised the Shah to clean up the regime's image a little.

The Carter administration would have preferred to simply ignore the situation in Iran, as publicly it has done so far, and the Shah would have preferred to continue as before. But they could not because of the growing opposition to the Iranian dictatorship. The growth of opposition and discontent inside Iran, in all its different forms from industrial disputes to writers protesting about censorship, has increasingly made it clear that all is not well with the Shah's "Great Civilisation", shattering the rosey image that the Iranian regime has been trying so hard to build up for itself throughout the world. At the same time continuous campaigns abroad against repression in Iran have done much to expose the Iranian regime for what it really is - a ruthless and barbaric dictatorship. If it wasn't for such campaigns in the United States then Carter wouldn't have cared less if the Shah and his henchmen murdered half the country. If the Shah hadn't found that his arrogant remarks about torture and SAVAK just fuelled the campaigns against his dictatorship he wouldn't have now tried to hide the regime's blood-stained image.

The Iranian dictatorship's sudden attempts to clean up its image abroad is without doubt a victory for all those who have campaigned over the years to expose and pressurise it. It means that despite all its propaganda efforts abroad the regime has failed and we have won. It

also shows clearly that the regime does feel the pressure of international campaigns and can no longer ignore them. The important lesson in all this is that international campaigns against repression in Iran must be stopped up.

Five hundred political prisoners may have been released, but there are still tens of thousands of others in the Shah's jails. They come from all walks of life. They include many workers and trade-unionists such as Asef Razmdideh, a print-worker; dissident intellectuals such as Vida Hajebi-Tabrizi, a sociology lecturer who has been in jail since 1972; militant students such as Mas'oud Radjavi, who was sentenced to life-imprisonment at the age of 21 in 1971, and Hossein Reza'i who has been in jail since 1970 for being a member of the Confederation of Iranian Students; dissident moslem leaders such as Ayatollah Montazeri who has been in jail since 1974; members of Iran's national minorities such as the Kurdish nationalist Ghani Bolourian. Their only "crime" is to have dared oppose one of the most barbaric dictatorships throughout the world. Most of them have been subjected to torture and maltreatment in prison and suffered considerably as the result. These prisoners are the very living symbols of the oppressive nature of the Iranian dictatorship. Their defence, campaigns for their release and campaigns against their torture and maltreatment must come at the forefront of our activities against repression in Iran.

CARI is launching a campaign in defence of Iranian political prisoners. While calling for the release of all Iranian political prisoners we shall be highlighting a number of specific cases including those mentioned above. We urge everyone who feels concerned about the situation in Iran and wishes to give support to those who are suffering under the Shah's repressive regime and struggling against it to help us build this campaign. The Iranian dictatorship has been forced to retreat one small step. Not only must we not allow it to recover this step but we must force it to retreat even further by building up this campaign.

(If you wish to help us build the campaign on political prisoners, or wish to receive literature on political prisoners please write to CARI)

Writers speak out against censorship

In a gesture of protest against the ever increasing restrictions imposed on artistic and intellectual freedom in Iran, the Iranian Writers' Society Kanoun Nevisandegan Iran has addressed two open letters to the Prime Minister of Iran. The first of these letters, dated 13th June, 1977, was signed by 40 of the most distinguished Iranian writers, poets, film and theatre directors. In it they protested against censorship and the constant harassment faced by Iranian writers and artists, and point out the very damaging effect of these on the country's artistic and intellectual life. They also raised a number of simple demands in connection with legalisation and greater freedom of action for the writers' society.

The government gave no official response to the open letter and as would be expected the tightly controlled press did not mention the open letter at all. However, a short while after the release of the open letter Amir-Abbas Hoveyda, (at that time still Prime Minister of Iran) made a speech in which he spoke in favour of freedom of speech and strongly criticised excessive censorship. The press also quoting official sources made vague promises of relaxation of censorship.

The Writers' Society addressed a second and more strongly worded open letter to the Prime Minister on 19th July in response to his speech. In this letter, which was signed by 98 distinguished figures, including the 40 who signed the first letter, the Prime Minister was effectively challenged to act on his words if he really meant them. He did not do so. As expected the statements made by the Prime Minister and the press remained nothing but empty words, and no visible steps have been taken to either relax censorship or legalise the Writers' Society. The statements in favour of freedom of speech were clearly prompted by the government's fear of adverse publicity abroad as the result of the open letter, rather than any genuine wish to extend freedom of expression.

The Iranian Writers' Society is an illegal organisation in Iran at present. It was formed in the 1960's by a number of distinguished writers mainly as an organisation for the defence of writers against

censorship and harassment by the authorities. It faced constant harassment by the authorities ever since its formation and was eventually forced to officially disband in 1969. Since then it has had to operate in a clandestine manner. Although there are no reports of any of the signatories of the two letters being victimised, the possibility of such reprisals cannot still be excluded. In the past SAVAK has responded to such letters by repressive measures. For instance, in 1970, the Writers' Society circulated an appeal protesting about the imprisonment of four writers and poets, Fereydoon Tonekaboni, Mohammad-Ali Sepanlou, Mahmoud Etemadzadeh (Beh-Azin), Manouchehr Hezar-Khani - all of whom are among the signatories of the recent open letters. Eighty-eight signatures were collected. SAVAK's response was to arrest a number of the signatories. The lack of similar measures at present does not signify any liberalisation in the regime's attitude, but is more the result of the regime's present eagerness to maintain a more liberal image abroad.

The widest possible publicity and support for the open letter and the demands of the Writers' Society is needed to both prevent future reprisals against the signatories and bring the possibility of greater artistic and intellectual freedom in Iran a step closer.

We reprint the full text of both the open letters below:

OPEN LETTER

Mr. Amir-Abbas Hoveyda, the Prime Minister,

You are aware that from time to time and on various occasions highly publicised meetings are held, even with your own participation, for the purpose of consultation about promotion of books. And you know better than anyone else that as with many other government undertakings the noise of the discussions dies with the last session and no-one sees any signs of persistence or resolution. Official and government reports show that only those concerned with censorship, the book trade and technical aspects of printing and publication are involved in such commissions and seminars which provide each of them with an opportunity to defend their interests. The discussions thus necessarily do not go beyond a reference to the difficulties and constraints of printing distribution, and the high cost of wages and materials.

Unfortunately writers, poets, translators, researchers, composers and others who are in practice or potentially competent in the field of intellectual and artistic creativity and should by rights be at the centre of these gatherings are denied access to these meetings and seminars. Thus the problem is not posed beyond a superficial manner nor is any attention paid to the roots of the problem.

Publication of books and promotion of intellectual and artistic works in general are part and parcel of a wider problem called national culture, and solutions for this problem are necessarily dependent on the initiative and active participation of those who are at the forefront of the work of cultural creativity, and intellectual and artistic creation; those who keep alive the values of ethnic and national culture of a society with their work. Consideration of the reasons for the lack of such active and involving participation and the search for a solution in this respect motivated us to write such a letter to you.

