

~~THE CASE OF~~
**THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT
OF THE IRANIAN RESISTANCE 1979-1991:
THE ROLE OF A BANNED OPPOSITION MOVEMENT
IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS**

Mehrdad Khonsari
PhD Thesis



Department of International Relations

The London School of Economics And Political Science

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Abstract

Banned opposition movements dedicated to the overthrow of repressive governments have existed for centuries. In the second half of the 20th century, while some terrorist organizations in Western Europe, the United States, and Japan have resorted to violence in pursuit of their goal of world revolution, others, particularly, in the Third World, have engaged in acts of resistance, including violence, for the attainment of their democratic rights.

Today, the more serious opposition movements are able to obtain support from outside sources for the pursuit of their aims.

This thesis, deals first with the fundamental theoretical questions germane to the study of any opposition movement in current times (Chapter 1). Thereafter, as a researched case study, it focuses on "The National Movement of the Iranian Resistance (NAMIR)", led by Dr. Shapour Bakhtiar which was the first political movement to come out in opposition to the theocratic dictatorship in Iran. The thesis recounts Bakhtiar's political background (Chapter 2) and gives a detailed account of his activities in NAMIR from July 1979 until his brutal assassination in August 1991 (Chapters 3-6).

Finally, it is hoped that this researched presentation will facilitate for students of international politics a better understanding of some of the critical concepts and issues relevant to the role of banned opposition movements in contemporary international politics.



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PREFACE

Banned opposition movements dedicated to the overthrow of governments have existed for centuries. In modern times - i.e., in the second half of the 20th century - the most notorious groups were the terrorists in Europe. They used robbery, kidnapping, and murder to undermine democratic governments in Italy, Germany, and Spain. While some terrorist organizations in Western Europe, the United States, and Japan have rejected their own democratic societies and resorted to acts of violence in pursuit of their goal of world revolution, others, particularly in the Third World, have engaged in acts of violence for the purpose of attaining (or re-establishing) their democratic rights.

It follows that organizational goals can vary a great deal amongst opposition groups. Some groups are purely nationalistic. The Provisional Irish Republican Army wants the British to get out of Northern Ireland and to unite the two Irelands into a single nation. The Puerto Rican Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN) wants an independent Puerto Rico with a socialist government. Basque terrorists in northern Spain would like to establish an independent homeland. In the Middle East, most Palestinian groups seek to undermine Israel and recover lost territory; and since the victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran and the advent of Ayatollah Khomeini, there has been a plethora of religiously motivated political groups in the Islamic world that have resorted to hostage taking and other acts of extreme violence for purposes of promoting their political agendas.

At on stage, most opposition movements resorted to such acts as robbery and kidnapping for ransom in order to secure the funds needed for their existence. While some still engage in such activities, the more significant opposition movements in the present international environment, also receive large amounts of money from outside sources such as foreign governments and international business consortiums - e.g., some oil -rich Arab nations continue to provide substantial funds to some Palestinian groups.

Furthermore, it is a reality that many Third World countries are governed by extremely inefficient, repressive, and corrupt regimes, few of which have achieved notable success in improving the quality of life in their country. They largely depend on money provided from external sources for development, but much of the money is diverted into personal bank accounts by their corrupt rulers. Repressive regimes are rarely stable. They are vulnerable to internecine power struggles, insurrections and, as happened in much of Latin America, guerilla warfare. Ironically, many Third World countries that have experienced revolution usually find themselves no better off, as new governments turn out to be as repressive and ineffectual as their predecessors.

Consequently, in the post colonial era, the dramatic increase in the number of newly independent countries has been synonymous with a commensurate increase in the number of opposition groups committed to an agenda which differs from that of their functioning regimes.

This thesis, deals first with fundamental theoretical questions relevant to the study of any opposition movement in contemporary international politics (Chapter 1), and is thereafter focused on a researched study of "The National Movement of the Iranian Resistance (NAMIR)"¹, a liberal-democratic political movement formed to oppose the theocratic dictatorship that had superseded the Iranian monarchy following the victory of the Islamic Revolution and the creation of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979. It is thus a study of a banned opposition movement that is neither revolutionary nor violence oriented by nature. It is the study of a movement, representing secular traditional forces and values in Iranian society².

The history of NAMIR for the period chosen - i.e., 1979-1991³ - is closely interwoven with the personality of Dr. Shapour Bakhtiar, the last Iranian Prime Minister before the Islamic Revolution, who founded the organization and remained as its leader until his assassination in August 1991.

Born in 1914 to a distinguished tribal family, which had been active in the struggle for the establishment of liberal democracy in Iran, Dr. Bakhtiar received his

¹"Nehzate Moghavemate Melli-e Iran"

²The fact that NAMIR was capable of appealing to a mass audience, in turn restricted its options in that - unlike some revolutionary opposition groups such as the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran - it could never contemplate resort to arbitrary acts of violence against the functioning regime, given that any such action would have been at the cost of undermining its future political prospects by alienating its own constituencies at home.

³NAMIR was not disbanded following the death of Dr. Bakhtiar, and has continued to remain active.

education in Iran, Beirut, and at the Sorbonne in Paris. During the Second World War, he served with the French Army's Orleans Battalion and was an ardent opponent of fascism. He returned to Iran in 1948 and became a Minister of State in Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh's cabinet in 1951. After the fall of the Mossadegh Government, he was imprisoned for his political beliefs on a number of occasions and was also banned from leaving Iran for a period of some ten years. Having been a leading member of the opposition to the late Shah of Iran for over twenty five years on constitutional and democratic grounds, Dr. Bakhtiar accepted the almost impossible task of forming a civilian government in the dying days of the imperial regime. During his 37 days in office, he disbanded SAVAK, the secret police, freed all political prisoners, allowed total press freedom and began the process of establishing a modern democratic state in Iran. Although, his government was swept away by the tide of revolutionary fervor that was fully exploited by Ayatollah Khomeini, his record as a man who had resisted the excesses of both the late Shah and had at the same time refused to yield to the uncompromising demands of the Ayatollah, made him the natural leader of many Iranians who were opposed to the unfolding events in their country.

The ensuing chapters deal at length with Bakhtiar's political background (Chapter 2) and with a detailed account of his activities in NAMIR, which began following his escape from Iran in July 1979 and ceased when he was brutally assassinated in his home on the outskirts of Paris in August 1991 (Chapters 3-6).

Furthermore, the thesis, apart from focusing on the particular case of NAMIR,

also aims to present an academic understanding of an important phenomenon - namely banned opposition movements - which have come to play an increasingly important role in the current international environment⁴, by providing answers to such questions as: How do individuals or groups who are banned from expressing their political beliefs and social preferences strive to achieve their aspirations? How can they establish credibility and, thereafter convince their own people as well as the international community of the legitimacy and justice of their struggle? What kind of organization and infrastructure do they require in order to achieve these fundamental objectives and therefore pose an effective challenge to their functioning regimes at home?

Thus it may be surmised that the impact that banned opposition movements are able to make on their own communities as well as a wider international audience are contingent upon a number of important factors with which a political movement must come to grips if it is to be taken seriously. In the case of NAMIR, the most important liberal-democratic movement to range itself in opposition to the Islamic Republic of Iran since the Islamic Revolution of 1979, these factors (apart from a deep conviction about the righteousness of its cause) included the following:

1. The leadership of an accepted and popular national figure, who was known and generally respected in the outside world.
2. Access to substantial funds (raised in the first instance through

⁴This has been most evident in a number of major international capitals such as London or Paris, where hundreds of exiled opposition movements are active in promoting their agendas.

indigenous means and later through international donations). This allowed the organization to engage a professional team to promote its objectives by formulating policies designed to promote the movement's political, economic, social and cultural message with the objective of mobilizing the necessary support- whilst at the same time providing the organization with the ability to supply its membership and its potential supporters with crucial propaganda material containing an elaboration of its policies (i.e. using newspapers, books, tapes, meeting, seminars, conferences, etc.).

3. Access to major foreign policy makers, and the opportunity for presenting its case.

4. Access to a number of radio stations, providing it with the ability to communicate with the Iranian public on a daily basis.

5. Access to a dedicated and loyal membership which was willing to make sacrifices for the promotion of the movement.

Thus, any political movement, unable to obtain access to all or some of the basic prerequisites cited above, is likely to encounter great difficulty in establishing the credibility or acceptability that is essential for the projection of its image.

However, an inability to meet these criteria has not deterred many banned opposition movements from entering the arena. Those which have been more sincere, have contended themselves with a gradual approach to attaining these required attributes, while the more cynical, have sought to use their position as a platform for obtaining financial hand outs and other short term gains, ignoring

the higher goals they have espoused publicly. But, it must be stressed that, as demonstrated in the case of NAMIR, even a banned opposition movement which is able to fulfill all the basic criteria, including wide public appeal (as was the case with Dr. Bakhtiar, particularly in the mid-1980s) is not guaranteed success.

Ultimate success for an opposition movement is to a great degree also dependent on factors such as the durability of the functioning regime (i.e., one that is determined to cling on to power to the "bitter end" as opposed to one that is likely to be more accommodating once it has become aware of the hopelessness of its position), as well as the degree of genuine international support that it is able to muster from external sources⁵.

Finally, it is hoped that this researched presentation which addresses a number of critical theoretical concepts associated with this topic, such as *Legitimacy*, *Obedience*, *ideology*, *organization* and *leadership* as well as the more empirical factors associated with the existence of opposition movements in general such as *strategy* and *funding*, will facilitate for students of international politics a better understanding of some of the critical issues relevant to the role of banned opposition movements in contemporary international politics.

⁵Here, for example, one can distinguish between the support that was provided by the US to democratic forces in Eastern Europe (e.g., Poland), as opposed to Iraq (whose opposition was encouraged during the preceding months to the start of the Persian Gulf War and then severely let down). On the hand, should external forces have a vested interest to support a particular regime for strategic reasons or other considerations, then it is obvious that movements opposed to that functioning regime, no matter how popular or just, have to contend with a whole host of other obstacles as well (here one can make slight reference to the case of the opposition movement opposed to the Saudi Arabian regime, whose leader has found it difficult to even obtain asylum or refugee status in the UK).

Chapter 1: Banned Opposition Movements in Contemporary International Politics: A Conceptual Framework and its Application to the Case Study

SUMMARIZED SUCCINCTLY IN THE DICTIONARY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, "THE OPPOSITION, IN ANY PLURALIST SOCIETY, NORMALLY MEANS A COHERENT GROUP, REGULARLY ACTING TOGETHER, AND ABLE TO PRESENT THEMSELVES COLLECTIVELY TO THE ELECTORATE AS AN ALTERNATIVE GOVERNMENT WITH AN ALTERNATIVE POLICY".⁶ THUS, IN UNDEMOCRATIC SOCIETIES, WHERE ALL FORMS OF POLITICAL DISSENTION ARE BANNED OR SEVERELY RESTRICTED, OPPOSITION MOVEMENTS, LIKE THEIR COUNTERPARTS IN PLURALIST SOCIETIES, STRIVE TOWARDS THE ATTAINMENT OF THE SAME OBJECTIVES, USING OTHER MEANS.

While the concept and history of "revolution", has been a subject of meticulous study by numerous scholars since the closing days of the eighteenth century (resulting in the compilation of a great deal of rich and pertinent literature on the various aspects of this phenomenon), actual and specific literature on the subject of banned opposition movements in non-democratic societies is at best limited and quite scattered. To a large extent this insufficiency can be overcome by taking an inverse look at any piece of researched study on the subject of successful or unsuccessful revolutionary activity, given that it can help to assist in tracing the origins of any significant political challenge to a functioning regime and to opposition movements and the individuals who constituted the bulk of their membership. Furthermore, it can be seen that mere numbers - i.e.. the size of a committed membership in any such movements, has never been a determining factor in ensuring a successful outcome. Lenin in 1917, and Castro in 1959, are perhaps good examples that underline this particular point⁶.

⁶"In November 1956 Che Guevara, Fidel Castro and eighty revolutionaries set out for Cuba in the *Granma*, and were immediately trapped in a vicious ambush which reduced their forces to twelve men. After a series of dramatic escapes they reached the Sierra Maestra - and there for two years they fought a guerrilla campaign which swept the whole of Cuba in one of the great national liberation struggles of the twentieth century" (printed under the heading of "Reminiscences of the Cuban Revolutionary War", at the last page of Che Guevara's book, *Guerrilla Warfare* [Penguin Books Ltd., UK, 1961].

In contemporary times, banned or restricted opposition movements and their leadership, are also capable of making a significant impact within, and in some instances well beyond, their own immediate political environments, by attracting significant national and international attention, even without having secured victory in their political struggles. Furthermore, even under conditions of severe repression and with their leaders behind bars, opposition movements have shown themselves, in certain instances, to be resilient and capable of displaying great moral strength, by winning support among their own people as well as that of the international community. In recent times, this has been demonstrated by the likes of the "Solidarity Movement" in Poland, and the "African National Congress" in South Africa, whose incarcerated leaders - Lech Walesa and Nelson Mandela - were both, subsequently, able to emerge as heads of state in their respective countries. Similarly, figures like, 'Aung San Suu Kyi', the opposition leader under house arrest in Burma, as well as the Dalai Lama of Tibet, represent highly respected, and internationally recognized personalities with substantial political impact, despite the fact that neither holds any office and wields no real power in their respective homelands⁷.

Why People Actually Rebel: the "Raison d'etre" of Opposition Movements

Throughout the course of history, people have repeatedly rebelled against their rulers, as a means of attaining their aspirations. In contemporary international politics, public order is put at risk, and the chances of organized resistance increased, whenever

⁷The Dalai Lama lives in exile, while 'Aung San Suu Kyi', is under house arrest in Burma, which is now also referred to as "Myanmar", courtesy of the military government in that country.

individuals are prohibited from, and deprived of the means of expressing their discontent. According to statistics collected by T.R. Gurr, during the period from 1961-1968, "some form of violent civil conflict reportedly took place in 114 of the world's 121 countries". Based, on these figures, Gurr concluded that for that given period of time, "violent attempts to overthrow governments were more common than national elections"⁸.

As seen from the eyes of scholars such as Theda Skocpol, who has investigated the various aspects of 'revolution', "Changes in social systems or societies"⁹, give rise to grievances, social disorientation, or new class or group interests", thus creating the potential for collective mobilization¹⁰. This potential then has the ability to develop itself into a "purposive, mass based movement, coalescing with the aid of ideology and organization - that conscientiously undertakes to reform or altogether remove the existing government, and perhaps the entire social order"¹¹. In the final analysis, the opposition movement - be it peaceful or violent - confronts the ruling elite or the authorities of the dominant class, and if it is able to secure victory, it then proceeds to assert its own authority and implement its own program of action.

In another study entitled, "Why Men Rebel", T.R. Gurr, presents the same proposition

⁸Gurr, T.R., *Why Men Rebel*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1970, p. 3.

⁹In contemporary international politics, lack of changes - i.e.. the static nature of the political system in face of new demands for forward movement, that need not necessarily have originated from within their own societies, could present similar challenges (e.g. the call for the establishment of a "Shora" in Saudi Arabia).

¹⁰Skocpol, T., *States And Social Revolutions - A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, And China*, Cambridge University Press, 1979, p.14.

¹¹Gurr, T.R., *Ibid.*, pp.12-13.

in slightly different terms, by stating, "The primary causal sequence in political violence is first the development of discontent, second the politicization of discontent, and finally, its actualization in violent action against political objects and actors". He elaborates between three stages he associates with violence: "Turmoil" (spontaneous), "Conspiracy" (organized but limited participation), and "Internal War" (organized and widely supported), and establishes that the greater the degree of discontent in any society, the greater is the likelihood of the violence that is associated with any fundamental socio-political change that might take place¹². According to Gurr, discontent is a product of "relative deprivations", which he in turn, defines as the "perceived discrepancy between men's value expectations and value capabilities"¹³. Based on his conclusion, one sees an emerging and inevitable role for opposition movements, who serve as the main vehicle for pursuing these aspirations, by channeling any widespread discontent¹⁴, into some form of organized and collective action that might ultimately include violence as well¹⁵.