Mr. Prime Minister, culture and intellectual and artistic creativity have come to a standstill and are stagnating in our society, and one can even say boldly that extremely worrying signs of cultural degeneration have also appeared, the dimensions of which are expanding from day to day. In our opinion this situation is not the result of simple technical and financial factors of publication of books, such as those raised in official and government-organised gatherings, but is primarily related to the extreme limitations set on the conditions of creative and free thinking for writers and intellectuals and all those who are in practice or potentially competent in intellectual and artistic fields. It is further related to the heavy restraints of censorship imposed various departments of the State. The third problem in connection with books results from the extreme restrictions in the way of studying books imposed on those interested in reading books particularly young people and students.

The limitations, pressures and other restrictive factors which exist for intellectual and artistic creativity not only do not result from legal and democratic regulations and constraints, but are nothing but the arbitrary wish of various state organisations and individuals and result from their neglect of official laws and human liberties. Taking into account the Constitution which symbolises a democratic and constitutional order, and observing the existing situation, one can boldly claim that all the Articles of the Constitution which guarantee the protection and the strengthening of the main roots of cultural motivation and impetus, intellectual creativity, and political and social development and maturity have for some time been suspended by the State and organisations under its control. Writers and intellectuals are denied all legal, judicial, political and social guarantees, and have no official point of reference or support to which they can resort when confronted with the violence of state and censorship agencies. So much so that one can name people who have or are spending years in prison for the crime of writing, translating or even reading books.

The essential factor for cultural and intellectual creativity is the existence of political, social and judicial guarantees for intellectual freedom, free exchange of thought, and freedom of formation of associations, printing and publication of serious books, journals and papers, which have been clearly provided for in our Constitution and its addenda, and in the Declaration of Human Rights. The existence of these liberties, from several hundred years ago, has led to cultural movements and the intellectual, political and social development and maturity of the people of various countries in the world. Today we have been turned into consumers of their material and intellectual products as the result of the suspension of freedom and intellectual stagnation, and in this way we have become totally barren from a cultural point of view.

Mr. Prime Minister, social and economic development can never be accounted for solely on the basis of a growth in the figures and statistics related to the growth of national income resulting from the sale and export of the country's national resources, nor the growth of income per head accompanied by a regime of unequal distribution of income; it is related directly to the development of intellectual creativity, the expansion of cultural foundations and the growth of scientific, literary and artistic activities. Development is primarily a social and cultural phenomenon which cannot be replaced by industrial growth, uncontrolled congestion of cities resulting from

rural migration, nor the expansion of a middle-man economy. Unfortunately the signs of intellectual degeneration and stagnation, scientific barrenness, and cultural decay and ossification have become clearly visible in present day society, and this degeneration and the depth of its effect on the social conditions of the country has become a cause of concern for every Iranian interested in the fate of his nation and of his people. If we are to continue to exist in the world as a free and proud nation relying on our own work and culture, and preserve our past national and cultural heritage which is one of exceptional standing throughout the world, we must necessarily move ahead, remove the existing restrictions and establish genuine and healthy links with all the social groups in the country through our intellectual and creative work. In order to achieve this aim within the framework of the Constitution and of the Declaration of Human Rights, we the undersigned demand:

- (1) That the Iranian Writers' Society (Kanoun Nevisandegan Iran) - a copy of the Constitution of which is enclosed and a request has been made for its official registration - be given the possibility of official activity as a centre for the exchange of thought by Iranian intellectuals.
- (2) That all obstacles in the way of setting up premises or clubs, in Tehran or the provinces, as places for the assembly of members of this Society be removed.
- (3) That legal provisions be made for the production of a publication by the Society, and its unrestricted distribution throughout the country.

Mr. Prime Minister, in putting forward these demands it is hoped that the cooperation which is a declared but unfortunately never implemented aim of the Government, will be ensured in its full and genuine sense, and, as has often been declared, every Iranian will be able to communicate his or her beliefs and thoughts to others free from all fears and in a healthy environment within the framework of the Constitution and devoid of extreme tensions, and the people of Iran will succeed to become creators, rather than mere consumers, of culture and scientific and intellectual values in the developed world today.

Mr. Prime Minister, we the signatories of this sheet are individually and collectively responsible for the writing of this letter, for signing it and getting it signed, and will be responsible for it before any organs of the State.

Dr. Fereydoon ADAMIAT	Ahmad ABDOLLAHPOOR
Dariush ASHURI	Dr. Mahmud ENAYAT
Shams AL-AHMAD	Kamran FANI
Mahmoud ETEMADZADEH (Beh-Azin)	Mohammed GHAZI
Seyyed Abdollah ANVAR	Ali KATEBI
Dr. Mehdi BAHAR	Eslam KAZEMIEH
Bahram BEYZA'I	Siavosh KASRA'I
Dr. Nasser PAKDAMAN	Houshang GOLSHIRI
Dr. Bagher PARHAM	Ghassem LARSON
Nasser TAGHVA'I	Assadollah MOBBASHERI
Fereydoon TONEKABONI	Cyrus MOSHFEGHI
Ali-Asghar HAJ-SEYYEDJAVADI	Rahmatollah MOGHADAM-MARA-GHE'I
Abolfazl KHODABAKHSH	Dr. Hossein MALEK
Ali-Asghar KHEBREHZADEH	Nasser MO'AZEN
Dr. Simin DANESHVER	Bagher MO'MENI
Dr. Mostafa RAHIMI	Mohammad-Ali MEHMID
Mohammad ZAHRA	Ne'mat MIRZAZADEH (Azam)
Dr. Gholam-Hossein SA'EDI	Jamal MIRSADEGHI
Mohammad-Ali SEPANLU	Dr. Homa NATEGH
Tahereh SAFARZADEH	Dr. Manouchehr HEZARKHANI

Mr. Prime Minister, the original of the signatures is in safekeeping in the hands of the members of the members of the Society, and as you yourself know better than anyone else why the Society has been unable to obtain an address and the signatories of this letter are known well enough in society, your reply to any single one of the signatories will be taken as a reply to all and will reach everyone else.

Teheran, 28 Tir 1356 (19 July 1977)

Mr. Prime Minister,

On 23 Khordad (13 June) an open letter signed by forty writers, poets and other literary figures was sent to you, which while mentioning the various restrictions placed by your government in the way of our country's intellectual and cultural life, requested that a step be taken towards the implementation of the principles of liberty as stipulated in the Constitution and its Addenda, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by granting official recognition to the Iranian Writers' Society and removal of the mentioned difficulties. No reply has been given to that letter. Furthermore neither the newspapers nor the radio and television network which received copies of that letter have made any mention of the letter and its contents. This in itself shows the kind of restrictive atmosphere, limitations and prohibitions in which the country's news media are entangled.

Nevertheless, the speech that you gave to a gathering of reporters, writers and employees of the mass media on 13 Tir (4 July) at the National Radio and Television Club necessitates another opportunity to raise the matter.

Taking into account your personal status and the impact and effect that the words of a person of your status should have, we cannot but feel satisfied about some of your new positions on intellectual and literary activities - on condition that they are implemented in practice.

You state: "We all wish to live in a country where there is literary freedom". This in itself is correct, although during the period of office of the person who has said these words this same simple and natural demand and this same indisputable right recognised by the Constitution and its Addenda and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights have been ignored in practice, and writers have not only been faced with suspecting and petty censorship but have also faced prison and harassment, such that some of them are still in prison today. You say that "the government has no such duty to direct writers in one direction." Yes, the government has no such duty and nor will it earn anything but ignominy and disgrace if it should make such a claim out of spite or a temptation to be obstinate, which would be contrary to human rights. Thus your conclusion that "it is the logic and judgement of the people which should distinguish between right and wrong" is correct.

Thought must be free, otherwise it becomes the faded light of the will of an external party. So much the better if thoughts are free and compete with each other so that whichever is better and more alive becomes accepted and used through the experience and judgement of the people. It is clear that such a situation can only come into existence if people can become aware of intellectual and literary works in freedom and without fear of persecution and harassment. We are glad that the Prime Minister of Iran is at last speaking from this correct point of view, but experience warns that the words and deeds of those in authority may not follow the same path, and all this may be nothing but an evasive and time-wasting manoeuvre on the part of the government to see it through the present political difficulties.

You say: "Everyone is free to express their thoughts so long as they are not contrary to the life of the Iranian people. "But it is not clear whether you have said this as a statement of what actually exists - i.e. everyone in Iran today actually has such a right - or as a statement of intention - i.e. that everyone should have such freedom. What is obvious to day is that the first assumption is contradicted by reality. The signatories of this letter therefore sincerely wish to know what concrete steps you, as head of government, have taken towards the implementation of this general intention and the provision of freedom of expression. But when you stipulate that

thought must not be contrary to the life of the Iranian people, it raises the question as to what the criterion used should be, who should have the authority to judge in this matter? What can be said with certainty is that the executive is in principle not an acceptable authority in this matter. All the difficulties which have usually confronted intellectuals and artists during the period of office of your government in particular have arisen from the fact that the executive authorities have considered themselves as the absolute and final authority, and intellectuals find themselves under accusation before publishing their opinion, and see all opportunities closed before them without even ever having taken steps to publish their thoughts. The result is the present intellectual poverty and bankruptcy.

Mr. Prime Minister, putting aside the past, if today the policy of your government is a return towards respect for freedom of expression and thought, what is expected of you is to show some determination in (bringing about) this change. In your speech you asked: "Does the official position of one or a number of people permit them to bar the way to artistic creativity?" The implication is that the fault over the question of censorship and other restrictions placed on writers rests with some of the officials who have overstepped the law. But who doesn't know that the censors carry out the instructions of your government and your policies? Again this question arises for you: "What qualification does this group have to call on individuals thoughts right or wrong?" In your own words the people should judge in this matter. Therefore the people must be given the opportunity to judge, since it is the judgement of the people itself which is the criterion for deciding which thoughts are right and which are wrong. Now if the authorities do not observe the regulations and the preservation of individual rights, and do not see any limits in the execution of power simply because they can prevent the publication of thoughts or imprison anyone expressing them, this situation does not just constitute an infringement of social and individual rights and suppression of thought, but also a direct transgression by the executive power into the domain of the judiciary power.

And this negates the country's principle of the separation of the three branches of state power - a principle on which our Constitution has been founded. And you know that the extension of political power beyond a reasonable limit, like irresponsible power, endangers the well-being of society.

Within the framework of the liberties which all the people of Iran should enjoy without any prejudice or exceptions, freedom of thought and expression have a prime place for writers. Writers must think freely and express themselves freely, and flower and bear fruit in a relationship free of obstacles with the people who are their audience if something is to be added to the cultural and artistic life of society. To achieve this the restrictions which have to date been customary in this field, under whatever name and imposed by whichever authorities, and all controls on printing and publication must be removed, the machinery of censorship in all its forms must be dismantled, and all those who have been imprisoned for publication of their thoughts, and cultural and artistic activities must be freed.

Mr. Prime Minister, apart from these demands which have a general character, are shared by us and other writers and the implementation of which would benefit us and other writers equally, we finally put forward our own particular demands and expect you to give instructions that:

1) The request for the official registration of the Iranian Writers' Society a copy of the constitution of which was enclosed with the previous letter, be considered and the Society given the possibility of official activity, as is its legal right.

2) All obstacles in the way of establishment of premises and clubs for the assembly of members of the Society in Teheran and the provinces be removed.

3) Legal provisions be made for the production of a publication by the Iranian Writers' Society and its uninhibited distribution throughout the country.

The signatories of this letter expect to see the text of this letter, which has been put at the disposal of the press and the radio and television, to be published without any omissions as a small sign of your sincerity in your speech at the National Radio and Television Club.

Iranian Writers' Society, Teheran.

Fereydoon ADAMIAT	Mohammad ZAHRA
Dariush ASHURI	Kazem SADAT-ASHKOURI
Shams AL-AHMAD	Gholam-Hossein SA'EDI
Nader EBRAHIMI	Mohammad-Ali SEPANLOU
Mehdi AKHAVAN-SALES	Jelal SARFARAZ
Houshang ASADI	Sa'eed SOLTANPOUR
MehdiESFANDIAR-FARD	Hassan SADR
Mahmoud ETEMADZADEH (BEHAZIN)	Manouchehr SAFA
Ali-Akbar AKBARI	Tahereh SAFARZADEH
Asghar ELAHI	Javad TALE'I
Ali AMINI	Bahram TABIBI
Seyyed Abdollah ANVAR	Mohammad-Hossein ABBASPOR
Parviz BABA'I	Ahmad ABDOLLAHPOUR
Mohammad-Reza BATENI	Mahmoud ENAYAT
Mohammad BORNA-MOGHADAM	Kamran FANI
Mohammad-Taghi BORUMAND	Ebrahim FAKHRA'I
Mehdi BAHAR	Abdolfazl GHASSEMI
Bahram BEYZA'I	Mohammad GHAZI
Nasser PAKDAMAN	Ali KATEBI
Abdol-Ali PARTO-ALAVI	Eslam KAZEMIEH
Bagher PARHAM	Heshmatollah KAMRANI
Hassan PASTA	Siavosh KAGRA'I
Mohammad PIFOON	Houshang KESHAVARZ-SADR
Nasser TAGHVA'I	Mohammad KALBASI
Fereydoon TONEKABONI	Ja'far KUSHBADI
Hossein JAHANSHAH	Roya KAHOBA'I
Ali-Asghar HAJ-SEYYEDJAVADI	Hushang GHOLSHIRI
Soroush HABIBI	Ghassem LARSON
Mohammad HOGHOUGHI	Assadollah MOBASHERI
Khosrow HAKIM-RABET	Javad MOJABI
Ali-Asghar KHEBREH-ZADEH	Shahrokh MASKOUB
Abolfazl KHODABAKHSH	Mahmoud MOSHREF-AZAD-TEHERANI
Bahaeddin KHORAMSHAHI	Cyrus MOSHFEGHI
Ahmad KHALILOLLAH-MOGHADAM	Rahmatollah MOGHADAM-MARAGHE'I
Azim KHALILI	Hossein MALEK
Mohammad KHALILI	Kioumars MONSHIZADEH
Esmail KHO'I	Nasser MO'AZEN
Mohammad-Taghi DAMGHANI	Bagher MOMENI
Majid DANESHARASTEH	Mohammad-Ali MEHMID
Simin DANESHVAR	Ne'mat MIRZAZADEH (AZARM)
Bahram DAVARI	Jamal MIRSADEGHI
Najaf DARYABANDARI	Mas'oud MINAVI
Abdol-Ali DASTGHEIB	Mohsen MINOUKHERAD
Akbar RADI	Homa NATEGH
Mostafa RAMIMI	Nasser NAZIFPOUR(IRANI)
Ahmad REZVANI	Janshid NAVA'I
Mohammad-Hossein ROHANI	Esmail NOURI-ALA (PEYAW)
Shaikh Mostafa RAHNEMA	Mansour YAGHOUTI
Nasser ZARAFSHAN	Manouchehr HEZARKHANI

Appeal in support of writers' protest

TO: Mr. Amir-Abbas Hoveyda,
The Prime Minister of Iran,
Tehran, Iran.