Finally, while Chalmers Johnson¹⁶ describes the inevitable steps taken by a disoriented

¹²Gurr, T.R., Ibid., p.11.

¹³According to Gurr, "Value Expectations" are the goods and conditions of life to which people believe they are rightfully entitled. "Value Capabilities", on the other hand, are the goods and conditions they think they are capable of attaining or maintaining, given the social means available to them.

¹⁴Charles Tilly, in his book entitled, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (McGraw Hill, New York, 1978, p.207) amplifies this point by also referring to T. Gurr and underlining that "a general condition for rebellion is a widening of the expectation-achievement gap".

¹⁵Gurr maintains that "most discontented men are not revolutionaries. They may be angry, but most of them probably prefer peaceful means for the attainment of their goals to the privations and risks of revolutionary action" (Ibid, p.355).

¹⁶Skocpol. T., Ibid., pp.. 11-12. According to Chalmers Johnson it is the "Macro-sociological theory of societal integration and change". But change is required when

populace towards revolution, as stemming from "a conversion to the alternative values put forward by a revolutionary ideological movement that then clashes with the authorities that be"¹⁷.

What these writers have all presupposed in their analysis, is that ultimate resort to violence (the level of which has not been specifically defined) between an organized group of disenchanted citizens¹⁸, which is in competition for "sovereignty" with the government, is inevitable¹⁹. However, recent experiences in Eastern Europe (with the exception of Romania), suggest that in contemporary international politics, the break down of internal methods of control in any non-democratic state, can be attained without necessarily resorting to the scales of 'bloody violence' normally perceived, and associated with revolution²⁰. Indeed, it has been quite amazing to note that in countries such as Iran in 1978-1979, and Czechoslovakia in 1989, how the customary methods

a society become "dis-synchronized". Once dis-synchronization set is, people become disoriented and hence open to conversion to the alternative values proposed by a revolutionary movement. As this happens, existing authorities lose the legitimacy and have to rely more and more on coercion to maintain order. But they can do this successfully for a while. Only through reform, can they re-synchronize values and environment. But if the authorities are stubbornly "intransigent", then the revolution will accomplish change violently

¹⁷Skocpol, T., Ibid., p.15. In her writing, Skocpol, indirectly relates to 'Opposition Movements', by making reference to Karl Marx, who considered Revolutions to be the "locomotives of history" (which transform state organizations, class structures, and dominant ideologies at a national level, while spreading their victorious ideology to remote places, at an international level), and who also adhered "to a version of the premise that revolutions are made by "purposive movements".

¹⁸i.e.. an Opposition Movement.

¹⁹Skocpol, T., Ibid. But while, resort to violence is generally considered to be a common feature, it is not an imperative requirement, given that one can cite a number of examples where the desired transition has been generally "peaceful", resulting in a minimum loss of life - e.g.. the transfer of power in 1986, from Ferdinand Marcos to Corozon Aquino in the Philippines.

²⁰Here, it is important to note that levels of post-revolutionary violence, can at times be much more bloodier than the revolution itself.

of internal control, that had been very effective for a great number of years, proved increasingly inadequate as the crisis in both countries deepened²¹. As a consequence, not only was the desired outcome, at the time - i.e.. a complete overhaul of government, fully achieved, but also its violent aspects were generally restricted. Yet, once a new government had been installed in Teheran (1979) and in Prague (1989), their subsequent resort to violence for various reasons (e.g.. stemming from ideological ones to mere punishment for the remnants of the previous order) were significantly divergent²².

Disobedience, Legitimacy And Opposition

Questioning "Legitimacy" and "Obedience": In his book entitled, "Civility and Disobedience", Burton Zweibach states that 'opposition' or 'resistance' takes place, when any act of disobedience is directed against a regime. This act, can then be further reinforced by the claim that the regime is 'illegitimate', and as such not entitled to claim our loyalty²³. Zweibach relates loyalty,(as an act of political obligation²⁴) directly

²¹Farhi, F., *States and Urban-Based Revolutions - Iran And Nicaragua*, University of Illinois Press, Urbana and Chicago, 1990, p. 51.

²²In that while the one in Prague was bloodless, the one in Teheran, was, in terms of brutality, without precedent in the country's modern history.

²³Zweibach, B., *Civility And Disobedience*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge (UK), 1975, p.192.

²⁴According to Zweibach (Ibid., p.68), "obligation derives from the imperative of survival, which as human life involves not merely physical existence but the presence of those specifically human capacities we summarize by phrases such as "moral life", must be seen to include the survival of that level of human association which makes "civility" - political association, culture, and moral life - possible. Consequently, the justification of obligation, entails an evaluation of the extent to which a particular set of political arrangements assures at least minimal attainment of these things. The most interesting and important questions regarding obligation concern the worth of the social

to the extent that a regime is willing to commit itself to "supporting the values of civility²⁵ and the common life" in any given society. Thus, the argument that a regime ought not be supported or obeyed can be sustained in any place where it can be shown that the conditions of 'obligation' have been violated. However, according to Zwiebach, the mere violation of a condition of obligation, normally only justifies disobedience, and not resistance. Resistance or opposition, on the other hand, is justified only when it appears that violating the 'condition of the common life' is the condition for the existence of the regime. Hence, legitimacy is called into question not merely when rights are violated, but where it seems that there is no way to correct that violation within the existing political processes. Thus, to justify resistance or opposition, it is imperative to establish that repression is both systematic and persistent. Hence, resistance assumes the assertion that the regime does not merely deny rights, but it is incapable of adequately redressing the evil, even when it has been brought to its attention. Zweibach concluded, therefore, that in principle, "it is difficult to avoid raising questions of illegitimacy, once rights have been denied by any regularity"²⁶.

Towards a Clearer Concept of "Opposition"

While opposition movements have always played an important role in world history, and

order demanding obedience".

²⁵According to Zwiebach (Ibid., p.68), "Civility means more than survival, stability and the existence of culture: It is also and necessarily concerned with moral life, for the outlawing of barbarism and violence and involves the understanding and the attainment, and the transmission of moral ideas; the justification of mutual restraint in interpersonal undertakings; and the consequent association of human action with moral decision making and free moral judgement".

²⁶Zwiebach, B., Ibid., p.196.

are by no means a phenomenon of modern times²⁷, their whole disposition, particularly their evolution to their current form in non-pluralist societies, as "banned" political actors on the international stage, has undergone a significant transformation since the end of the Second World War, and the start of the de-colonization process, particularly, in areas that have now become the Third World. Thus, as more nations gained their independence from their former colonial masters - and in most cases, without the necessary state of preparedness for the assumption of the types of responsibilities associated with statehood and independent self rule - there has been a general influx in the number of disenchanted groups and movements opposed to the policies being carried out by their functioning governments. However, this steady increase in the number of disenchanted, and generally 'banned' or restricted opposition groups, has not by any means, remained confined to the newly emerging states. Indeed, during the course of this century, apart from Russia and China, opposition groups - using both peaceful methods, as well as armed conflict²⁸ - have been able to successfully dislodge many other previously established independent governments, such as Cuba in 1959, Iran in 1979, and South Africa in 1994. Although, there are some countries in the Third World, in which some form of legal and peaceful opposition to government policy has been tolerated, there are, nonetheless, too many countries, worldwide²⁹, where democratic forms of dissent from the official state policy line are banned, and those wishing to persist with their conflicting views and political agenda are arrested or

²⁷ According to Ted Gurr, "Men have rebelled against their rulers for a millennia" (Gurr, T.R., "Why Men Rebel", Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1970.).

²⁸ According to Che Guevara, only when "People see clearly the futility of maintaining the fight for social goals within the framework of civil debate", and until such time "A government maintains at least an appearance of constitutional legality, the guerrilla outbreak cannot be promoted, since the possibilities of peaceful struggle have not been exhausted" (*Guerrilla Warfare*, Penguin Books Ltd., UK, 1961, p.14.).

²⁹ Particularly in the Middle East.

otherwise dealt with. But, this has not deterred many, who cannot resort to democratic means for the attainment of their social, economic, and political aspirations, from engaging in various forms of organized resistance or opposition. In particular, during the course of the past three decades, this has led to a significant rise in the number of individuals and groups, in various countries, who have contributed to the formation of a whole new breed of actors in the international political arena³⁰.

Classifying "Opposition"

According to Leonard Schapiro³¹, the word "opposition", in its English usage, is, so far as politics are concerned, of eighteenth century origin, with a peculiarly English connotation. It belongs to a period when, in the aftermath of the Revolution and the doctrine of Locke, the idea took root that the "Party" of opposition stood 'opposed' to the administration of the day, the 'party' of government, ready and anxious to take its place³². According to Schapiro, this originally English notion, has just the same, been successfully adopted in a number of democracies with very different party systems from that of England³³. However, in focusing on the subject of his own study at the time (namely, the communist regimes of the former Soviet Union and the 'Eastern Bloc'), Schapiro states categorically that the term "opposition", in a political sense is ill

³⁰A sample of this can be seen in *Revolutionary And Dissent Movements - An International Guide*, A Keesing's Reference Publication, Longman Group UK Ltd., 1988.

³¹Schapiro, L., *Political Opposition In One-Party States*, The McMillan Press Ltd., London, 1972, p.3.

³²Ibid.

³³Here, Schapiro (Ibid.) has drawn on other writings, such as Professor Robert A. Dahl's, *Political Opposition in Western Democracies* (Yale University Press, New Haven & London, 1966).

adapted to countries in which rival political parties are not tolerated³⁴. Nevertheless, based on Schapiro's general analysis, it can be deduced that disagreements with, or opposition to, an existing administration in any authoritarian, or non-democratic, country can manifest itself in one of the following forms:³⁵

1. That of "All Out Rejection" of the whole incumbent system of rule, coupled with a desire to set up some alternative form of rule. This form of 'opposition' - while not necessarily homogeneous - rejects all forms of compromise with the incumbent regime and devotes itself fully to its overthrow³⁶.

2. The Concept of "Power Struggle", where one leader at the highest national level, attempts to oust another. It thus follows that a "Power Struggle" will almost invariably be associated with some fundamental question of ideology or policy. Another main feature of a "Power Struggle", is the way in which the displacement of one leader by another is succeeded by executive changes of key personnel, which enables the new leader to provide himself with a following of adherents who are likely to support him in power³⁷.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Schapiro, in addressing his writing to the communist countries of the late 1960s, stresses the fact that the boundaries between different categories which he has outlined, are not necessarily permanent or clearly distinct (Ibid., p.3).

³⁶In a post-revolutionary Iranian context, this is the option that was chosen by nearly all of the exiled opposition movements, including NAMIR.

³⁷Despite the fact that in writing about the concept of "Power Struggle", Schapiro was thinking about the communist countries of the 1960s, nonetheless, his description in its broader sense has particular meaning in the post-revolutionary Iranian context as well. While, it can be said that power struggles are not always a universal accompaniment of leadership change in such regimes (e.g., like in the former Soviet Union following the death of Brezhnev), "Power Struggle", in the sense that has been described has manifested itself, on at least three separate periods in post-revolutionary Iran. It first manifested itself in 1980-1981, when the then President, Abol-Hassan Bani Sadr, was attempting to assert himself on the Iranian political scene. Following Khomeini's death, "Power Struggle", in the sense described manifested itself again, with President Hashemi Rafsanjani, taking charge and placing all his trusted advisers in key positions. And finally, since 1992, we have seen a similar pattern unfolding

3. That of "Dissent", which is apolitical in the sense that its exponents do not advocate the overthrow of the regime, or the replacement of the administration by another. They assert the right which they claim derives from the law, to criticize actions and policies which are contrary to the constitution of the land³⁸.

4. Various "Interest" or "Pressure" Groups that can operate under the restrictions imposed, bearing in mind that they are usually deprived of operating freely without government interference³⁹.

T.R. Gurr, looking at the same problem, classifies society under three separate categories, by taking into account the intensity of its member's politicized discontent. According to him, the "loyalists" are those committed to using "regime-approved" means for remedying or protesting deprivations, while the "actively dissident" are those committed to the use of illegal means. Finally, according to Gurr, the "neutrals", consisting of a majority of most populations, are apathetic or ambivalent about the means of action, committed neither to the regime nor to active, illegal opposition⁴⁰.

again, only this time, with Ayatollah Ali Khamenei attempting to assert himself. In all the examples mentioned here, "Power Struggle", has been associated with a fundamental difference in both ideology and policy.

³⁸In an Iranian context, this was the very term which was used frequently by Dr. Shapour Bakhtiar to describe the People's Mojahedin Organization in the early 1980s.

³⁹See Appendix 3, which is a report prepared by the writer, entitled "The Second International Conference on Human Rights - Vienna, 14-25 June 1993". In this report, which was prepared following the writer's visit to Vienna during the conference, and his interviews with a number of participants, particularly within the ranks of the NGOs, specific reference is made to "The Society of Women of the Islamic Revolution", led by 'Azzam Taleghani' (daughter of the late Ayatollah Taleghani), as well as "The Iranian Women Society", represented by Farideh Hakimy, who both fit this category. While, both organizations lobby for certain "privileges" for Iranian women, they are not acting against the incumbent regime and can thus be categorized as 'friendly interest groups', with their activities closely scrutinized by the Islamic authorities. Another Iranian participant in the Vienna Conference, fitting this category was "The Iranian Journalist Welfare Syndicate", represented by Mohammad Hassan Sazegara and Nader Kavooosi.

⁴⁰Gurr, T.R., Ibid., p.276.

Opposition Movements As Transnational Actors

In recent times, even the most militantly internationalist movements have been established on a national basis and act as alternative national regimes⁴¹. Consequently, all revolutionary organizations - aspiring to project themselves as counter-states in important international circles - operate almost entirely as actors within their own national framework or as an exile from national power⁴², until such time that they are able to secure power at home. But this is not to say that they cannot aspire to greater global achievements⁴³, while at the same time using the international stage for the promotion of their goals and ideals. This is an important evolution which has taken place in the form, as well as the presentation of opposition movements, and one which has provided them with a new role in the international arena, for the explicit purpose of assisting the promotion of agendas within their own national boundaries.

Opposition Movements as "Pressure Groups": Also, within the modern international setting, the plight of all opposition movements, which are barred from open political participation in any non-democratic country, is today greatly enhanced and assisted by technology and the various dramatic developments that have taken place in the field

⁴¹Bell, J.B., "Contemporary Revolutionary Organizations", in Keohane, R.O., & Nye, J.S. (Edited), *Transnational Relations and World Politics*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1971, p.153.

⁴²Ibid., p.154.

⁴³Be they the promotion of world revolution or the enhancement of world peace, etc. But, according to J. Bowyer Bell (Ibid., p.168), for those truly committed to "transnational revolution" - e.g., Khomeini's initial hopes of establishing an "Islamic Empire", devoid of any national boundaries (along the lines suggested earlier in the century by the Moslem Brotherhood who sought to overthrow atheistic regime, in the name of universal Islamic state) - the prospects look as bleak as ever.

of mass communication. These developments⁴⁴, can be used to go "over the heads" of incumbent governments, by establishing a direct link and 'rapport' between various opposition movements, and the ordinary citizen who form their constituency. Thus, it is possible for opposition movements to utilize these means for painting a more accurate picture of the socio-economic and political realities in their respective societies, and for communicating their views to the general population and also their vision of a better system of government. The examples of the dismantlement of the former Soviet Union, and the fall of the Berlin Wall have demonstrated in vivid terms that it is, in fact, possible to defy the pundits and attain what may have appeared to be, only a short time before, a seemingly impossible task. So, whether by peaceful means or by some form of violence, past experience has demonstrated a great adaptability on the part of banned opposition movements to overcome formidable difficulties and ostensibly insurmountable odds, by the ultimate achievement of their stated objectives. Backed by realistic policies, and agendas which are in conformity with the general aspirations of their compatriots, there is reason to hope that this established trend will continue to manifest itself in the future.

In this international environment⁴⁵, one of the most suitable venues, which opposition movements can use for the promotion of their agendas, is amongst the growing multitude of "Nongovernmental Organizations", or NGOs, as they are more commonly referred to.

Indeed, ever since the very inception of the United Nations, Article 71 of the its Charter,

⁴⁴Radio Broadcasts, Satellite TV, Fax, Phone etc.

⁴⁵Given, particularly, its interdependent nature, and bearing in mind that events in one country can have profound effect on others.

makes specific reference to nongovernmental organizations, and in all the years that the United Nations has been in existence, a great number of serious and major contributions, particularly, in the field of human rights have been made by a number of important NGOs. These contributions, have simultaneously provided opposition movements with unique opportunities for drawing the full attention of the international community to many issues related to their agendas. In the past, this has been achieved by using either the good offices of a suitable "promotional pressure group"⁴⁶, like Amnesty International⁴⁷, or a sympathetic member state⁴⁸. Alternatively, it is possible

⁴⁶Willetts, P., *Pressure Groups in the Global System - The Transnational Relations of Issue oriented Non-Governmental Organizations*, 1st Edition, Frances Pinter (Publishers), London 1982, p.3.

⁴⁷Organizations such as Amnesty International, the Anti-Apartheid Movement and Oxfam have all obtained consultative status with ECOSOC under category II. According to Peter Willetts (Ibid., p.214), of the 640 NGOs which have been granted consultative status, 31 are in category I (composed mainly of major organizations, with members in a large number of countries, such as the World Federation of Trade Unions), 215 in category II (e.g., inclusive of such important NGOs, as the International Commission of Jurists, International Committee of the Red Cross, and the Socialist International), and 394 are on the Roster (the overwhelming majority of which are highly specialized, such as the International Committee Against Apartheid, Racism and Colonialism in Southern Africa). There are three ways of gaining a place on the Roster: 152 NGOs have been approved by ECOSOC; 28 have been recommended by the UN Secretary General; and 214 are on the list by virtue of having consultative status with specialized agencies or other UN bodies.

⁴⁸In April 1981, the writer was empowered by Dr. Shapour Bakhtiar, the Leader of the National Movement of the Iranian Resistance (NAMIR), to approach the President of Panama, in order to seek his government's assistance for urging the forthcoming session of the UN General Assembly to consider the issue of human rights violations in Iran. The idea was that a Panamanian representative in the General Assembly's Third Committee, would make a strong speech condemning human rights violations in Iran, and would then urge the Committee to place this item on its agenda for annual consideration. While there was never any particular affinity between NAMIR and the government of Panama - bearing in mind, specially, that only a year before there were strong rumors that the Panamanians were intending to hand the exiled Shah back to the Islamic authorities in Iran - an arrangement was reached whereby NAMIR could receive the type of publicity it was trying to promote, while the Panamanians would, at the same time, be awarded "certain compensation" for their efforts. The negotiations were successfully conducted in Panama city, but the whole arrangement fell apart a few months later, in the aftermath of the accidental death of the Panamanian strongman General Omar Torrijos, who had approved the agreed package.

for opposition movements to present their cases directly - provided they have obtained consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) or Observer status to the UN⁴⁹. However, making direct representation to a formal meeting of an international agency, is a privilege which is not readily available to a great majority of opposition movements. Therefore, most opposition movements, like any other NGOs, have the opportunity of holding "fringe meetings" during the course of any important international gathering where they are able to present and publicize their cases with almost equal effect. For example, during the course of the Second International Conference on Human Rights, which was held in Vienna in June 1993, more than one hundred different personalities and political organizations - led by such respected international figures as the Dalai Lama of Tibet - acting in opposition to their national governments were allowed to set up 'Presentations Desks'⁵⁰ and disseminate their own information material and assessments about various problems that confronted their compatriots in their homelands, with the explicit aim of mobilizing international support for their agendas⁵¹.

Thus, NGOs, in their "diplomatic" interpretation, meaning "organized groups of people who wish to influence political decisions"⁵², have come to acquire another useful

⁴⁹e.g.,. The PLO does not have consultative status with ECOSOC, but can address ECOSOC in its capacity of an observer to the UN. Since 1977, the PLO has also enjoyed full membership of the subsidiary Economic Commission for West Asia.

⁵⁰Supplied with photographs and literature.

⁵¹In this context, "women's groups, which form a distinct sub-category among the communal groups" or opposition movements, can further augment the efforts of a particular organization, by using the same forum in order to exert extra, independent pressure on certain issues, that have the ability of attracting enough attention by themselves.

⁵²According to Willetts (Ibid., p.1), diplomats have come to choose this terminology over "lobby" or "interest groups", which "carries a strong sectional interest towards considering sectional economic interests as being more important or influential". He

function by promoting, on an international scale, the aims and objectives of numerous disaffected national groups seeking to implement change within their own national boundaries. This function has been of particular benefit, since in the last two decades, there have been far fewer countries that have required liberation from the "yoke of a foreign oppressor", and many more that have needed liberation from "the scourge" of a multitude of repressive domestic regimes⁵³.

Therefore, in summarizing the arguments presented, it is possible to establish that, in contemporary international politics, political opposition to un-democratic rule, can manifest itself in at least one of the major categories outlined above⁵⁴.

"Banned" Opposition Movements And The Stakes Involved

As previously stated, "Banned Opposition (or Resistance) Movements", as actors on the international stage, are a phenomenon of modern times. Moreover, the history of all successful revolutions, particularly those in the twentieth century, can be traced to a particular group or set of individuals, who formed the original core of a movement that was eventually able to impose its views.

states that some NGOs, by trying to bring about social change, acquire the features of a "pressure group", and he concludes that it is the act of applying "pressure" that brings them into the political sphere.

⁵³According to Willetts, based on this analysis, whenever a claim is made for international recognition of the 'national right to self determination', a domestic communal group has in effect converted itself into a liberation movement. In an Iranian context, the main objective of NAMIR, and all other liberal-democratic movements, has been the removal of the provisions of Ayatollah Khomeini's doctrine of "Velayate Faghih" from the Iranian constitution. Such an achievement would be the first step toward to the establishment of a system which enshrined the concept of the 'national right to self determination' in its most supreme document - i.e.. its national constitution.

⁵⁴One must allow for instances where there is some overlapping.

While, an analysis of the net benefits to society of any "fundamental socio-political change accomplished through violence"⁵⁵, apart from those for national independence against foreign domination, is a separate subject for debate, there is a great deal of evidence to suggest that there has been a huge increase in the number of potential actors in this area⁵⁶ (particularly in the post-colonial period), committed⁵⁷ to the setting up of a new order in their various countries⁵⁸. Just the same, the role associated with banned opposition movements in contemporary international politics is a precarious one, due to the enormity of the stakes that are involved. If victorious in their efforts, leaders of opposition movements achieve the ultimate, in a political sense - i.e., they win, and thereby form the government of the day; define the ideals; set the national

⁵⁵The definition of revolution according to T.R. Gurr (*Why Men Rebel*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1970, p.4).

⁵⁶Bell, J.B., "Contemporary Revolutionary Organizations", in Keohane, R.O., & Nye, J.S. (Edited), *Transnational Relations and World Politics*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1971, p.168.

⁵⁷Or 'allegedly' committed. The point trying to be made is that, in terms of international politics, "Opposition Movements", across the board, have been somewhat of a "growth industry".

⁵⁸This can be quantified in various ways. One simple way is by determining the increase in number of opposition groups that have been registered in the *Second Edition* of *Revolutionary And Dissident Movements - An International Guide* [A Keesing's Reference Publication, Longman Group UK Ltd., 1988]. It should be borne in mind that this particular reference book does not contain information about all the existing groups that are opposed to their incumbent governments, but concentrates mainly on those which have been more prominent in projecting an image of themselves through various means, such as the ability to engage in lobbying efforts in major international centers, such London, Paris, or Washington (e.g. in its section on Iran, no mention has been made of numerous monarchist splinter groups scattered from areas bordering Iran in Turkey and Pakistan, to the suburbs of major cities in Western Europe and the United States). Another important yard-stick is reference to the abundant presence of tens of opposition and "interest groups" (such as the Bahais), all with different backgrounds, but united in their opposition to their incumbent governments- under the banner of a Non Governmental Organization (NGO) - during the course of the Second International Conference on Human Rights that was held in Vienna Austria in June 1993. This was a stark contrast to the First International Conference on Human Rights, held in Teheran, in 1968, where virtually no opposition group was represented, under any category.

agenda; dispense the patronage; and govern the people. If unsuccessful, they invariably weaken in resolve, become fragmented, and eventually degenerate into insignificance.

For the true believers who associate with any such movements, the desire to succeed, and the fear of extinction are, in most cases, the only two real alternatives that will confront them in their endeavors. However, for some who are more cynical and less idealistic, there is also a third. Indeed, there have been many political movements in this century whose so-called leaders have never intended (or were intended) to become victorious in the true sense. Instead, victory for this category of individuals has normally meant the securing of adequate funds to run their various bureaucracies, or to provide for their own subsistence. It is also a fact that this objective has suited many governments, major international business concerns and private individuals: they have funded such opposition or resistance movements for the sole purpose of promoting their own agendas, which are often far more selective than the stated goals and objectives of the earmarked recipient organization⁵⁹

⁵⁹In the present Iranian context, an Iranian exile group by the name of "Derafsh-e Kaviani" (Flag of Freedom Organization of Iran)- recently renamed as "The Iranian Organization for the Defense of Basic Freedoms and Human Rights"- has been funded by the US Government (USG) for the "alleged" purpose of overthrowing the Islamic dictatorship and establishing a democratic order in its place. However, this organization, much like the 'proverbial man', has been too light to do any heavy work, and too heavy to do any light work. As a result, not only does it not have any credibility with the Iranian people, its existence has also come to reinforce the belief that its continued existence (based on the supposition that without USG funding, it would cease to have a membership of even one!), indicates the limits of American intent against the Islamic Republic. The clear meaning of such an interpretation is that far from threatening to overthrow the Iranian regime, this American sponsored group has been created and kept afloat only to remind the Iranian authorities of the continuing potential of an American threat (i.e., which can always be "heated up"). Based on this analysis, it is hardly surprising to note that apart from persons receiving direct salaries from this organization, the outfit has failed to attract a following, and is generally isolated in Iranian circles, and devoid of credibility.

Yet, despite the difficulties and the enormity of odds that usually confront such movements, comprable opposition struggles have persisted, and opposition movements have continued to mushroom on the international scene. Nonetheless, a realistic assessment of the stakes involved - i.e., a full understanding on the part of both the leadership and the membership, of the risks and rewards inherent in their efforts - is a matter of crucial importance in both the establishment and the enhancement of organizations which are capable of presenting a serious challenge to any functioning regime.

Structural Requirements for a Credible Opposition Movement

The ultimate criteria for judging the potential of any political opposition movement is its ability to present itself as a credible force capable of exerting a decisive influence on the political atmosphere in which it operates. The ability of a movement to generate this is, in turn, contingent upon a whole series of other factors, such as its ability to mobilize and organize those sections of the population, who sympathize commensurate with its aspirations. Thus it is essential that an opposition movement should create a structure, in which the potential of endowing itself with such credibility can become a possibility.

While an analysis of what is generally referred to as 'mobilization' and 'organization', may assist in explaining what is structurally required by any Opposition Movement, it is important that reference also be made to a number of other vital factors, such as leadership, membership, vision, strategy, and trust, all of which are essential for the projection of 'credibility', without which no movement can ever cherish any realistic

hope of attaining its stated objectives.

In his book entitled, "From Mobilization to Revolution", Charles Tilly says that "by a 'movement', we often mean a group of people identified by their attachment to some particular set of beliefs. While groups constitute the basic unit for the study of 'collective action', the notion of a movement, is usually more complicated than the idea of groups and events"⁶⁰. According to Tilly, collective action takes place when people begin to act together in pursuit of common interests, which in turn stems from a combination of what he terms as "interest", "organization", "mobilization", and "opportunity"⁶¹. However, Tilly is of the view that the most persistent problem faced in analyzing collective action -i.e., joint action in pursuit of a common end⁶² - is its lack of "sharp edges", in that people vary continuously from intensive involvement to passive compliance, and interests vary continuously from quite individual to nearly universal⁶³.

In this regard, the prospects of any aspiring political opposition movement are to a very large extent dependent upon avoiding the types of common contradictions and confusions, to which Tilly has referred. Hence, it is vital for any such movement to ensure that its message, and the collective action it espouses, are both sharp and

⁶⁰Tilly, C., *From Mobilization to Revolution*, McGraw Hill, New York, 1978, p.10.

⁶¹According to Tilly, Ibid., p.7, these components have been described as follows: Interest: a groups' goals and ideals; Organization: a group's structure which most directly affects its capacity to act on its interests; Mobilization: the process by which a group acquires collective control over the resources needed for common action; and finally, Opportunity: is the relationship between the group and the world around it.

⁶²Ibid., p. 84. Tilly further elaborates this matter by pointing out that the extent of a group's collective action is a function of (1) the extent of its shared interest (2) the intensity of its organization (3) the extent of its mobilization (i.e., the amount of resources under its control).

⁶³Ibid., p.10.

unambiguous. By striving for clarity and unambiguity, any opposition movement can thus present a feasible challenge or threat to any functioning regime, provided it is able to project a credible image of itself with the aid of ideology and organization, prior to actual confrontation⁶⁴.

The Role of Ideology in Any Opposition Movement

The role ideology plays in mobilizing masses for socio-political change in any society⁶⁵, is of pre-eminent importance⁶⁶. It thus follows that in ideological mobilization, certain ideas and slogans come to represent the struggle against a regime. Moreover, it is the process through which a particular view of society comes to dominate the rhetoric and the way in which the status quo is altered or a new social order is created⁶⁷.

A very important ingredient necessary for the success of any opposition movement, lies in its ability to bridge the ideological gap between its 'intellectual elites' and the rest of

⁶⁴Confrontation can be either peaceful or with the use of force.

⁶⁵ e.g., Islamic activism in Iran, and Sandinista socialism in Nicaragua.

⁶⁶According to G. Therborn (*The Ideology of Power and the Power of Ideology*, New Left Books, 1980), "ideology serves to set a common agenda for a mass of people.... Such mobilization develops through a breach of the regime's matrix of affirmations and sanctions, which in normal times ensures compromise or acquiescence and the successful sanctioning of oppositional forces.... A successful ideological mobilization is always translated or manifested in practices of political mobilization".

⁶⁷Farhi, F., Ibid., p.101. According to Farhi, "the most important presupposition is the rejection of ideology as a system of ideas. Instead, ideology is conceived as a dynamic, ongoing social process through which subjects are created and yet, at the same time, is subject to transformation by the willful actions of more or less knowledgeable actors". Hence, according to her, ideology must be understood by aligning it not with mere political beliefs or ideals, but with the large cultural systems that preceded it and out of which, as well as against which it came into being." (Ibid., p.83).

society, while at the same time, being "creative" in so far as allowing individuals and groups to articulate and pursue different visions of the past and the future. But, while ideology can help to stimulate unity of purpose and thereby general mobilization within any society, it is incapable of explaining a revolutionary outcome by itself⁶⁸ - being entirely dependent upon the full backing of a well structured organization and a dedicated membership to fulfil its role. But, the fact remains that the future prospects of any well structured and dedicated political organization is similarly dependent upon the type of ideology which the movement comes to represent. Stated more clearly in terms of the current study, the prospects for any opposition movement with a popular ideology and a weak organization are just as bleak as those of a well structured and efficient organization with an unpopular ideology⁶⁹.