It has come to our attention that an open letter carrying the signature of forty of Iran's most distinguished writers and intellectuals, has been addressed to yourself. This letter is unfortunately yet another reflection of the complete lack of the most elementary democratic rights regarding freedom of expression and association in Iran. It speaks eloquently of the harassments, imprisonment and the violence to which the Iranian dissidents are subjected, and the detrimental effects of the present state of affairs on the cultural and intellectual life of Iran.

We, the undersigned, are concerned with the continuing disregard for elementary human rights, and more particularly with the severe restrictions on the freedom of artistic and intellectual expression in your country. While expressing our support for the above mentioned open letter, we urge your government to remove all restrictions on the freedom of expression, to release all those held in your prisons because of their political, intellectual or artistic beliefs, to refrain from harassment or imprisonment of the forty signatories of the open letter, and to accept the demands of the open letter in connection with the removal of restrictions on the activities of the Iranian Writers' Society (Kanoun Nevisandegan Iran.)

Claude Bourdet (France)
Alf Lomas (Sec, London Coop Political Committee)
Colette Magny (France)
Joan Maynard MP
Ian Mikardo MP
Stan Newens MP
Trevor Phillips (Nat. Sec. N.U.S.)
Laurent Schwartz (France)
William Wilson MP

From the Shah's Great Civilisation



How to solve the housing problem — the Shah's way

The following report appeared in the Tehran Daily Kayhan in August.

".....Municipal officials attacked building-sites and shanty houses of Javadieh in Tehran-Pars yesterday. This attack took place suddenly and without prior warning in contravention to recent recommendation by the capital's city council. In the course of the demolition of the houses much of the belongings of the occupants were destroyed and two people were injured.

"The city demolition officials, who were carrying sticks and clubs, attacked those who were protesting against the demolition of the houses and building-sites and

beat them up in such a way that two people were injured, one of whom was seriously injured and is now at the 25th Shahrivar Hospital in Tehran-Now.

"This person who is called Hassan Beig Khormizi, has a broken shoulder and arm, and deep cuts on his head. There is also evidence of blows from sticks on his back, chest and legs.

"People owning plots of unbuilt land in Javadieh started digging foundations to build houses from a few days ago. Officials attacked the area suddenly and without prior warning and filled up the foundations with the aid of a bulldozer and 20 men.



Above: Hassan Beig Khormizi - his head is injured, his arm and shoulder are broken, his home (left) has been razed to the ground and he has lost all his belongings - all because he demanded the right to have a roof over his head.

"In the course of the attack three houses and shanties were also demolished by the officials. One of the houses was built three years ago and had even been connected to the electricity supply.

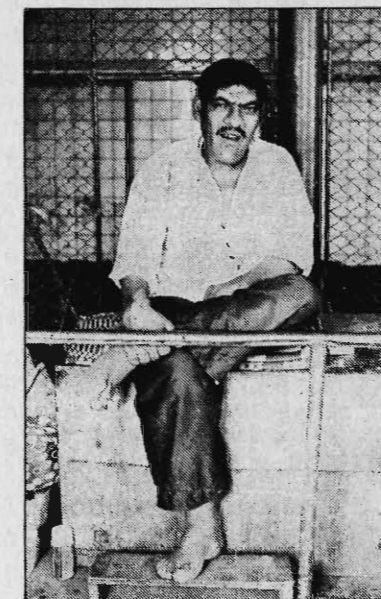
"Hossein Akbarian, the owner of this house whose household belongings were destroyed in the attack said: 'The officials put some of the undamaged furniture in their Jeep and were intending to take them away with them when we intervened. They threw the furniture in a ditch and set it on fire !'

"The Kayhan news reporter writes: The furniture was reduced to ashes and there was still a little smoke rising from the ditch. Broken pieces of furniture were scattered about. The belongings of Samad Zinali, another of the local residents were also buried under the debris. He said: 'The officials didn't even let me take out my belongings and destroyed everything with their bulldozer.....' "

The incident described above - and we should point out again the description is not ours but that of the government-controlled paper Kayhan - is only one out of many similar incidents which has occurred in Tehran in recent months. In another similar attack on a shanty-town in the Majidieh district of Tehran, reported in Kayhan, a one-year-old child was injured on the head with a brick, her pregnant mother had a miscarriage as the result of shock and a 70-year-old man was severely beaten up. There have even been reports of people being killed in clashes between shanty dwellers and government officials trying to evict them. The government's excuse for these vicious attacks is that the houses or shanties have been built without a permit or are outside the city boundaries.

Housing is one of the most serious problems in Tehran today. Workers often have to spend as much as 70% of their income on rent. The Iranian authorities only effort to solve this problem seems to be to demolish homes and beat up the occupants while they are at it. Perhaps the Iranian regime is more concerned with protecting the interests of property speculators and landlords, who make millions at the expense of the homeless. After all the more homeless there are the higher the rents and property prices. It is simple economics !

The human zoo



The man in the picture above is called Ali Nowrouzi. He is sitting in a cage in Tehran Zoo. Visitors to the zoo pay 50 Rials (40p) to look at him.

Nowrouzi is suffering from a disease which causes abnormally large growth. He weighs 35 stones and is over 7ft tall. He was a farm worker in southern Iran but found recently that he was unable to do heavy manual work because his abnormally heavy weight tired him out quickly. So he came to Tehran in the hope of getting medical treatment.

The doctors said they couldn't help him. He found himself stranded in Tehran without a job and in desperate need of money to support himself, his wife and four children. Eventually Tehran Zoo offered him a job, not as an ordinary worker but as an animal ! He had no choice but to hire himself to the zoo and now sits in a cage at the zoo every day. In return the zoo feed him and give him a little pocket money.

Nowrouzi isn't the only person to suffer such humiliation and degradation in Iran. The lack of provisions for welfare benefits means that thousands of people suffering from physical disabilities of various kinds have to resort to all sorts of desperate measures to survive.

(Photo and report from Kayhan, 13 June 1977.)

Dissident writer refused exit visa

According to a letter published in the New York Review of Books on 12th May 1977 the famous writer Dr. Gholam-Hossein Sa'edi is being refused permission to leave Iran.

Sa'edi is one of the best contemporary Iranian novelists and playwrights. He is probably best known in Europe as the script-writer for the prize-winning Iranian film "The Cow". He is also well-known for his opposition to Iran's dictatorial regime and as a campaigner for freedom of expression in Iran. He was one of the founders of the Iranian Writers' Society in the 1960's and is a signatory to both the open letters recently addressed by the Writers' Society to the Prime Minister of Iran. He has been arrested a number of times because of opposition to the dictatorship. The last occasion on which he was arrested



Gholam-Hossein Sa'edi:
refused an exit visa.

was in 1974. He was held by SAVAK for nine months during which time he was subjected to torture. Since his release in 1975 he has been under constant surveillance. Many of his writings are banned and he is not permitted to publish any new works. A few months ago The Guardian reported that he refused to give interviews to foreign reporters since it would immediately result in yet another session of interrogation by SAVAK. The authorities' refusal to grant Sa'edi an exit visa is yet another and the latest form of harassment to which he is being subjected.