The Role of Organization in Any Opposition Movement

For "counter-elites acting in unison and creating instability"⁷⁰ to produce multiple sovereignty, and thus force a stage of political crisis (or revolution), commitment to them must be activated in the face of constraints or contrary directives imposed by the

⁶⁸Ibid., p.101.

⁶⁹This proposition best manifests itself through a simple, cursory look at the current political opposition to the Islamic Republic of Iran. Although, the liberal-democratic ideology professed by the 'Iranian Constitutionalists', is potentially very popular, nonetheless, the latter have not been able to make a significant impact on the Iranian political scene, mainly as a result of their failure to be represented by a well structured and efficient organization. On the other hand, despite being endowed by an efficient and experienced political organization, the radical Mojahedin have also failed to make any serious headway, simply on the grounds that the ideology they profess (and despite the fact that it is being constantly diluted) is generally perceived as being too unpopular. Thus, a conclusion can be made that only through a happy marriage between ideology and organization can any serious movement develop realistic hopes of entering into a potentially successful confrontational campaign with an existing regime.

⁷⁰T.R. Gurr's definition of an opposition movement.

functioning regime. The existence of a coherent organization makes a crucial difference at this particular point, in terms of facilitating the initial seizure of control and activating the commitment already made by specific men⁷¹.

While according to Charles Tilly, the first main determinant of a group's mobilization⁷², is its organization⁷³, T.R. Gurr goes further by suggesting that different degrees of organization can, in turn, affect the degree of civil strife and instability in any undemocratic society.

According to T.R. Gurr, apart from structural characteristics like "scope, cohesiveness, and complexity", it is the organization's capacity to provide their members with "value opportunities, satisfaction, and the means for expressing protest", that can assist in providing patterns of action that can have rewarding consequences for any movement⁷⁴. According to him the 'scope' of an organization is determined by the size or proportion of the population that is likely to participate in any anti-regime activity sponsored by the opposing movement⁷⁵. Furthermore, the scope of the potential opposition against a functioning government, is likely to determine "the form of strife",

⁷¹Tilly, C., Ibid., p.208.

⁷²The word mobilization conveniently identifies the process by which a group goes from being a passive collection of individuals to an active participant of public life. The extent of a group's collective action (i.e. joint action in pursuit of common ends) is in turn, a function of (1) the extent of its shared interest, (2) its mobilization, and (3) the extent of its organization.

⁷³Other main determinants include, "its interest in possible interaction with other contenders, the 'current opportunity' and the group's subjection to repression" (Tilly, C., Ibid., p. 56).

⁷⁴Gurr, T.R., Ibid, p.274.

⁷⁵Ibid., p.283.

that will need to be adopted by a particular movement. Similarly, according to Gurr, 'Cohesiveness' is the extent of goal consensus and cooperative interaction among members, while 'complexity', is the extent of hierarchial and functional differentiation within a movement itself⁷⁶.

The scope, cohesiveness and complexity of organized groups also affect their ability to carry out functions of any kind such as seizure of power and satisfaction of popular expectations to name but a few. Aspiring opposition movements must generally strive to have a high degree of both cohesiveness and complexity within their organizations. While neither is a necessary condition for the other, they are, nevertheless, both considered to be reinforcing conditions essential to the successful outcome of any movement. Finally, it is also essential for organizations to develop the capacity to provide their members with value opportunities, satisfaction, as well as the means for expressive protest⁷⁷.

The Role of Leadership

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 285.

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 274. What needs to be addressed are the factors that lead to the establishment of disenchanted groups which eventually become opposition movements. Here, a lack of democratic means for critical expression, ideology and repression, are perhaps the simplest examples that come to mind. But there are others. When formed, the shape and size of the movement, and the way in which it proposes to carry out its objectives, are the next factors that warrant consideration. If a group chooses to resort to violence for the achievement of its objectives, then even a small group can create significant problems and be taken seriously on both the national and international levels- the best examples that come to mind are "Action Direct" in France, "Hezbollah" in the Lebanon, and the "Mojahedin Khalq" in Iran. All these organizations gained international fame for their opposition to the established governments of their respective countries. Here, it would be essential to look at the role of terrorism as a political instrument for the achievement of policy by some opposition movements [e.g., the I.R.A.]

The development of leadership, cadres, differentiation of organizational functions, and the establishment of formal bodies to carry out functions greatly facilitate the survival and effectiveness of opposition movements⁷⁸. In this respect, the role assigned to leadership is of critical importance. This is due to the fact that it is primarily the function of leaders to articulate various doctrines, help raise and maintain morale, and convince their followers to continue with their struggle in adverse circumstances, particularly in times when there might be no alternative but violent confrontation with the functioning regime⁷⁹. It thus follows that in times of crisis, competent leadership and complex organization may be used to minimize, and contain the extent of political violence.

Other organizational functions to which leadership contributes are the provision of normative and physical support for followers, thereby increasing group cohesiveness. A major function of doctrines articulated by leaders is to provide their followers with normative justifications for opposition. Leadership also plays an important role in giving the necessary momentum to attain the "revolutionary outcome" desired - i.e. "the displacement of one set of power holders by another"⁸⁰- for which the opposition movement was initially formed. In the final analysis, given that leaders should be endowed with the potential for guiding members' discontents into a variety of relevant activities, leadership must provide patterns of action that have predictably rewarding consequences for their followers, and it is ultimately against such a yard stick that leaders are either retained or superseded by any dynamic movement.

⁷⁸Ibid., p.290.

⁷⁹According to T.R. Gurr (Ibid., p.292), "highly competent leadership is necessary for the creation and direction of persistent organized violence".

⁸⁰Tilly, C., Ibid., p. 193.

However, problems for opposition movements emerge when there is a huge gap in terms of personality and prestige between a 'leader' (a problem which is less often associated with a collective leadership), and an organization's membership. The net result, in such circumstances, is that the movement is likely to become totally reliant and fully identified with its leader, who in most cases is likely to be a colorful person of great charisma. The net effect in such cases can be both positive and negative: positive, in the sense that a charismatic leader of national or international fame is likely to attract greater attention which might help accelerate the growth and popularity of a movement. Alternatively, should something happen to that leader, or should the leader become too self-centred and irrational, then the movement as a whole will suffer and probably become insignificant.

Why People Participate in Revolutions: The Role of Membership

One cannot discuss the issue of membership without some form of a more general reference to the whole issue of what motivates people to participate in opposition movements. It is a fact that every social scientific treatment of revolution includes a theory of motivation and a psychology of the revolutionary behavior.

According to Michael S. Kimmel, two sources of motivation - despair and hope - propel people into revolutionary activity and motivate their behavior. These sources are mutually reinforcing in that while despair may make revolutionary activity necessary it is hope that transforms a rebellion or revolt into a purposive and visionary movement that is capable of transforming the social foundations of political power⁸¹.

⁸¹Kimmel, M.S., *Revolution - A Sociological Interpretation*, Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 1990, p.12.

It thus follows that one cannot fully consider an opposition movement aiming to implement change in any one society, without taking into consideration the role of its membership, who are expected to be the 'vanguards' of their societies for carrying out this work⁸². People become revolutionary or active members of an opposition movement, when they become desperate enough to mobilize themselves politically to overthrow the existing system, and when they become hopeful enough to believe that by mobilizing themselves to take political action they have some reasonable prospect of success. Thus, according to Kimmel, "when people make revolutions, they are acting on their dreams"⁸³.

Therefore, to fully grasp the requirements of mobilization, apart from the structural theories of revolution, adequate attention must also be paid to the role of revolutionary psychology -i.e. structural theories⁸⁴ which tell us much about the causes or the consequences of revolution, which need to be augmented with factors pertaining to the social psychology of a particular society. This in turn, begs some consideration for the role of "culture" in times of change or revolution.

It is a fact that opposition movements are successfully organized in proportion to the strength and relative unity of their cultural basis. Cultural questions inevitably involve values, a socially derived morality that people apply to the institutions and structures which exert such inexorable power over their lives. Here, loss of legitimacy, affected by any cultural imbalance, in ensuring the downfall of a particular regime is important, if

⁸²Ibid., p. 188.

⁸³Ibid., p. 193.

⁸⁴i.e. the causal role of the international system, class relations, levels of productions, etc.

not more, than economic difficulties or the disintegration of the ruling regime's coercive apparatus. Thus, far from being necessarily a retardant of social change, tradition, culture, and values may propel a people towards revolutionary challenge. Based on this assertion, Kimmel concludes by insisting that "down playing human agency, also downplays the role of the individual as a human actor"⁸⁵. Kimmel is, therefore, of the view that it is important to focus on the capacity of individuals to act together, to make strategic choices, and to influence one another. This is in turn related to the role that is played by charismatic leaders which cannot be fully understood without taking into account culture and ideology on the one hand, and "individual agency" on the other⁸⁶. This is due to the fact that charisma involves the rejection of convention, of established political order, and creates possibilities for new and different forms of rule. The fact that opposition movements often do succeed without "charisma", does not mean that one should disregard the enormous potential which charisma theoretically possesses for mobilizing individuals or a membership⁸⁷. Thus, charisma - i.e. "this non-rational form of authority"⁸⁸ - has the ability to "mobilize, activate, and politicize" emotions, assisting membership in any opposition movement to the types of social upheaval that it is trying to create for the attainment of its final objectives. But, the role that is effectively played by any membership can at the same time vary according to the scope, as well as the strategy of opposition chosen by any one movement.

Visions

⁸⁵Kimmel, M.S., Ibid., p. 190.

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 191. Kimmel goes on to say that charisma is a capacity to revolutionize people "from within", offering a "revolutionary will" as an alternative to legal or traditional orders.

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 191.

⁸⁸Ibid., P. 192.

One of the most difficult tasks confronting any leadership and indispensable to its success, is the provision of an inspiring "vision" of the society that is to be created, once the movement has successfully completed its mission. This vision must be capable of capturing the hearts and minds of the membership, in the first instance, as well as winning the trust of other important sectors of the society at a later stage, and should transcend the day to day rhetoric of mediocre politicians. No amount of organization, planning, or discussion can supplant this primary requirement. Thus, for any aspiring opposition movement and its leadership to establish themselves as the future successors of existing regimes, it is absolutely essential that they articulate and inform their populations of this important requirement, thereby promoting the notion that the movement is able to play the role of "savior" with the ability to address all their legitimate needs and desires.

Strategy

Twentieth century opposition movements have discovered their strategies quite independently, based on their own experience, instinct, and of course, native traditions. According to Laqueur⁸⁹, in discussing guerrilla warfare, there is nothing in the purely military pages of Mao or Che Guevara which a traditional band leader would regard as other than simple common sense. If so, the novelty of twentieth century guerilla warfare would seem to be not so much military as political. Therefore, by "Strategy", we mean calculated courses of action that are available to an opposition movement, the pursuit of which may or may not ultimately achieve the desired outcome.

⁸⁹Laqueur, W., *Guerrilla - A Historical and Critical Study*, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, London, 1977, p. 385.

In the twentieth century, while studying the success of the Bolshevik movement in Russia, the communists in China, Ghandi in India, and Khomeini in Iran, it can be seen that different tactics were used by the respective victorious leaders to achieve mobilization and the types of collective action best suited for the fulfillment of their strategy. It thus can be concluded that major change can come about and ruling authorities can become supplanted through a number of different modes, depending on the overall strategy pursued by a movement, such as a coup d'etat, guerrilla warfare, civil disobedience, or a national uprising which is triggered by urban insurrection.

This entails an undertaking that gives serious account not only to the various assets and potentials that are available to a movement, but, more importantly, also to the resources which are at the disposal of the functioning authorities, against whom the campaign is being conducted. Success or failure depends on numerous variables that require calculation⁹⁰. Thus to ensure success, strategies require effective leadership, organization, and communication among all participants. Strategies of resistance movements vary a great deal from one another according to the existing disposition of their 'opposing forces'. In the final analysis, to achieve success, the opposition movement and its leaders must overcome barriers before them through reliance on their own strategy⁹¹, as well as the ingenuity displayed by the movement's membership.

⁹⁰Johnson, C., Ibid., p. 140.

⁹¹According to Chalmers Johnson, whatever the final form of strategy - e.g. a coup d'etat or guerrilla warfare, etc. - the first requirement is to organize the aspiring party itself - i.e. the movement to whom the active membership will owe their primary allegiance and from whom they will take their orders. A second requirement of this strategy is to identify and exploit issues that will lead to greater acceptability in the international arena, and greater cooperation on the home front with other disenchanted social groups within the country- i.e. the notion of striving for a "united front". This notion has also received some important mention by Michael S. Kimmel. It is important to bear in mind that all strategies in such matters contain extremely large elements of risk, even when calculated in the most careful and realistic manner.

Sustaining An Opposition Movement

To sustain an opposition movement, what is required most, apart from ideology, motivation, and organization are funds and 'other resources', which are essential to sustain the activities of any opposition movement by allowing it the room it needs to grow and attain the stature necessary for making credible demands. The level of funds and other resources available, will in most cases, determine the likely outcome of any opposition. For example, in many cases, securing funds may be only adequate to enable an opposition movement to maintain a profile. However, if serious attempt is likely to be made at overthrowing an established system, then even large amounts of funds, alone, may not be adequate. Other resources, such as broadcasting facilities, key personnel⁹², arms, communication equipment, and training might also be necessary. Finally, the degree of recognition that an opposition movement receives from external sources is another important factor [diplomatic support prior to acquisition of power, and diplomatic recognition following its acquisition].

Concluding Observations on Conceptual Framework

Opposition movements may affect the course of political action by existing

⁹²The mention of the term "key personnel", open a very important issue with which Charles Tilly (Ibid., p. 170) has dealt in some detail, while discussing the choice between "loyalty and effectiveness" in any membership. According to Tilly, effective employees or members often use their effectiveness to serve themselves, while loyal employees or members are often ineffective. To strive for effectiveness, apart from the whole notion of loyalty, an organization sometimes requires specialized professionals, for which it then requires to allocate resources according to the type of assignment that is required. For example, tasks such as coming up with a contingency plan for disrupting water and electric utilities or broadcasting on an effective frequency, are specialized jobs, which might form a key part of an opposition movement's strategy. If ultimate success is hinged on the ability to carry out such a task, then the opposition movement must come up with the required resources and the key personnel must be recruited.

governments. Thus, they may have an impact on the wider political field, irrespective of their being successful in attaining their stated political objectives.

Furthermore, one can elaborate the ways in which 'home' and 'foreign' governments have dealt with an opposition movement in order to achieve their own objectives. There are times when a home government [meaning the government of the country which the opposition movement is focused against], itself, uses opposing forces to enhance its own position domestically. In the case of Iran- and the same may also be applied to other countries- certain key personalities in the government of the day [mostly in SAVAK] developed an interest in the 1960s to use the "myth" concerning the Tudeh party which by then had become virtually non-existent [due to arrest, execution and the exile of the bulk of its leadership in the late 1950s], to fund and indirectly control a number of leftist/communist dissidents. Though this was clearly aimed at promoting the ambitions of a certain few, it did nevertheless involve the Iranian government as a whole, and it did create the false impression both at home and abroad that the left was in fact dangerously active inside the country. This arrangement was clearly of benefit only to a number of government officials who had devised the scheme, and there was never any question that the so-called opposing forces were a source of threat to the government⁹³

More commonly, however, opposition movements are funded and assisted by external governments who wish to use them in pursuit of their own national interests⁹⁴. Of

⁹³This matter was mentioned in a number of discussions that have been held in recent years in London between the writer and Lt. General Mohsen Mobasser, the former Head of the Iranian Police Force.

⁹⁴During the past three decades countries such as the United States, the Soviet Union, Iraq and Saudi Arabia have all played a role in this respect. Also, In the Arab world, many such movements have often been controlled or promoted for irredentist

course, the national interests of an external power need not necessarily be in conflict with the national interests of a country on whose behalf a particular opposition movement is engaged. But, there are also times when an opposition movement acts as a fifth column for the aspirations of an ambitious external power, such as the various communist movements that acted as clients of the former Soviet Union in a number of countries. Again, in the Iranian context, since 1979, we have seen how scores of foreign countries have tried to make use of various opposition movements for various reasons in order to meet their own particular objectives.

The prospects of success by any opposition movement, are also viewed with particular attention by many others who are likely to experience some change - either positive or negative - should that movement succeed in acquiring power. Thus, the activities of any credible opposition movement warrants consideration at three different but interlocking levels. This is due to the fact that a successful opposition movement can affect the political environment at the home, regional, and international levels. Therefore, all opposition movements with an eye to success, must clearly gear themselves to confront the various obstacles which may be placed before them during the course of their struggle, from all these levels. Hence, the perceived view and policy objectives of the functioning regime, regional governments, and the 'major powers' vis-a-vis any opposition movement is of paramount importance. A failure, on the part of any opposition movement, to comprehend the significance of coming up with a political strategy that is capable of meeting these challenges can be very serious. In particular, they must come up with policy positions that give full consideration to both regional as well as 'major powers' perceptions (now that we no longer have a bi-polar world).

reasons, aimed at acquiring chunks of disputed territory or settling some other form of feud.

Relating Conceptual Framework to the Chosen Case Study

The Islamic Revolution in Iran, which began with a small uprising in January 1978⁹⁵ and ended successfully in February 1979, was the first major break in the Third World from the revolutionary model of protracted armed struggle (e.g., China, Vietnam, Cuba, Nicaragua, etc.) for one of mass insurrection⁹⁶. Moreover, it was a revolution which itself, had incorporated much of the conceptual framework, to which the preceding paragraphs have alluded.

In short, it materialized mainly because by 1978, all sectors of Iranian society seemed discontented with the Shah and with their own situations⁹⁷. Thus, according to Theda

⁹⁵According to Sir Anthony Parsons, "A few days after President Carter's departure, the government inadvertently lit the fuse that was to detonate the mine which, a year later, would destroy the Pahlavi dynasty and all it stood for. For some time the authorities had been getting worried about the inflammatory effect on public opinion of the clandestine Khomeini cassette recordings. In early January, someone decided that Khomeini must be openly discredited.....A long article was published in one of the leading newspapers traducing in lurid detail Khomeini's personal background, his private morals and his religious credentials... On January 9th serious rioting broke out in the holy city of Qom, Khomeini's spiritual home. The situation passed beyond the control of the local police. Troops were called in, and whether through panic or by design, they fired into the crowd... The whole country was shocked and staggered by the incident and a crisis developed between Muslim religious leadership and the government..." (*The Pride and the Fall - Iran 1974-1979*, Jonathan Cape, London, 1984, p. 61).

⁹⁶Eqbal Ahmad's Comments on Theda Skocpol's, "Rentier State and Shi'a Islam in the Iranian Revolution", Theory and Society, May 1982, p.293.

⁹⁷In many interviews conducted by the writer at the time just prior to the start of the Iranian Revolution (at the time a doing research at the IISS), this point was generally validated, and applied even to very senior figures in the Shah's administration. So much so, that it was commonly stated that general discontent was such that "a street sweeper thought that he had been swindled into sweeping the street, and should instead had been a more senior official in the local council; the more senior official at the local council felt that he was swindled, and should instead have been a more senior figure in the ministry; the more senior figure at the ministry thought he

Skocpol, the Iranian Revolution was a product of social disruption, social disorientation, and universal frustration with the pace of change⁹⁸. This state of dissatisfaction had gradually transformed itself into an extraordinary series of mass urban demonstrations and strikes which grew continuously in size and ultimately rendered the regime's only source of defense, namely its coercive organizations, totally ineffective - without having suffered defeat in any external war or come under pressure from any external source⁹⁹. But, irrespective of its distinct features¹⁰⁰, the Iranian Revolution also incorporated, in one form or another, nearly all of the theoretical concepts generally associated with revolution, to which the major portion of this chapter has been devoted (e.g. concepts such as disobedience, legitimacy, ideology, mobilization, collective action, etc.).

Once the broad and heterogeneous coalition that had been formed around Ayatollah Khomeini had triumphed in Iran, the general perception on the part of most Iranians as well as many Western observers, was that Western oriented liberal-democrats, would shape the new regime and implement the types of reforms, particularly advocated during the preceding months (i.e. the establishment a democratic order with respect for popular sovereignty and basic freedoms, etc.). Indeed, the appointment of Mehdi

should have been the minister, the minister thought that he should have prime minister; the prime minister thought he should have been the Shah, and the Shah felt that he was God!". The point being made, that irrespective of the fact that from street sweeper to the Shah himself, all Iranians had begun to have material privileges never before available to their society as a whole, no one was satisfied, and there were a general feeling on the part of everyone that they had been swindled out of their fair share of things.

⁹⁸ "Rentier State and Shi'a Islam in the Iranian Revolution", Theory and Society, May 1982, p.267.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ e.g. Shia Islam was both organizationally and culturally crucial to the making of the revolution against the late Shah.

Bazargan, as Prime Minister of the 'Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran', seemed a step in that direction, and the overwhelming majority of the Iranian people seemed happy with the outcome of their struggle, and were optimistic about their future, as they prepared for their "Spring of Freedom" ("Bahr-e Azadi"), that was to prove all too fleeting.

Apart from the numerous gruesome executions of senior military officers and senior officials of the previous regime, whose bullet riddled bodies were the subject of nearly all front page news (a process which began only a few days after the consolidation of the revolution in mid February), the first item on Ayatollah Khomeini's 'hidden'¹⁰¹ agenda manifested itself during the course of a referendum on 30 March 1979 and converted Iran into an "Islamic Republic". Although, there is little doubt that the majority of people would, at that time, have backed Khomeini's appeal on this issue, nevertheless, the way the whole campaign was conducted alienated many Iranian. This was mainly due to the fact that all potential opponents of an "Islamic Republic", were barred from campaigning in support of their own preferred form of government, and every effort was also made to prevent any form of discussion that might possibly undermine the creation of an Islamic Republic that was incompatible with Khomeini's own personal visions¹⁰². Subsequently, as the months of 1979 went by, the liberals and

¹⁰¹The truth is that there was nothing 'hidden' about Khomeini's agenda. He had written and preached about his beliefs, long before his accession to power. Nonetheless, there was this sense of false belief amongst all the various political forces that had joined him in the struggle against the Shah, that Khomeini would some how abstain from any involvement in the Iranian political scene by withdrawing to Qom, and leaving politics to the politicians. However, when contrary to their expectations, Khomeini refused to withdraw, talks about Khomeini's hidden agenda began to emerge as an excuse by leading politicians for their own failures in having been outwitted by the shrewd Ayatollah.

¹⁰²For example, in an interview outside the Iranian Consulate in London with the BBC Persian Service on 30 March 1979, even personalities such as General Fereidoon Djam - the second most senior Iranian military figure in exile (only General Bahram

the National Front lost out completely to clerical and lay proponents of an avowedly Islamic republic, with strong powers for a supreme religious leader, (i.e. through the incorporation of the doctrine of 'Velayate Faghih' which essentially negated the concept of popular sovereignty) and for Islamic jurisprudence written into the Constitution. However, other members of the 'Grand Coalition' which had toppled the Shah, notably such organizations as the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran, decided to continue to go along with the mullahs, with one specific objective in mind - i.e., to reach the general public and build a mass movement organization¹⁰³.

While for many liberals, the start of total disillusionment with Iran's revolutionary outcome and the beginning of a new struggle to rid Iran "from the yoke of a theocratic dictatorship" began in earnest with the closure of the "Ayandeghan" newspaper in July 1979, it was not until the closure of the Tudeh Party Offices in May of 1983, that the last remaining member of the victorious coalition against the Shah were "weeded out" by the religious authorities, and power and political participation totally monopolized by the clergy. Even then, political power was to reside solely within the domain of only those in the clerical constituency who were committed to Khomeini's visions of an Islamic regime¹⁰⁴.

Aryana was at the time more senior than him) - had stated that he had participated in the referendum and voted for an Islamic Republic, because Iran was both Islamic and a republic. This notion of an Islamic Republic shared by Djam and many other Iranian intellectuals, was quite different to that of Ayatollah Khomeini. While, almost all envisioned the creation of a secular, liberal democratic republic, with particular consideration for Islam in general, and Shia Islam in particular (much like the 1906 Constitution), Khomeini's notion was clearly the creation of an theocratic 'Islamic Republic' based on his own personal interpretation of 'Velayate Faghih' or "Islamic Government".

¹⁰³Abrahamian, E., *The Iranian Mojahedin*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1989, p. 186.

¹⁰⁴During Khomeini's reign as Iran's 'Supreme Ruler' from 1979-1989, the most clear examples of intolerance within clerical ranks were displayed against the persons

Banned Political Movements in the Aftermath of the Iranian revolution

It was against such a background of rapid extremism at home coupled with militant anti-Westernism, that Dr. Bakhtiar began his campaign in exile against the Islamic regime, following his escape from Iran in July of 1979. He began his campaign in exile because, irrespective of his total disassociation with the excesses of the Shah's regime which he had genuinely opposed for the previous 25 years, his failure to submit to Khomeini during his brief period tenure as the imperial government's last Prime Minister¹⁰⁵, had made him a hunted man in Iran, whose fate would have no doubt met the sharpest edges of revolutionary justice, had he been caught. Under those prevailing circumstances, and contrary to general international opinion at the time¹⁰⁶, it was

of a number of Grand Ayatollahs such as Kazem Shariat Madari, Hassan Qomi Tabataba'i, and finally, Khomeini's own chosen successor, Hossein-Ali Montazeri. Interviews conducted by the writer with a number of leading clerics from Qom, Teheran and Mashhad, underlined the generally unspoken reality that by the early 1980s, despite a marked improvement in the status of all mullahs throughout Iran, no more than 10% of the clerical constituency were supportive of an Islamic Republic based on Khomeini's personal interpretation of the doctrine of 'Velayate Faghih'. Apart from certain 'Iran experts', who were capable of detecting this matter, many outsiders, particularly in the international media, were unable to comprehend this development, due mainly to their lack of understanding of how the only form of opposition - namely 'Passive Opposition' - manifested itself amongst the conservative clergy, and as a result symbolic gestures of opposition, such as 'maintaining a silence' or 'not declaring open support' for many of the government's well publicized stands, were not generally picked up.

¹⁰⁵For a period of only 37 days between January and February of 1979.

¹⁰⁶Unlike the example of the Eastern bloc countries or Russia itself, where former communists were allowed to continue remaining active in politics, either under their former banners as communists or alternatively, under the more euphemistic banner of 'new socialists', no such consideration was given to anyone in Iran with political connections to the previous regime. The image thus created by the new Islamic Republic was that there were no longer any support for either constitutional monarchy, or the advocates of the '1906 Constitution minus its provision for monarchy' in Iran. It is a very important consideration to note that in no referendum or elections of any sort conducted in the history of the Islamic Republic - and in particular during the early years, when efforts were being made to draft a new constitution for Iran - have candidates supportive of a "Constitutional" platform been allowed to participate (the term "Constitutionalists" in its current form refers primarily but not exclusively to

obvious that neither Bakhtiar, nor any of his close supporters would have been permitted the opportunity of forming a political organization, representing his views. And so it was that, the Islamic Revolution in Iran was less than two years old, when on 5 August 1980, Dr. Shapour Bakhtiar announced the formation of the National Movement of the Iranian Resistance (NAMIR). Although, Bakhtiar was without question, the first and most important Iranian public figure to come out in open opposition to the newly created regime in Iran, nevertheless, the power and the prestige of Ayatollah Khomeini, as well as the aura of the Iranian Revolution at the time, were far too great for his message to make any serious impact beyond a small circle of Iranians, composed mainly of the more educated classes (inclusive of some middle class elements, former elites, and intellectuals).

In the international community, despite a feeling of general respect and sympathy that had, by and large, been generated for Bakhtiar by the international media during his brief period of tenure, most political pundits, still in a state of shock following the rapid disintegration of the imperial order in Iran, gave negligible credibility to the seriousness of Bakhtiar's early challenges to the Khomeini regime that began in 1979. However, by mid-1980, Bakhtiar's position was to some extent receiving greater scrutiny in the wake of the American hostage crisis and Khomeini's overt attempts to promote Islamic fundamentalism, particularly in the more traditional states of the Persian Gulf (e.g., Bahrain). These matters were being considered at a time when there continued to be overt signs that the Iranian people were still charged with revolutionary fervor, with the Islamic regime continuing to display great ideological strength and impressive power in acts of mass mobilization, particularly following the start of the

supporters of constitutional monarchy, as well as advocates of the 'spirit' of the 1906 Constitution).

Iran-Iraq War in September 1980.

NAMIR: Origins, Aims, And Purpose

The National Movement of the Iranian Resistance (NAMIR) represented the convergence of three streams of political principle, nationalism, constitutional liberalism and opposition to theocracy. While, all of these were not without precedent in modern Iranian history, NAMIR was setup with the clear intent of bringing them all together in a torrent of resistance to Khomeini's Islamic Republic. Nationalism and constitutional liberalism in NAMIR were further complemented by a strong commitment to secular government which, whilst respecting the central place of Islam and religious feelings in national life, resisted the tyranny of theocracy as strongly as any other form of autocratic government¹⁰⁷.

NAMIR, as the first political movement to point out the totalitarian consequences of clerical rule in post-revolutionary Iran, was therefore dedicated to extinguishing the terror that had replaced the first democratic government in Iran for more than 25 years, and to ending the futile war with Iraq which had brought so much misery to the people of both countries. The movement intended to achieve this aim by becoming a broad-based coalition of Iranian people, both inside and outside the country, who were pledged to replacing the Islamic Republic with a liberal and democratic government, committed to free elections, respect for the rule of law, and guaranteed protection for human and minority rights.

NAMIR's most immediate objective and first priority was the overthrow of the Khomeini

¹⁰⁷NAMIR - National Movement Of The Iranian Resistance, A brochure produced by NAMIR-UK, 1985.

regime and its replacement by a government of national unity. In order to achieve this objective, NAMIR by early 1982¹⁰⁸, had started to operate clandestinely inside Iran, paving the way for a controlled and popular uprising against the Khomeini regime¹⁰⁹. As a consequence, NAMIR was gradually able to achieve the successful build up of substantial support amongst the armed forces, the tribes, as well as in important sectors of Iranian society in the cities (such as the professional middle classes, civil servants, and the Bazaaries [merchants]). The general population were also kept in touch with NAMIR's activities through its radio stations, which broadcast clandestinely to Iran, as well as underground publications and an informal network of friendly contacts.

Outside Iran, NAMIR's activities were directed towards exposing the brutalities of the Islamic Republic, and highlighting the plight of the Iranian people. The movement was also engaged in lobbying public opinion and policy makers, using its offices in North America, Western Europe and Asia, and its newspapers which were published in a number of different languages.

Ultimately, following the downfall of the Khomeini regime, the main tasks to be undertaken by a NAMIR inspired government of national unity, would have included the

¹⁰⁸It is important to note that despite announcing the creation of NAMIR as early as August 1980, Bakhtiar - well aware of the general popularity of Khomeini in the early years of the revolution - was more hopeful of overthrowing the Islamic regime by using more immediate avenues, such as a military coup. Indeed, it was not until such time that all these possibilities were fully exhausted, that he gave serious consideration to structuring NAMIR such that it could play its intended role (hence the gap between 1980-1982, when NAMIR began functioning in an active manner).