Moslem oppositionist dies in London

On 19th June Dr. Ali Shari'atti, a prominent figure in the moslem opposition to the Shah's regime, died in London. Dr. Shari'atti had a strong following among radical young moslems and students, and about 800 Iranian residents in Britain responded to the news of his death by holding a memorial procession in London on 24th June.

Dr. Shari'atti was a very well known figure in Iran as a writer, sociologist and theologian. He was for some time director of Hosseinieh Ershad, an Islamic theological institute in Tehran. His lectures at the institute attracted large audiences particularly of young people. Fearing his growing influence, the Iranian regime eventually closed down the institute in November 1972 and banned many of his writings. This failed to stop Shari'atti's growing influence and so SAVAK eventually arrested him in September 1973. No charges were ever brought against him publicly. He was denied visitors in prison and is believed to have been subjected to torture. In an attempt to put further pressure on him to publicly renounce his dissident views, SAVAK also arrested his 70 year old father, who was in prison until the death of his son.

Dr. Shari'atti's arrest and imprisonment brought about a considerable amount of protest internationally. But he was

Dr. Ali Shari'atti:
SAVAK bears the real
responsibility for his
death.



only released 18 months later in March 1975. He was constantly hounded and kept under close surveillance by SAVAK after his release. His attempt to leave the country were frustrated by the authorities until he eventually was able to leave and come to Britain three weeks before his death.

Doctors in London issued a statement that Shari'atti had died of a heart attack. Whatever the actual cause of his death - and there are understandable fears and suspicions among his supporters about the circumstances of his death - the real blame for his premature death clearly rests with the Iranian regime and SAVAK. His imprisonment, torture and constant harassment must have been a severe strain and a major factor in bringing about his death.

But as if to add insult to injury, after having effectively hounded him to his grave the Iranian regime immediately started praising him as a great thinker and theologian. The government-controlled papers which had had nothing to say about Shari'atti's arrest and harassment while he was still alive now like vultures started publishing long articles praising him. Elaborate plans were announced for a funeral and numerous memorial ceremonies. Presumably the regime thought that now that he was dead he was no longer dangerous. But they were wrong. The regime's hypocrisy brought about an angry reaction from supporters of Shari'atti particularly in the universities. There were angry demonstrations in a number of universities particularly in Tehran and Mashad, the country's most important religious centre. The regime and the press immediately dropped the whole issue and stopped mentioning Dr. Shari'atti as if nothing at all had happened.

Paris: hunger strikers call for release of prisoners

A group of Iranian moslem clergymen staged a seven day hunger strike in Paris between 1st and 7th October. In a leaflet distributed by the Organisation of Iranian Moslem Students in England they stated their demands in the following way:

"We demand an end to the repressive and anti-Islamic conditions prevailing in Iran, the rule of gun upon the imprisoned people of Iran and the rule of torture and the so-called courts on the 'justice' machinery of the country which threatens the lives of political prisoners in Iran.

"We demand an end to the unlawful exile of the leader of the Islamic movement, Ayatollah Khomeini.

"We demand the freedom of Seyyed Mahmoud Taleghani, Hossein-Ali Montazeri, Seyyed Mehdi Hashemi, Ezatollah Sahabi, Lotfollah Meisami, who, at present, are in very bad physical condition and are subjected to very severe psychological torture."

CARI sent a telegramme of solidarity to the hunger-strikers.

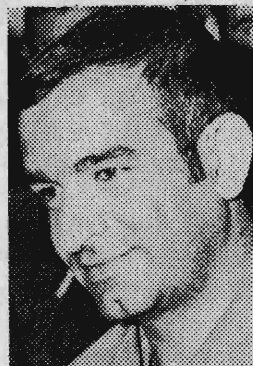
The 'Hadafi' trial: a frame up?

Twenty-two alleged "religious terrorists" were tried at Isfahan criminal courts in April. Six were sentenced to death, eight were given prison sentences and the remaining eight acquitted. At first glance it may look like a simple criminal case only complicated by the fact that it involves the murder of a number of religious figures by a rival religious faction. The Iranian authorities have certainly made every effort to make it look like a simple criminal case by conducting the trial through the criminal courts rather than the military courts used for political cases, although the investigations are believed to have been conducted by SAVAK rather than the ordinary police. However, a number of moslem oppositionist groups including the Organisation of Iranian Moslem Students (Khordad Khouneen nos. 1 and 2) have claimed that the trial was a politically motivated frame-up of moslem oppositionists. The facts about the case, so far as they are known, certainly indicate that it may very well have been a political frame-up.

The whole affair began over a year ago in April 1976 when a prominent Isfahani religious leader, Hojat-ol-Eslam Shamsabadi, was murdered under mysterious circumstances. At the same time the Iranian press reported that threatening letters and telephone calls had been made to other religious leaders in Isfahan by people claiming to be responsible for Shamsabadi's death. Shamsabadi's murder caused a great deal of public anger in Isfahan and thousands turned up for the funeral procession. Almost immediately after the murder a number of people from a village near Isfahan called Ghahdarijan were arrested and charged with the murder.

What followed can only be described as a deliberate campaign by the press and the regime to arouse public hostility towards the alleged murderers. The press built up a whole story which reads like a crime serial each episode of which promises more gorey details in the next. Shamsabadi's murder was claimed to have been committed by a religious group called the Hadafi group led by Seyyed Mehdi Hashemi (Hashemi who is one of the six sentenced to death is known as a moslem oppositionist and had

been arrested by SAVAK on previous occasions because of his political activities). A number of people alleged to have "confessed" to Shamsabadi's murder were even brought on television. One murder wasn't enough for the press which began linking the Hadafis to a number of other crimes. The press even claimed that the group had been responsible for the murder of a woman in Ghahdarijan for which three men had already been found guilty and jailed. Letters from the "outraged public" demanding "justice" and severe punishment for the "murderers" began pouring into the press. This press campaign went on for most of summer 1976 during which time according to the Tehran daily Kayhan about 400 people were arrested and questioned in connection with the murders. There can be little doubt that the aim of the campaign was to prepare public opinion for the trial and to counteract any efforts by moslem oppositionists to build up political opposition to a trial that they claimed to be a frame-up.



Seyyed Mehdi Hashemi: sentenced to death not because he was found guilty of any crime, but because of his political beliefs.

At the trial a number of defendants are reported to have "confessed". It is impossible to prove or disprove the validity of these "confessions". One can only express serious doubts about their validity in the light of past experience and in the knowledge that one of SAVAK's functions is to extract "confessions" under torture. The confession story itself is very weak and unlikely.

Whatever the nature of these "confessions" one thing is quite clear: no proof at all was produced to show that Hashemi was in any way involved. The defendants who "confessed" denied that Hashemi was involved. Hashemi himself who had not been given the right to choose a defence lawyer and had to defend himself personally completely denied any involvement and claimed that he was on trial for political reasons. Addressing the court, he is reported to have said: "Don't allow a human being to be sacrificed for his humaneness and for

supporting the weaker class" (Kayhan 28 March 1977). Hashemi's conviction was solely based on a report sent to the court by the investigative authorities (i.e. SAVAK) in which it was stated: "Although none of the accused who have confessed to murder have mentioned Seyyed Mehdi (Hashemi) in any way, in the light of the investigations carried out and the position of the accused, it seems that the above named person was aware of the events and the accused were under his influence". (Kayhan 4 April 1977). Furthermore this report was not based on any concrete evidence but on Hashemi's past activities in other words on his political/religious beliefs and his opposition to the regime. Thus Hashemi has been sentenced to death not because he has been found guilty of any crime but because of his opposition to the Shah's regime. This casts a serious doubt over the nature of the whole trial and raises the question whether it was all a frame-up.

The other five defendants sentenced to death together with Seyyed Mehdi Hashemi were: Mohammed-Hossein Ja'farzadeh, Asadollah Shafi'zadeh, Hassan Moradi, Abbas-Ali Rahimi and Amir-Gholi Hamzehzadeh. The latest news about them is that they are still awaiting the outcome of their appeal against the death sentence.

More British arms for Iran

In July, Yarrow shipbuilders announced a new £55 million deal with the Iranian navy. The Scottish-based company which is now part of the nationalised ship-building industry is to build four support vessels for the Iranian navy. Construction is expected to begin in November. The first vessel is expected to be launched in early 1979 and all four by mid-1981. The Iranian navy, described as "one of our most valued customers" by Sir Eric Yarrow the company chairman, had two other vessels of similar type constructed by Yarrow two years ago.

The delivery of Chieftain tanks to the Iranian Army is continuing. The British government is so keen to sell these tanks to Iran that according to the Guardian (20/5/77) the new and faster version of the tank equipped with special lightweight armour is being delivered to the Iranian Army before the British forces on the Rhine.

Students killed in university strike

There were a number of small and large-scale strikes at educational institutions throughout Iran during the last academic year. We have received special reports on two of the major strikes - one at Tabriz University, which was probably the most serious strike over the last year and resulted in the killing of three students and arrest of more than one thousand, and the other at Kerman University.

TABRIZ UNIVERSITY

Tabriz University has been suffering from a chronic shortage of qualified teachers for a long time. This is a problem from which most Iranian universities suffer because of the regime's lack of concern for education and the country's very high "brain-drain", but Tabriz University has had more than its fair share of the problem.

The language officially used at the university is Persian even though Tabriz is the capital of the province of Azarbaijan and most of the students at the university are Azarbaijanis whose native language is Turkish. The use of Azari-Turkish or other languages spoken by Iran's national minorities is forbidden in educational establishments.

Most of the recently recruited staff are highly qualified Indian and Pakistani lecturers whose only medium of communication is either their mother-tongue or English. There are also a few lecturers sent by the US "Peace Corps" as American "gifts" for whom the students have to be eternally grateful. They of course only speak English. To expect the predominantly Azarbaijani students at the university to study in their second language - Persian, is bad enough, but to expect them to do it in a third language - English, proved too much to bear.

The students sent representatives to the university authorities in January 1977 to lodge a complaint about the impossibility of learning anything under these circumstances. The immediate reaction of the security authorities was to arrest all the representatives and expel them from the university. A month later another representation was made. The result was the same: arrest, imprisonment, torture and

expulsion. This provoked a strike by all 6000 students at the university demanding the "right to learn". The reaction of SAVAK was to cordon off the university buildings with tanks and armoured cars, and to confront the students with guns. Three students are reported to have been killed and 1400 arrested in the clashes which ensued, and the university was closed indefinitely.

In March the students were told that they had to re-register. But they had to bring along their parents as guarantors of their good behaviour! When re-registration started many students were refused re-admission. There were scenes of hand-to-hand battles between parents and security forces who had thought it necessary to make their presence felt on campus at the time. The result was further arrests - this time of students and their parents together!

The university was declared "peaceful" in April with only 3500 out of the 6000 students re-admitted. The system continued as before.

KERMAN UNIVERSITY

Kerman is a small provincial capital of one of Iran's impoverished south-eastern provinces. Its university is a very new institution established only three years ago. It is typical in many respects of the universities set up in Iran in that it exists more in name than anything else. The main motive for setting it up has been the prestige of being able to add one more university to the list of Iranian universities. Little if any consideration has been given to the academic or social welfare of the students who are supposed to study there. Consequently it lacks even the most basic facilities.

The Chancellor of Kerman University is Dr. Ali Mirzai (a graduate of Imperial College, London) and the Vice-Chancellor is Dr. Reza Salajgheh. Both were appointed to their jobs on the merit of their stand against dissenting students and lecturers at Pahlavi University (Shiraz) in 1967/68. As for their "concern" about the university suffice it to say that neither of them have made their home where they are supposed to be working. Their offices are in Tehran, (some 1500 miles away) where they live and

Iranians face charges in Germany

Two years ago 21 Iranians were charged with "conspiracy to trespass" in London after a brief and peaceful occupation of the Iranian Embassy. Twenty Iranians now face a similar situation in Germany. They occupied the Iranian Embassy in Bonn in January 1976 as a protest against the execution of nine opponents of the Shah's regime. The charges they now face include "unlawful entry into the embassy" and "causing damage to embassy property" (tearing down the Shah's photograph and writing slogans on the walls). Their trial was due to begin in September, but has been postponed and the new date is still to be fixed. Unless a strong defence campaign is built up immediately the trial may have very serious and dangerous consequences for the defendants. They may be jailed or heavily fined, but even worse they may be deported from Germany back to Iran where they could face prison and torture.

The Federal Republic of Germany claims to be one of the most democratic states in Europe. But its record - the notorious Berufsverbot law which bars people with left-wing and radical views from many jobs in public employment, the fact that many left-wing organisations were banned in Germany until as little as ten years ago, the treatment of immigrant workers in Germany etc. - tells a very different story.

The experience of Iranian oppositionists living or studying in Germany has been a bitter one. Far from living up to their democratic claims and allowing Iranians to freely express their opinions and organise campaigns against the Shah's dictatorship, the German authorities have persistently done all they can to support the Iranian regime against its opponents in Germany. Iranians have been arrested and deported, stringent travel restrictions have been imposed in some cases, Iranians have been refused entry into Germany, peaceful demonstrations have been banned or attacked by the police.

One of their excuses that the German authorities have been using to "justify" their attacks on civil liberties is the "fight against terrorism". Attempts have been made in the past to use such excuses

to justify attacks on Iranians. Last year for instance a high-ranking German government spokesperson made vague accusations against the Confederation of Iranian Students claiming that it was a "terrorist" Organisation.

There is also much evidence of close collaboration between the German authorities and the Shah's secret police SAVAK. The most overt and outrageous collaboration ever between SAVAK and any western government occurred during an official visit by the Shah to West Germany in 1967. The Shah was allowed by the German authorities to bring over about 500 SAVAK thugs with him. Their task was to organise violent counter-demonstrations against students protesting about the Shah's visit. One German student demonstrating against the Shah was killed by the police.