¹⁰⁹Given the Iranian regimes brutal and repressive nature, resort to armed support was never ruled out for such an uprising. By the mid-1980s, reliance on military support was to become the main component of NAMIR's overall strategy for the acquisition of power.

following items from the movement's well publicized agenda: the restitution of human rights; removal of controls over political activities; abrogation of press censorship; re-opening of schools and universities; restitution of trade union activities; and the enforcement of temporary measures to alleviate the country's acute economic problems. Finally, the government was to pave the way for holding free elections to a constitutional assembly - within a period of 18 months - whose main function would be to review the constitution¹¹⁰.

In the sphere of foreign policy, the discarding of Khomeini's policy of interference in the internal affairs of neighboring countries and active support for international terrorism, plus respect for all accepted norms of international behavior, were promised as the hallmark of such a transitional government, which would also have sought a quick and just termination of the war with Iraq.

Because NAMIR was envisioned as a democratic coalition, the basis of its membership was never governed by any ideology. Its structure - e.g., A Council representative of all major interest groups in the movement, which was chaired by Dr. Bakhtiar - thus included liberals, conservatives, and democratic socialists, as well as monarchists of a constitutional nature. Therefore, the policies and beliefs designed to unite this diverse membership was an unequivocal faith in democracy, independence, and the rule of law, and detestation of the bloodstained tyranny which had shattered the image of Iran.

Early Indications of Disenchantment With the Regime

¹¹⁰According to NAMIR - National Movement Of The Iranian Resistance, A brochure produced by NAMIR-UK, in 1985, the transitional government was to rule according to the provisions of the 1906 Constitution, in order to ensure legitimacy for its actions..

From the outset, the short term prospects of organizing a popular, exiled based, movement against the newly installed Islamic regime, were bleak. There was no question that during the initial years, particularly prior to the start of the Iran-Iraq War, both Ayatollah Khomeini and the 'revolution' were extremely popular, particularly amongst the lower classes of the general population¹¹.

Nevertheless, the waves of indiscriminate executions and other forms of "revolutionary justice" being administered around the country, were, by and large, as shocking to the people in Iran as they were to the outside world. Furthermore, it soon became apparent, that a majority of these decisions were being taken by certain revolutionary authorities, who were acting independently of the provisional government . The situation became further exacerbated when, contrary to every expectation, a process of "general cleansing" - which was nothing more than a witch hunt intended to rid the bureaucracy of all non-Islamic elements and 'women' was initiated in all government departments. As a result, the impression that began to take shape amongst a majority of the liberals and intellectuals who had supported the revolution, was something quite

¹¹While there were signs of middle class and intellectual discontent about the direction which the revolution was taking, this was of no real concern to the regime. To enhance support for its policies, the Islamic authorities were using the entire sophisticated propaganda infra-structure which they had inherited from the Shah to great use. The effectiveness of their internal propaganda campaign - which essentially concentrated on representing the regime as the interest bearer of the "deprived ones" - the so-called "Mostazefin" ; was a tremendous source of assistance to them for a number of years (it was only after the termination of the war with Iraq, when contrary to general expectations, economic hardships began to accelerate, that the shine in the regime's propaganda began to wear off). According to Bakhtiar's Minister of Information, Dr. Cyrus Amuzegar (conversation with the writer), "It was the propaganda strategy of the Islamic regime which made it effective - While the Shah's propaganda material was one which was sneered at by the educated classes, and not understood at all by the lower classes, the message from the Islamic regime tended to generally ignore the educated classes, while conveying the impression that it was concentrating on catering to the needs and wants of the lower classes".

different to what they had originally envisioned. Indeed, even liberal-democrats such as Mehdi Bazargan who were always greatly influenced by religion¹¹², discovered that Khomeini's agenda, was not one of 'business as usual minus the Shah and the abuses of his system'. The rapid growth of this impression among many important sectors - such as the middle class and the intelligentsia - who had been at the forefront of the revolution against the Shah, were further solidified by the mounting acts of violence and revenge that were erupting in provinces such as Turkman-Sahra, Khuzistan, and Kurdistan, prompting, in each instance, a strong reprisal against their instigators. Thus, the combination of these events, quickly dampened the general public's state of euphoria, greatly affecting public perceptions of the new regime, to which everyone had originally been prepared to pledge their loyalty. By the time the government of Mehdi Bazargan had been hounded out of office, the revolutionary feeling which had unified the nation only months before, had been seriously and irreversibly dented.

This situation was further aggravated, when the Islamic authorities began a campaign for the establishment of new social order in Iran, dominated completely by Islamic values¹¹³. These measures were to create immediate backlash effects amongst the middle classes and the intelligentsia, preventing the regime from solidifying the basis of its legitimacy amongst them. Nonetheless, the uneducated masses were generally untouched by these developments, and it was not until much later, and due mainly to reasons of economic decline and an unpopular war, that the message of critics such as NAMIR was able to make its impact felt amongst a much wider audience.

¹¹²Bazargan was always greatly influenced by Islam, to such an extent that he was commonly referred to as an "Akhund" by many of his contemporaries (discussion with Dr. A. Alebouyeh, one of Bazargan's classmates in France).

¹¹³Particularly against women.

NAMIR's Available Options

Based on Leonard Schapiro's classification of opposition movements, outlined earlier in this chapter, NAMIR, as an opposition movement, clearly fell into the category of those movements which totally rejected the whole incumbent system, and were fully committed to setting up some alternative form of rule. Thus, in line with Schapiro's analysis, NAMIR's form of 'opposition' was one that rejected all forms of compromise with the incumbent regime, preferring instead to devote all its resources towards its overthrow.

In view of 'scope' - i.e., the likely size or proportion of the population that could realistically be mobilized to participate in various anti-regime activities sponsored by NAMIR, the actual "form of strife", that was decided upon for attaining the desired outcome, was eventually arrived at following a great deal of consultation and debate that followed a specially prepared "Working Paper" that was commissioned for discussion purposes in early 1983. The working paper contained the following¹¹⁴:

"Projected Options Available to the Iranian Opposition

1. Political Settlement

- a. With the collaboration of Khomeini during his life time.
- b. Without the collaboration of Khomeini, after his death
 - (i) Through the formation of a coalition between leftist elements within the Islamic Republic, and leftist secular and "semi-secular" elements in exile, led by the Bani-Sadr/Mojahedin group¹¹⁵.
 - (ii) Through the formation of a working relation between the majority

¹¹⁴ Prior to Bakhtiar's first visit to Saudi Arabia in April 1983. As it turned out, the paper (prepared by the writer) was never discussed, though its conclusions later formed the basis of what was to become NAMIR's plan of action.

¹¹⁵ In the early 1980s, prior to the breakup of their relationship, prior to the expulsion of the Mojahedin from France and their admission to Iraq..

of Khomeini's religious constituency, and the secular, traditionalist elements led primarily by Shapour Bakhtiar (NAMIR), and incorporating other personalities such as Reza Pahlavi II, and others.

2. Violent Settlement

a. Military Coup - before the termination of the Iran-Iraq War.

(i) From the armed forces - with either leftist/rightist outcome¹¹⁶

(ii) From the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) - with likely radical and anti-Western consequences¹¹⁷.

b. Military Coup - after the Iran-Iraq War

3. National Uprising

a. To be initiated by leftist groups and gaining momentum, and then leading to some form of possible military support (armed forces or IRGC).

b. To be initiated by nationalist elements, with support from segments of both the military and the religious constituencies.

4. Continuation of the Status Quo

Indefinite perpetuation of the Islamic Republic, and the exclusion of all other political element, irrespective of their ideologies.

An Assessment of the Above Options

1. In the case of Political Settlement:

Option 1a: totally unrealistic, and virtually impossible¹¹⁸.

Option 1b: Must be considered under two separate circumstances:

In Khomeini's lifetime:

¹¹⁶The composition and the state of mind of the armed forces, was such that both possibilities existed. The chance of a leftist coup was given greater credence when a Tudeh party member was able to slip through various nets, by becoming the Commander of the Iranian Navy.

¹¹⁷The IRGC, in the 1980s, was a very radical-Islamic organization, consisting, particularly in the initial years, of hard line Khomeini supporters.

¹¹⁸At the time of the briefing, this option was considered virtually (though not totally!) impossible. The reason being that if the opposition was to have gained weight and credibility, to such a level as to truly threaten the Khomeini system, then the Ayatollah might have accepted some form of a compromise. He demonstrated this type of flexibility in 1988, when he accepted UNSCR 598, by making a speech in which he said that accepting a cease fire, was like drinking poison.

Option 1b(i): The attainment of some kind of a political settlement with the Islamic Republic, without Khomeini's personal blessing - most unlikely¹¹⁹.

Option 1b(ii): While, there may be a willingness on the part of some elements within the ruling clique of the Islamic Republic, to reach a form of settlement (for purposes of protecting their own long term interest), any advance of this nature is unlikely to occur, so long as the Ayatollah is either alive or in sound mind.

After Khomeini's Death:

Option 1b(i): The same arguments made above would continue to apply.

Option 1b(ii): Certain Difference could occur- the religious constituency might try and exploit this option more seriously, once it is no longer inhibited or intimidated by Khomeini. Should this option receive meaningful diplomatic support in the form of certain signals to key individuals, through third party diplomatic channels or any other effective action, that would indicate 'general international support' for such a move, it is quite possible to obtain very remarkable results in a very short span of time. It is important to note, that in this regard, diplomatic efforts from important outside players is crucial.

2. In the case of Violent Settlement

Option a(i): Any action while the war is still continuing present great difficulties. This is because of the various other national priorities, such as fighting the aggressor Iraqi army, etc., need to be taken into account. Nonetheless, the continuation of the conflict, after 1982 when the enemy had been evicted from Iranian territory, was considered by many in the armed forces to be contrary to national interest. All the same, the ability to inflict a mortal blow on the regime in Teheran, from units not actually deployed at the front is one that can be exploited.

Option a(ii): Both the state and the IRGC have a vested interest in the perpetuation of the Islamic regime. Thus, unless the IRGC, was to see its own position to be under some kind of a threat, it is unlikely that they will ever oppose the regime. Moreover, it is likely that they would conceivably be deployed against any attempt by the regular military to launch a coup, despite the fact that their realistic chances of survival, given their state of readiness, is considered by many experts to be limited.

¹¹⁹Due to the fact that elements such as Bani Sadr and the Mojahedin, represent 'dissident' elements of Khomeini's own regime- albeit that they had tried to use his system to advance their own ideologies. However, given that they were eventually purged by incumbent religious parties in the country, destroyed any probability of reconciliation with them - even had they never indulged in any acts of violence against the regime, and had continued to remain in Iran.

Option 2b: With the war over, the state might move to swiftly disband the existing armed forces, purge its heroes while integrating the rest into the IRGC. Such a move, would in the short term, decrease the chances of a military coup from rightist elements of the army and increase chances of a leftist coup following Khomeini's death. Thus, as far as the liberal-democratic opposition is concerned, all possible calculations would have to be made while the armed forces continue to remain intact. Should the armed forces not become disbanded following the war, the same calculations as in 2a(i) and 2a(ii), will continue to remain valid, with the difference that the army would feel more free and less inhibited to move under the right circumstances.

3. National Uprising

a. The "Frying Pan" Option

Chances of a leftist uprising are minimal and quite extinct. Here, it is important to point out that with Bani-Sadr as President and Commander in Chief of the Iranian armed forces, and the Mojahedin having the benefit of open political activity inside the country, for a period of more than two years, neither were able to arouse 'mass support', for the promotion of their objective. It is clear, that had they been able to generate any kind of large scale public support for their positions, prior to fleeing the country, then the outcome of events could have been significantly different. Since, fleeing to exile, their joint¹²⁰ 'resort to dramatic bombings and assassinations' against senior Islamic figures, has alienated many ordinary Iranians, and decreased their popularity.

b. A Democratic Option

Such a movement, in support of a moderate, democratic option is very possible in the aftermath of Khomeini. This is because an overwhelming majority of the religious constituency¹²¹, according to all indications, are opposed to Khomeini's personal doctrine of "Velayate Faghih". Thus, while

¹²⁰It is important to mention that Bani-Sadr, was hand in hand with the Mojahedin, and the nominal head of their joint organization, while horrendous terrorist attacks were launched against key people inside the country. This is something, that Bani-Sadr cannot disassociate himself from.

¹²¹Led at the time by (the now all dead) Grand Ayatollahs, Khonsari, Shariat-Madari, Marashi-Najafi, Golpayeghani and Khoii, as well as the still living Grand Ayatollah Qomi Tabatabaai - who were all against Khomeini's interpretation of the universally accepted concept of Velayate Faghih. All of the above senior clerics, rejected Khomeini's concept of an "Islamic Government", and considered the perpetuation of such a government to be in the long term detriment of the Shiite Moslem clerical community in Iran.

their opposition will always continue to be passive in nature, there is little doubt that under the right circumstances, the majority of senior clerics in Iran will actively support any popular uprising by moderate nationalist elements - inclusive of the middle classes (i.e.. bureaucrats, technocrats and intellectuals). Their participatory role is of crucial importance to the armed forces, and will serve to strengthen their hand, by giving them the public support they need to fulfill their ultimate role in joining up, and defending the uprising of the people.

4. Continuation of the Status Quo

It is impossible for the Khomeini system, as he created it, to survive him in the long term.

NAMIR's Strategy

Based on the preceding analysis, the following options are not in conformity with NAMIR's Objectives, as stated above, and are as a result dismissed from consideration:

Options: 1a; 1b(i); 2a(ii); 3a; and 4

Thus, the only remaining options are:

Options: 1b(ii); 2a(i); and 3b

The attainment of NAMIR's objectives, based on any of the above options, will be to achieve total victory, in a fashion that involves the least amount of risk, the least amount of cost (human and material), with the least amount of disruptive effect in both regional and international calculations. Based on this thesis, NAMIR's preferred order of Options would be:

1. Political settlement, carried out quietly between NAMIR and the religious constituency, with effective international diplomatic support [Option 1b(ii)].
2. National Uprising of Iranian Nationalists, with clerical and military support, fuelled externally by diplomatic and propaganda pressures from the West on key clerical figures.
3. Military Coup, requiring in the first instance "international" diplomatic and logistical support, which would then be followed by diplomatic recognition, and media support."

In the end, it was decided that NAMIR should give serious consideration to each of the above 'Options' - i.e., preparing preliminary plans of action, simultaneously, for all of them. Such a course of action, would then allow NAMIR, the privilege of

exercising the "cheapest" option, whenever that availed itself.

Conclusion

The fact that the National Movement of the Iranian Resistance (NAMIR), as a banned opposition movement, with its leadership having no alternative but to operate from outside the country, was unable to achieve any of its main objectives, is not a full reflection of either of the movement's true potential - particularly prior to the assassination of its leader, Dr. Shapour Bakhtiar¹²², nor of its true credibility and impact on the Iranian political scene. Thus, to judge NAMIR, solely on the basis of the tangible results it was able to achieve, can be misleading, and oblivious of the complexities that surround organizations of this nature, in contemporary international politics.

In this regard, it is possible to make a useful comparison between NAMIR and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) - which is usually acknowledged as one of the world's most successful "opposition movements"- in terms of noting their actual achievements¹²³. Such a scrutiny would demonstrate that like NAMIR, the PLO's record as a liberation movement, prior to the Start of the US-Soviet sponsored peace conference in Madrid in October 1991, had been one of a conspicuously unsuccessful

¹²²In the aftermath of Bakhtiar's death in 1991, the movement as it had existed before disintegrated in to several small groupings. One these small groupings, which inherited the organization's title, is still operative, although its activities are more or less confined to the occasional (sometimes monthly) publication of NAMIR's old bi-weekly newspaper, Qyame Iran.