As past experience shows the German authorities will do their best to make the 20 Iranians now facing trial pay heavily for their opposition to the Iranian regime. Only strong international pressure will stop them - the kind of pressure which stopped the British authorities victimising the 21 who occupied the London Embassy. An international campaign is being organised. As part of this CARI called a meeting on 26th September to discuss possible activities in this country. An Ad Hoc Committee has been set up which is planning a picket of the German Embassy as well as other activities. What is at stake is not simply the fate of 20 Iranians but also the much wider issue of the ever-growing attacks on civil liberties in Germany. We call for the widest support for the 20 and the campaign in their defence.

For further information please write to the Ad Hoc Committee for the Defence of the Iranian 20, c/o CARI, Box 4, Rising Free, 182 Upper Street, London N.1.

Fleet Street's Ashraf and the real Ashraf

The Shah's twin-sister Ashraf narrowly escaped death on 13th September in the South of France.

She was returning to her villa in Juan-les-Pins at 4 am after a night of gambling at a casino in Cannes when her Rolls Royce was forced off the road and attacked by two armed men. In the shooting which followed an Iranian woman accompanying her was killed and a man injured.

This news hit the headlines of the London evening press. Smiling pictures of the princess appeared on the front pages of the Evening News and the Evening Standard. Fleet Street had many good words about Ashraf but omitted any embarrassing facts about her which may have damaged her image as their latest "innocent" victim of "terrorism".

The press correctly pointed out Ashraf's important position in Iran, particularly as the Shah's representative on important international missions. What it forgot to say was what kind of missions she has been involved in. The most important mission she has had as the Shah's envoy took place in 1953 when she met CIA chiefs in St. Moritz and planned the military coup which overthrew Dr. Mossadegh's government and resulted in the murder, execution, torture and imprisonment of thousands of people.

The press called her a "thin frail lady", but no mention was made of the fact that this same "thin frail lady" once had a journalist burnt alive in front of her because he had criticised her decadent lifestyle.

Her role in the UN Human Rights Commission was a big point in Fleet Street's eulogies. But there wasn't a single word about the fact that she represents a regime with one of the worst records on human rights in the world.

As for the press's description of her as "Iran's chief feminist campaigner", this can only be described as a massive insult to the international women's movement. Her appearance at the UN conference on women last year provoked a walk-out by a number of delegates.

The press was also keen to mention the princesses "concern" for social welfare in Iran, but not a word was said about

her other major interest - international drug trafficking. On two separate occasions, once in Paris and once in Geneva, she has been caught by customs officials with suitcases full of heroine. On both occasions diplomatic immunity saved her from prosecution. Meanwhile hundreds of people have been shot in Iran over the last few years for alleged possession of small quantities of heroine and other narcotics.

Students killed.....cont. from p.15.

issue remote-controlled directives to Kerman University. No doubt they prefer their luxury offices in Tehran to the old, rat-infested buildings which house the university.

According to the latest reports, there are still no libraries, laboratories and no educational facilities other than a few rooms with chalk and board and a few young lecturers. Having gone through the difficult and highly competitive process of gaining admission to a university, students arriving at Kerman University must have been very disappointed with what they found to say the least. But that is not all since they were now faced with the impossible task of learning something and passing exams without having the most basic facilities to do so. They had been waiting for a long time to enter university, but now that they were there they found themselves at a greater disadvantage than those who had failed to get a place since having learnt very little they now had to bear the shame of failure too! The approaching exam period therefore, looked like a descending bomb which would inevitably explode - and it did explode.

The students asked for a degree of leniency in the examinations in the light of the fact that they had had nothing to learn from. The examiners refused. The students went on a strike which lasted a fortnight during which time all the university windows were broken, and chairs and desks were burnt. The secret police, SAVAK, instructed the university Registrar to supply them with names, addresses and photographs of all 1500 students at the university. The Chancellor was then instructed to select and expel a number of students to set an example. Twenty-eight students were selected for victimisation, but the attempt to expel these students provoked another strike. SAVAK decided to shelve the matter in the face of this determined resistance on the part of the students.

CARI REPORTS

LONDON

Battersea & Wandsworth Trades Council invited a speaker from CARI to its meeting on 13th June. The trades council is now considering the possibility of sending a delegation to the Iranian Embassy to protest about the lack of democratic rights in Iran and the repression to which workers are subjected by the Iranian regime.

Hackney Trades Council also invited a speaker from CARI to its meeting on 6th October. This trades council has already been very active on the question of Iran. It sent a delegation to the Iranian Embassy earlier this year. This action was very successful particularly since it brought about a considerable amount of publicity in the local press about the situation in Iran.

LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

A speaker from CARI was invited to speak at a fringe-meeting organised by Liberation on 4th October. The meeting which was entitled "against fascism at home and abroad" was chaired by Stan Newens MP. Other speakers included Fenner Brockway, Bob Hughes MP and Sid Bidwell MP.

GUILDFORD

The Guildford branch of the Electrical, Electronic, Telecommunication & Plumbing Union (EEPTU) invited a speaker from CARI to its meeting on 14th October to speak about the situation of workers in Iran. The CARI speaker was very well received and there was a lively discussion about the situation in Iran. At the end of the meeting the trade union branch decided to sponsor CARI.

The Guildford branch of CARI organised a meeting at the University of Surrey on 17 May. The theme of the meeting was "political prisoners in Iran". About 70 people including reporters from the local press attended. Apart from a speaker from CARI a representative of the Confederation of Iranian Students and Anne Burley of Amnesty International also spoke at the meeting. The meeting received considerable publicity in the local press. The question of SAVAK surveillance of Iranian students raised during the course of the meeting was also reported in the Evening News and the Sunday Telegraph.

TAMESIDE

Tameside Trades Council has sent the following letter to the Iranian Ambassador in London :

Your Excellency,

My Trades Union Council understands that the above-named citizen of Iran (Vida Hadjebi Tabrizi) is under arrest and confined to prison since July 1972 and that the charges brought against her were basically political in that she was carrying out a detailed study of the living conditions of Iran's peasant population.

The good name of your country is at stake in this matter. Charges that your Government have incarcerated thousands of prisoners because of their political viewpoint are made readily and my Trades Council has received detailed information concerning Ms. Tabrizi amongst others.

If these charges are substantiated your country cannot be classed as democratic in any sense and the strictures of your Shah on his recent visit to this country (in which he made pointed suggestions on our 'economic' ills) are a downright cheek in view of the outrageous treatment of his political opponents at home.

Perhaps you would care to comment?

Yours faithfully,
Bert Ellicott (Hon. Secretary)

16th April 1977

COLLEGE FRESHERS' WEEK ACTIVITIES

CARI had stalls at the freshers' fayres of the following 28 colleges and universities at the beginning of this academic year: Kent University, Leeds University, Sussex University, Essex University, Queen Mary College (London), London School of Economics, Surrey University, North London Polytechnic, Middlesex Polytechnic, Brunel University, Imperial College (London), Wilsden Technical College, Warwick University, Kingston Polytechnic, University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, University of Manchester, Manchester Polytechnic, Salford University, Polytechnic of Central London, Teesside Polytechnic, Hatfield Polytechnic, Watford Technical College, Sheffield University, North East London Polytechnic, University College (London), Queen Elizabeth College (London), Oxford Polytechnic, Oxford University.

In most cases the CARI stalls attracted a considerable amount of attention. In some of the colleges and universities interested

students have agreed to set up CARI Societies or local CARI groups and to organise further activities on Iran. We will be giving details of these activities in future issues of the Bulletin.

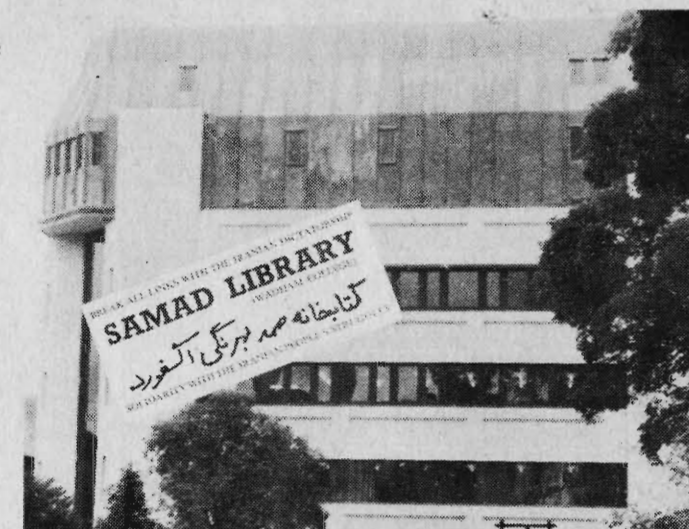
OXFORD

A new library has just been opened at Wadham College in Oxford. This library has been built with a £400,000 donation from the Shah's twin-sister Ashraf Pahlavi. In return the college have named the library the Ashraf Pahlavi Library. The library was opened without any kind of ceremony. This was not because the college authorities or Ashraf didn't want to hold a ceremony but because after the experience of the strong pickets around the college last year at the time of Ashraf's visit they knew that there would be even a stronger picket this time and that any kind of ceremony would only cause further embarrassment for them all.

Ashraf didn't donate this money to Wadham College because she has any interest in culture and learning. After all she represents a regime which does everything in its power to deny intellectual freedom and spends billions of pounds on arms while nearly 70% of Iran's population is still illiterate. Her only reason for donating this money is to gain publicity for her self and for the regime she represents. This is why she has insisted that the library should be named after her. By denying her the opportunity of getting publicity through an opening ceremony we have scored a gainst her. But her name still remains on the library.

Wadham Students' Union has taken a stand against their college's collaboration with Ashraf. Together with the Oxford branch of CARI it is now campaigning to get the library renamed after Samad Behranghi, an Iranian writer who was killed by the Iranian secret police in 1968. Posters, stickers and leaflets have been produced for this campaign and distributed widely throughout Oxford, and further activities are being planned. For further information please contact the Students Union, Wadham College, Oxford.

The Oxford branch of CARI organised a meeting at Wadham College on 11th May. A representative of CARI spoke about the situation in Iran and the need for the students at the college to campaign for changing the name of the new library.

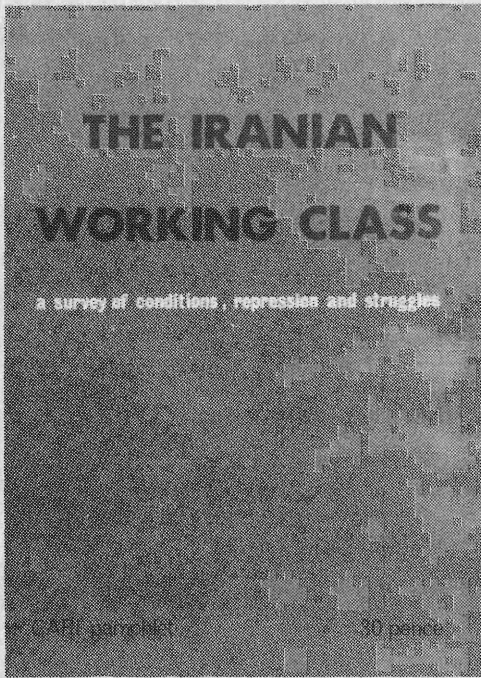


BIRMINGHAM

Supporters of CARI in Birmingham organised a meeting on Iran for trade unionists in the Birmingham area on 25th June. Many of the companies operating in the West Midlands such as British Leyland, Lucas, Chrysler and Massy Fergusson have operations in Iran. There were trade unionists from a number of these firms at the meeting. The meeting was opened by Roger Klein, a trade unionist from Masey Fergusson in Coventry, who spoke about multinational firms and the implication of their operations in countries such as Iran for British trade unionists. This was followed by a talk on the situation of workers in Iran given by a representative of CARI.

NEW SPONSORS OF CARI

Syd Bidwell MP
Jim Lamond MP
Ian Mikardo MP
EEPTU, Guildford Branch
Wolverhampton South West Constituency Labour Party
Mendes France (France)
Daniel Guerin (France)
Alain Krivine (France)
Victor LeDuc (France)
Michel Mousel (France)
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Laurent Schwartz (France)



THE IRANIAN WORKING CLASS
New pamphlet published by CARI
32 pages price 30p
Copies available from CARI (single copies
40p including postage, discounts for bulk
orders)

Iran is ruled by one of the most oppressive regimes in the world. 25000 to 100,000 political prisoners; widespread use of torture; the highest rate of political executions in the world; the most severe restrictions on the freedom of expression; a ban on all independent trade unions; a ban on all political organisations opposed to the regime - these are some of the bare facts about the repressive regime which is in power in Iran today.

The aim of the Committee Against Repression in Iran is to widely publicise the current situation in Iran and to organise broad-based campaigns in defence of Iranian political prisoners, for democratic rights in Iran, for the right of Iranian workers to freely organise in defence of their interests, against the activities of the Iranian secret police in Britain and against the British government's policy of friendship and support towards the Iranian regime.

CARI is an independent organisation not attached to any particular political organisation. It seeks the support and affiliation of all individuals and organisations which support its aims.

Sponsors of CARI include: John Berger, Syd Bidwell MP, Martin Flannery MP, Judith Hart MP, Jim Lamond MP, Tom Litterick MP, Joan Maynard MP, Ian Mikardo MP, Stan Newens MP, Ernie Roberts, Alan Sapper, William Wilson MP (Hon. Chairperson of CARI), Audrey Wise MP.

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- I/We endorse the aims of CARI
 - I/We would like to affiliate to CARI (annual affiliation fees: £10 national organisations, £5 local organisations, £3 individuals)
 - I/We would like to take a subscription to CARI Bulletin (rate for 4 issues UK £1, overseas £2)
 - Please send me more material on the campaign on political prisoners
 - Please send me copies of Iran: the Shah's Empire of Repression and copies of The Iranian Working Class (single copies 30p + 10p postage and packing, discounts available for bulk orders)
 - Please send me copies of CARI Bulletin regularly starting with issue no.

Enclosed is a contribution of £.....

Enclosed is a total of £.....

(Cheques and postal orders should be made payable to the Committee Against Repression in Iran)

Name/Organisation:

Address:

Please detach and return to CARI, Box 4, Rising Free, 182 Upper St, London N1.