¹²³While, the PLO can claim to command the support of a majority of Palestinians living under Israeli rule, Dr. Bakhtiar equally claimed the support of a majority of Iranians following the successful response he received to his call for a general protest in 1985. However, in terms of international recognition, the fact that since 1974 the PLO was accepted by other Arab states as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, had perhaps more to do with the other Arab states, than with the PLO on the basis of its achievements against Israel..

movement due to the following reasons:

1. the PLO had failed to liberate a single inch of territory
2. Its energies were diverted more in inter-Arab struggles than the war against Israel
3. Ultimately, the success of the organization depended on its ability to convince public opinion in Europe, and more importantly in the U.S.¹²⁴

Nonetheless, the fact that the PLO, "was around" and the issues they were committed to addressing had continued to remain "very much alive", meant that the organization and its leadership could deploy different tactics and continue pursuing their aims, at a more conducive time. The same can also be said of NAMIR, because of the fact that so long as Bakhtiar was alive, the organization continued to pose the most serious threat to an Islamic regime that was beset by an increasing number of problems which it could not remedy. Unfortunately, the gap in stature between Dr. Bakhtiar and other members of the NAMIR Council was so great, that the organization was totally dependent on having Bakhtiar as its head. Thus, once he was no longer around, the organization could not rally around any other individual, and given its diverse nature, it soon disintegrated into small factions and became irrelevant as political opposition movement. Hence, the study of NAMIR from 1979-1991, is tantamount to the study of an organization which was a personification of its leader. Therefore, Bakhtiar's role as an individual was just as critical to the development of NAMIR during the period with which this study is concerned, as was his death to the demise and growing irrelevance of a promising organization which could not endure without him.

At the same time, it is also appropriate to mention that due to Dr. Bakhtiar's prestige and personality, something that he was able to exploit to the full during his brief period

¹²⁴ Gilmour, D., "The Creation and Evolution of the PLO" in Willetts, P., *Pressure Groups in the Global System - The Transnational Relations of Issue oriented Non-Governmental Organizations*, 1st Edition, Frances Pinter (Publishers), London 1982, p.59.

of office in Iran, NAMIR was the only liberal-democratic movement to receive financial assistance in the proportions necessary for cultivating a dedicated membership, while striving for credibility, mobilization and collective action. Yet, the movement was to display a great deal of serious flaws in both its decision making and organization, which, together, served to undermine many of its true potentials. Nevertheless, no other liberal-democratic political "opposition movement" in Iran, has received as much national and international attention as NAMIR, and what is more, no other organization has been as well equipped as NAMIR to deal with the task which it had set for itself. Thus, in line with T.R. Gurr's assertions, NAMIR was the only opposition movement of a liberal-democratic persuasion to the Islamic Republic, which apart from structural characteristics like "scope, cohesiveness, and complexity", also possessed the capacity to provide its members with "value opportunities, satisfaction, and the means for expressing protest"¹²⁵.

The ensuing chapters, which are a product of substantial research and many years of close personal contact with the activities of Dr. Bakhtiar and NAMIR, clearly demonstrate that, for a period of more than one decade, NAMIR was a significant political actor, whose presence could not have been ignored in any serious calculation concerning Iran, at both national and international levels.

Subsequent assertions by many, that by the time of his assassination in August 1991, Bakhtiar was essentially a "finished politician, planning to withdraw gracefully, in the sunset of his career"¹²⁶, while not totally without foundation, were nevertheless nothing

¹²⁵Gurr, T.R., Ibid, p.274.

¹²⁶This was a view that widely held by many Iranians, including very senior figures in NAMIR. In particular, it had been given special credence in the aftermath of Bakhtiar's second marriage and the birth of his young son, only a few years before his

more than gratuitous clichés. Indeed, the same could have been said about many notable Western personalities such as Winston Churchill, Charles De Gaulle and Richard Nixon, not to mention Ayatollah Khomeini, himself, all of whom had defied similar predictions. Indeed, in terms of Iranian politics, Bakhtiar, as a national figure, was as substantial a figure as they were¹²⁷, and even without acquiring power, Bakhtiar - much like 'Aung San Suu Kyi' or Nelson Mandela - was a political personality that could not have been ignored. Thus, his death, only months after the assassination of his close aide and colleague, Dr. Abdol-Rahman Boroomand, was a critical blow, from which NAMIR was never able to recover¹²⁸.

assassination. As a result, it was universally endorsed, in nearly all the interviews that were made with Iranian personalities of all political persuasions. As a matter of record, the writer had called the Iranian Embassy in London, as an act of protest, and had asked a member of the Embassy who was later deported from the UK, as to why the Islamic regime had perpetrated such a nefarious act. The response from the Embassy official (M. Soltani), who expressed denial that the regime had any thing to do with the murder was, "Why should anyone want to kill a harmless old man!"

¹²⁷it is worth noting that no one, only a year before the Iranian Revolution, could have predicted the fall of the late Shah, or the accession to power of Ayatollah Khomeini. Indeed, there were many leading clerics and politicians alike in Iran, who had made similar suggestions regarding Khomeini, from the time that he was first expelled from Iran.

¹²⁸The fact that NAMIR ceased to be a major political movement, once Bakhtiar was dead, was a boost for the Islamic regime, for it no longer had to contend with a political organization that was led by a prominent figure of national and international reputation. NAMIR's subsequent descent into the world of political oblivion underlines this point.

Chapter 2: Shapour Bakhtiar - Principles: Frustration of Opposition Politics: leeting Success and Continuing Struggle

Introduction

"... But I, as your Sovereign, having sworn to maintain Iran's territorial integrity and national unity, and to uphold the religion of duo-decennial Jaafari Shia'ism of our country, now hereby, repeat my oath to the people of Iran, and I solemnly vow that the mistakes, illegalities, cruelty, and corruptions of the past will not be repeated, and that these mistakes will be redeemed. I shall undertake the creation of a national government to establish fundamental freedoms, and the conducting of free elections, as soon as order has been restored, so that our national constitution, the offspring of our constitutional revolution, may fully come into its own. I, too, have heard your revolutionary message..."¹²⁹

**Extract of a radio broadcast made by
Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi
to the Iranian nation,
Teheran, 5 November 1978

In a historic statement to the Iranian people made in response to a series of mass protests that were having a crippling effect on every aspect of life in Iran, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, the late Shah of Iran, tacitly acknowledged the very reasons why his previous administrations had come to lose public support and confidence. He admitted that despite the great economic achievements of the previous quarter of a century, his failures strictly to abide by the strict provisions of the Iranian Constitution of 1906, and his refusal to allow greater political participation in the decision making process, had created a situation where, public discontent had reached a crisis level.

Whether he might have been able to maintain control by resorting to more extreme measures - an option that was readily available to him at the time - will always remain a subject of speculation. However, there is a wealth of evidence to suggest that at no time did he contemplate unleashing the armed forces against the people in order to

¹²⁹Source: Press Release dated December 1978, issued by the Imperial Iranian Embassy, London.

prolong his rule¹³⁰. This is in sharp contrast to the line adopted by his successors in the Islamic Republic who, on occasions, have been ruthless in their methods to contain public discontent¹³¹.

Furthermore, it is now evident that as soon as matters had appeared to get out of control, serious efforts were made by the late Shah to form a civilian government that would strive to regain public confidence by addressing the same critical issues to which he himself had made reference in his now famous "Apologia"¹³² of 5 November 1978 - ie. the establishment of constitutional government, the correction of certain major "mistakes, illegalities, cruelties, and corruptions", along with "respect for fundamental freedoms, and the conducting of free elections", etc.¹³³

Indeed, between November and December 1978, the main thrust of the Shah's policy had been to find a suitable candidate, with "national" credentials - ie. not associated with his own political constituency, to assume the premiership, and lead the country out of crisis, while keeping the institution of constitutional monarchy intact. To achieve this

¹³⁰Parsons, A., *The Pride and the Fall - Iran 1974-1979*, Jonathan Cape, London, 1984, p.150.

¹³¹Such as the mass protests in Mashhad in 1992 and in Gazvin in 1994.

¹³²This is the term used by many hard line supporters of the Shah, to describe his November 1978 statement, in which he had acknowledged having made certain mistakes in the past. Indeed, those normally associated with having had a "say" in the drafting of that statement - such as Empress Farah and her cousin Reza Ghotbi, the Head of the National Iranian Radio and Television, have been the subject of severe criticism, on the grounds that they had contributed to weakening the Shah's position, by allowing his vulnerabilities to become a subject of exploitation by the opposition.

¹³³Extract of a radio broadcast made by Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi to the Iranian nation, Teheran, 5 November 1978 (Source: Press Release dated December 1978, issued by the Imperial Iranian Embassy, London, p.2).

aim, the Shah had little choice but to approach a number of key "loyalist critics"¹³⁴, such as Dr. Ali Amini, whom he had kept in political wilderness since the early 1960s, or to turn alternately to former supporters of Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh in either the National Front or the Freedom Movement. However, as early as October 1978, during the course of a meeting with senior members of the Iranian Majles, the Shah had indicated a clear preference for wanting to hand the government over to the outright opposition ¹³⁵.

As a consequence of the crucial negotiations that were to follow, having failed to come to terms with more senior figures in the National Front, such as Dr. Gholam-Hossein Sadighi or Dr. Karim Sanjabi, the Shah could only obtain the consent of Dr. Shapour Bakhtiar to accept the challenge of forming a government at that critical period, and of steering the country away from the revolutionary turmoil that was disrupting every aspect of Iranian life.

While Dr. Sadighi had made his acceptance subject to the formation of a "Regency Council", with the Shah continuing to remain in Iran, a condition which was totally unacceptable to the monarch¹³⁶, Dr. Sanjabi had made his acceptance subject to the approval of Ayatollah Khomeini¹³⁷. On the other hand, Sanjabi's deputy in the National

¹³⁴From the early 1960s, a situation had arisen where being simply loyal to the Shah was not enough. Nothing short of total obedience had been acceptable by the Shah.

¹³⁵Interview with the former Deputy Speaker of the Iranian Majles, Dr. Mostafa Alamouti, London, 4 February 1995.

¹³⁶This suggestion, while practical, was nevertheless most degrading for the Shah, in that it was tantamount to stripping him of all his authorities, including those legitimately invested in him by the constitution.

¹³⁷According to Dr. Mostafa Alamouti, Sanjabi and Daryush Forouhar (another National Front leader), are known to have campaigned strongly for Dr. Sadighi not to

Front, Shapour Bakhtiar had consented to forming a reform government, on the basis that a Regency Council, performing the functions of the Shah, would come into operation only when the Shah had actually left the country on an open ended "vacation". Dr. Bakhtiar had also insisted that the Shah should not leave until both Houses of Parliament in Iran had given his government a vote of confidence¹³⁸.

So it was that at six minutes past one, on the afternoon of 16 January 1979, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, "the Shanhshah Aryamehr"¹³⁹, left the country, abandoning the fate of the Iranian nation to the hands of his relatively obscure new Prime Minister, Dr. Shapour Bakhtiar.

Bakhtiar: Heir to a Constitutionalist Tradition

The decline and the eventual overthrow of Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi in 1979, was accompanied by the rise and eventual prominence of two men, who were destined to represent the opposite poles of Iranian politics for the next decade. While Ayatollah Rouhollah Khomeini, was able to rise from relative obscurity to international fame, and even notoriety, by leading the Islamic Revolution to victory in Iran, Dr. Shapour Bakhtiar achieved his fame and popularity, by emerging from the shadows of the internal secular opposition, whose fate and frustrations he had endured during the previous 25 years.

accept the Shah's offer of forming a government, under any circumstance (Interview, London, 24 February 1995).

¹³⁸It was felt by many, including Dr. M. Alamouti (the Deputy Speaker of the Iranian Majles in 1979 - Interview, London, 24/2/95), that without the Shah in Iran, the Bakhtiar government would not receive the necessary vote of confidence.

¹³⁹Meaning the Light of the Aryans - a title bestowed on him in the late 1960s by the Iranian Majles.

His immense courage and unswerving commitment to constitutional government were the main assets which led him to accept - against all odds - the challenge of forming a new government, at a time of turmoil and civil unrest on a scale unprecedented in the history of Iran. Although his government was ultimately unable to withstand the tide of revolutionary fervor that had swept the nation for more than 37 days, it did not take long for a disappointed nation to appreciate the substance of the message he had tried to convey during his abortive tenure of office. In the 12 years prior to his untimely death at the hands of a group of assassins, Shapour Bakhtiar, much as in the previous quarter century, was to continue carrying on the struggle for freedom and justice in Iran.

Two important factors are important in describing the circumstances in which a political personality, such as Dr. Shapour Bakhtiar, was allowed to emerge as a major actor on the Iranian political scene:

1. A glance at the historical record of the development of Modern Political Thought in Iran during the 20th Century, and,
2. The Roots of Bakhtiar's Political Making, and the traditions of the political constituency represented by him.

1. A Glance at the Historical Record of the Development of Modern Political Thought in Iran During the 20th Century

The Iranian Constitution of 1906 was a modern and liberal document on the pattern of European democracies which contained the proviso that no legislation could contravene the tenets of Shiite Islam. Although in existence for more than seventy

years, the Constitution¹⁴⁰ did not fulfil its envisioned role. In fact, shortly after its proclamation, an attempt was made by the new monarch, Mohammad Ali Shah Qajar, a ruthless despot who bitterly resented the constitutional limits to his rule, to overthrow it completely¹⁴¹.

However, whatever the ideological attractiveness of the Constitutional Movement for Western liberal societies of the time, political realities and Great Power rivalries in the region were to have a serious effect on its development. It is important to note that in the historic context, the growth of this reformist movement was also impeded by the prevailing political situation at the time. This was dominated by the concern shared by the two imperial powers of the day, Britain and Russia, that Iran should not upset the delicate balance that existed between them in the Middle East, particularly at a time when they were both being threatened by a major challenge from Imperial Germany.

Thus, Britain and Russia were able, over the objections of the newly emerging Iranian nationalists, to establish through the 1907 Convention, zones of influence in the country, thereby ensuring internal stability and preventing the reformist movement from disrupting their mutual entente. In this battle against the Constitutionalists, the Imperial powers were not without domestic allies.

The history of twentieth century Iran prior to the Islamic Revolution, has two persistent features: First, the effort to establish a Constitutional Government, and second the

¹⁴⁰Thus, contrary to general perception, the constitution was, in effect, a non-secular document.

¹⁴¹As a result the Shah was deposed and sent to exile in 1908. He was replaced on the throne, by Ahmad Shah Qajar, who was himself deposed and exiled by Reza Shah I, who founded the Pahlavi dynasty in 1925.

effort to raise the nation to the plane of a modern industrialized state. A prevailing characteristic of government since 1900, including the post-revolution period, is that governance has been by the actions and initiatives of individuals and groups of individuals rather than by the enactment and the observance of laws. Such circumstances, it is clear, were distinctly unfavorable to orderly evolution of constitutional government.

Based on what has been stated above, the chronology of the events that shaped the direction of Iran's destiny prior to the downfall of Bakhtiar's government in 1979, can be set out as follows:

1. Until the end of 1906, the government of Iran was a despotism under the ruling monarchs.
2. On 30th December 1906, as a consequence of what has come to be termed the "Constitutional Revolution of Iran", constitutional government was granted to a population devoid of an experience in democratic government, and lacking any understanding of the basic concepts associated with majority rule¹⁴².
3. Although a counter-revolution led by Mohammad Ali Shah against the Constitution in 1908 was crushed resulting in the deposition of the Shah and the continued "formal" existence of the Majles and the Constitution, later monarchs "were able to regain the positions which they had previously held"¹⁴³. These events became further complicated in the aftermath of the decisions taken by Russia and Britain in 1907 to divide Iran into two separate "Zones of Influence",

¹⁴²This was despite the fact that there had been some measure of local self-government in the villages and among tribes, on the basis of the existing feudal system.

¹⁴³Halliday, F., *Iran - Dictatorship and Development*, Penguin Books, London 1979, p.22.

keeping Iran in a state of turmoil till 1914. With the advent of the First World War and following a Turkish invasion in 1914, despite Iran's declared neutrality, the country became an arena of conflict . Russian troops and local forces under Russian command occupied large areas in the North, while British forces and local forces under British command, did the same in the south of the country. After the Russian Revolution, troops under British command were also moved into Northern Iran and constituted the only significant force for the maintenance of order in the country. However, by September 1921, all foreign troops had evacuated Iran¹⁴⁴.

4. From 1921-1941, the Iranian government was under the progressively autocratic rule of Reza Shah I, who, following the deposing of Sultan Ahmad Shah Qajar, had succeeded the Iranian throne in 1925, thus establishing the new Pahlavi dynasty.

5. From 1941-1946, Iran was again occupied by foreign armies: the Russians in the north; the British and Americans in the south. The last Soviet troops were not withdrawn until May 1946¹⁴⁵.

The period since 1946, can be divided into three distinct phases:

1. The period of parliamentary rule, climaxed by the Mossadegh era, and the

¹⁴⁴"Modern Political Thought: A Historical Glance at Iran's Record in the 20th Century", Voice of Iran, Issue No. 6, February/March 1983 (This article, was inspired greatly by the writings of Professor Joseph M. Upton ("The History of Modern Iran: An Interpretation", Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1960). In his book, Upton also argues against hopes that a single individual can emerge to lead the people. He argues, that "No individual can change the character of Iran", and sees political instability arising from foreign intervention and the individualist character of Persians. As a side note, it can be said that the same - ie. foreign interventions and the individualist character of Persians, has certainly played an important part for preventing the establishment of an effective and coherent opposition movement against the Islamic Republic.

¹⁴⁵After a good deal of pressure that was placed on Stalin by President.

nationalization of the Iranian oil industry, up to his eventual overthrow in 1953.

2. The period of rising royal power under Mohammad Reza Shah, highlighted by the implementation of the "White Revolution" in 1963, and the emergence of the late Shah as the supreme policy maker.

3. The overthrow of the late Shah and the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in 1979 under Ayatollah Rouhollah Khomeini and his successors.

During this entire period, the cause of nation building in Iran has always been confronted with varying degrees of pressures exerted as a consequence of:

1. National disunity, stemming principally from ethnic and geographic diversity and social customs.

2. Foreign intervention and influence.

3. Lack of personal integrity coupled with opportunism on the part of some elites who have been keen to advance their own set of objectives and agenda, oblivious of the country's national interests¹⁴⁶.

2. The Roots of Bakhtiar's Political Making

Bakhtiar entered Iranian politics during an exceptional time in Iranian history, when as a consequence of the abdication of Reza Shah I, and the accession to the Iranian throne of a young and politically naive, Mohammed Reza Shah in 1941, a period of, more or less, true parliamentary democracy was in progress. The main political actors of this period were the elder, "elite" statesmen of the Qajar period, such as Ahmad Gavam (Gavam Saltaneh) and Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh (Mossadegh Saltaneh), who

¹⁴⁶This was particularly apparent in the years prior to the accession of Reza Shah I.

had all held senior positions prior to the accession of Reza Shah Pahlavi to the Iranian throne in 1925¹⁴⁷. Under Reza Shah's increasing autocratic rule, the notion of Constitutional rule, albeit at an elite level as championed by these men, had been put aside, and it was not until the Shah's forced removal from power, as a consequence of the Allied invasion of Iran in 1941¹⁴⁸, that the stage was once again set for the re-emergence of these political figures.

The main theme that was the cornerstone of Bakhtiar's political ideology, was the theme of "Constitutionalism", as advocated by his ideological mentor, the nationalist Iranian leader, Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh who had championed the anti-colonial struggle of the Iranian people through the nationalization of the Iranian oil industry, while at the same time leading a dedicated crusade against royal corruption and the pillage of public funds by the bureaucracy¹⁴⁹. It is ironic, that after a quarter century following the downfall of the Mossadegh government, in which Bakhtiar had served as an Under-Secretary in the Ministry of Labour, Bakhtiar's platform at the time of his accession to the premiership in 1979, was almost identical in its main themes to that of his political mentor, some 25 years before¹⁵⁰.

¹⁴⁷In fact Reza Shah had served as Minister of War in a cabinet led by Gavam, in which Mossadegh had been the Minister for Foreign Affairs in the early 1920s, prior to the dissolution of the Qajar Dynasty and its replacement by the Pahlavi Dynasty in 1925.

¹⁴⁸On the pretext that Reza Shah was harboring pro-German sentiments.

¹⁴⁹Diba, F., *Mossadegh - A Political Biography*, Croom Helm Ltd., London, 1986, p. 82.

¹⁵⁰While this was reflective of the fact that certain basic problems within Iranian society in 1978 were the same as those in 1953, the draw back, in later years, was that Bakhtiar was too complacent, about focusing on other issues that were born as a consequence of the Islamic Revolution. Thus, in his capacity as resistance fighter, there was always a situation in which Bakhtiar seemed to be fighting old battles. On one occasion in 1986, Dr. Ali Amini complained to the writer that Bakhtiar had boasted about the fact that "his position on various political issues had remained unchanged for

Therefore, like his mentor before him, Bakhtiar based his struggle for law and freedom on the upholding of the provisions of the 1906 Constitution. This Constitution, along with its 'Supplementary' provisions of 1907, constituted the basic laws of the land, and much like Mossadegh, Bakhtiar had also felt that it was the duty of every citizen - including the monarch - to uphold the application of these principles. Indeed, it was for the retention and application of this belief, that Bakhtiar dedicated the most significant part of his adult life, first in opposition to the late Shah, because of his increasing disregard for the provisions of the Constitution, and later in opposition to Ayatollah Khomeini for his absolute negation of the concept of popular sovereignty¹⁵¹.

Following the tradition set by Mossadegh, Bakhtiar was of the view that the Majles, as a center of power, had to be totally separated from any outside interference in its workings from the monarch and the royal court. His commitment to this belief, following the removal of Mossadegh from power in 1953, landed Bakhtiar in a great deal of trouble, and was the source of his imprisonment on several occasions. In fact, from 1953-1978, Bakhtiar was to spend a total of five years and eight months behind bars, and prohibited from travelling abroad for another seven years¹⁵².

Bakhtiar, the "Iran Party", and the National Front

the past 30 years". Dr. Amini had felt that this was not something to be proud of, "since matters had moved on from the previous 30 years!".

¹⁵¹Ayatollah Khomeini, by incorporating his personal doctrine of "Velayate Faghih" - which declared that all Iranians were "minors", who required the guidance of the clergy to determine what was socially, legally and politically best for them - into the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, had manipulated a situation, whereby Iranian citizens, had themselves voted in a national referendum to deprive themselves of the right of self-determination and popular sovereignty.

¹⁵²Amirshahi, M., *Yekrangji*, Farsi translation of Albin Michel's *Ma Fidelite*, Paris, 1982, p.96.

In his own autobiography, Bakhtiar states that during his days as a student he became greatly inspired by the political views of Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh, and having returned to Iran he immediately joined the liberal, democratic "Iran Party", which according to him was, later, to become the main skeleton of the "National Front"¹⁵³.

In the same autobiography, Bakhtiar admits having been received in an audience with the Young Shah, shortly after his return to Iran in 1946¹⁵⁴, who had encouraged him to help in the process of developing the country. He goes on to say that up to the late-1950s, his cousin Soraya Esfandiary, was also married to the Shah, and through her there was also great deal of encouragement for him to forge closer affiliations with the royal court¹⁵⁵. Nonetheless, it was his devotion to Mossadegh in the years prior to 1953¹⁵⁶, and his commitment to Constitutionalism, that was to keep Bakhtiar and the Shah in opposing camps. Indeed, it was not until such time that his throne was actually on the line and every other conceivable options was exhausted, that the Shah had turned to Bakhtiar, and chosen to appoint a man he had once termed as a "Natural born traitor"¹⁵⁷, as Prime Minister of Iran.

¹⁵³Ibid., p.59.

¹⁵⁴Ibid., p.34.

¹⁵⁵A matter referred to on several occasions in discussions with the writer.

¹⁵⁶The year in which the Mossadegh government was overthrown as a consequence of a military coup.

¹⁵⁷This, according to Parviz Khonsari (and many other senior figures in the Shah's regime), was a term that the Shah had used shortly after his return to Iran in 1953, in order to describe Bakhtiar. Parviz Khonsari (the writer's father), had been the acting Minister of Labour in the government of General Razmara, and had on the Prime Minister's direct order, removed Bakhtiar as Director of the Ministry of Labour's office in Abadan (for the province of Khuzistan). The Razmara government - which was a predecessor of the Mossadegh government, and as such a target of his un-assailing attacks, had felt that Bakhtiar, an ambitious politician, was agitating unrest amongst the

The Origins of the National Front And The Iran Party

The origins of the National Front can be traced to the sitting-in at the royal court on 14 October 1949, during the course of negotiations between the then Minister of Court¹⁵⁸, and a delegation of 20 leading public personalities (who were all united at the time in their support for the nationalization of the oil industry in Iran)¹⁵⁹, headed by Dr. Mossadegh. They had come to lodge a protest with the Shah, against election tampering in Teheran, during the course of the 16th (1949-1951) Majles (parliamentary) elections. Five days after the sit-in protest by Mossadegh and colleagues began on 19 October, the Shah promised to hold an enquiry into this matter. However, when Court Minister Hazhir was assassinated on 4 November, 1949, the Shah immediately consented to holding new elections for Teheran, which resulted in the election of some 7 new Deputies representing the newly created "National Front"¹⁶⁰.

labour force in the oil industry, at a difficult time when the government was trying to work out a reasonable new agreement with the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (to which Mossadegh was opposed). Bakhtiar was, thus, brought back to Teheran (and replaced by Mohammad Moshiri who was later to become a senior figure in NAMIR), and against the Prime Minister's directive that he should be sacked, he was made a Consultant to the Ministry of Labour. When asked by General Razmara, in a cabinet meeting, as to why his orders had not been fully implemented, Parviz Khonsari had responded by saying that "by not sacking him, Bakhtiar can only work against us half the time, for he is forced to spend all his working hours under my nose, where we can all keep an eye on him".

¹⁵⁸Abdol-Hossein Hazhir, who, at the time, was also responsible for the supervision of the elections.

¹⁵⁹According to Rahim Sharifi ("Darbarehe Jebheye Melli", SAHAND - A Persian Journal of Political & Cultural Studies, Vol.4 -No. 13, p.146), the delegation of leading Iranian journalists accompanying Mossadegh in the protest against unfair elections in Teheran, included the following: Dr. Hossein Fatemi (Publisher of Bakhtar Emrouz), Ahmad Maleki (Publisher of Setareh), Abbas Khalili (Publisher of Eghdam), Amidi Nouri (Publisher of Daad), Engineer Ahmad Zirakzadeh (Publisher of the "Tribune of the Iran Party", Jebheye Azadi), and Jalaledin Naini (Publisher of Keshvar).

¹⁶⁰Mossadegh, M., *Khaterat Va Taalomat Mossadegh*, Entesharate Elmi, Teheran, 1985, p.246.

Pursuant to this sit-in at the royal court, a Four point Charter announcing the creation of the National Front was announced by the protesting twenty man delegation¹⁶¹, headed by Mossadegh, which contained the following provisions:

1. The National Front is formed by its founding members and all other "nationalist" groups that believe in social justice and the retention of the Iranian Constitution.
2. The original founders will constitute the National Front's Board of Directors, and other "nationalist" groups will all select a representative, who along with local representatives whose credentials have been certified by the Board of Directors, will sit in the Front's Council.
3. The National Front aim is the establishment of a Nationalist government through free elections and free thought.
4. No single individual will be permitted to join the Front, and membership of all individuals will be subject to their membership in a group or an affiliation that has, itself, obtained recognition and membership by the National Front¹⁶².

Subsequently, the founding Members of the National Front, elected Dr. Mossadegh as their leaders, and appointed a committee to draw a constitution for the new political organization. Though a first announcement by the newly created National Front on 24

¹⁶¹ Apart from Dr. Mossadegh, the other original signatories of the National Front Charter were: Ayatollah Gharavi, Haerizadeh Yazdi, Abdol-Ghadir Azad, Hossein Maki, Dr. Ali Shayeghan. Dr. Karim Sanjabi, Mahmoud Nariman, Dr. Mozafar Baghai, Shamsedin Amir Alaii, Amidi Nouri, Engineer Ahmad Zirakzadeh, Dr. Hossein Fatemi, Dr. Reza Kaviani, Jalaledin Naini, Abbas Khalili, Ahmad Maleki, Dr. Shamsedin Jazayeri, Arsalan Khalatbari, and Yousef Moshar (Source: Sharifi, R, "Darbarehe Jebheye Melli", SAHAND - A Persian Journal of Political & Cultural Studies, Vol.4 -No. 13, p.147).

¹⁶²The emphasis on Groups as opposed to Individuals, was something that Mossadegh was very insistent upon. This issue, also became a subject of major contention between him and other Front leaders, during the years in which the Second and Third National Fronts were bring formed in the early 1960s.

October 1949, announced "Free Elections, Free Press and the Abolishment of Martial Rule¹⁶³", as the organization's main objectives, it was not until 1 July 1950, that the Constitution and the Front's Political Program - calling for free elections, implementation of the National Constitution, social justice, and economic reforms - were announced. Furthermore, a "Central Committee" was placed in charge of the management of the Front, and on Mossadegh's particular insistence, all memberships of the Front was limited to associations, trade unions, and political parties (ie. not individuals)¹⁶⁴.

It was in the aftermath of the parliamentary elections held after the creation of the National Front, that legislation for nationalizing the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company were presented to Majles¹⁶⁵, prior to its ratification on 30 May 1951.

During this entire period, the role played by Bakhtiar was essentially confined to that of being a follower of the "anti-colonial, pro-national" policies of Mossadegh¹⁶⁶, and membership of the "Iran Party", which was founded by many of Mossadegh's front line supporters in what had become the National Front. These included, personalities such

¹⁶³Which had been in place since the abortive attempt a year before to assassinate the Shah. The Tudeh Party had been blamed for that incident, and as a consequence all its activities had been declared illegal.

¹⁶⁴Rouhani, F., *Zendeghi Siasi Mossadegh Dar Matne Nehzat Melli Iran*, NAMIR, 1986, pp. 127-127.

¹⁶⁵According to Rahim Sharifi, a prominent member of the Iran Party and a close Bakhtiar aide (Interview, Paris, 23 November 1994), defections in the original ranks of the National Front, began as early as the time that the nationalization legislation was being discussed in the Majles. Amongst early defectors were the journalists Amidi Nouri (Publisher of Daade Melli), and Ahmad Maleki (publisher of the Setareh). The latter had later claimed that the National Front had been an American creation.

¹⁶⁶Morghe Toufan (A NAMIR Publication printed in 1980), p.9.

as Allahyar Saleh¹⁶⁷, Kazem Hasibi¹⁶⁸, Karim Sanjabi¹⁶⁹, and Gholam Ali Farivar¹⁷⁰. In fact, the origin of the Iran Party dates back to the period immediately after the abdication of Reza Shah I, in September 1941, when "Kanonone Mohandesin" (Engineers Association) was formed by number of foreign and domestic trained intellectuals. However, by 1943, when elections for the 14th (1941-1943) Majles were being conducted, this essentially professional association, became extremely politicized, and as a consequence, its membership was split in half. Those of a more radical persuasion joined the Tudeh Party, while a group of 15 moderates - all European trained intellectuals and technocrats - formed what came to be known as the Iran Party¹⁷¹. The Iran Party was to remain faithful to the National Front, even after the collapse of the Mossadegh government.

However, according to Homa Katouzian, a Mossadegh sympathizer, the Iran Party "was not so much a political party, as a collectivity of mainly European educated younger technocrats with European-style liberal and social democratic leanings"¹⁷². Putting the actual importance of the Iran Party, in some kind of a perspective, Katouzian further

¹⁶⁷The Mossadegh government's Ambassador to Washington, and a leading member of the "Second" National Front, elected to the 17th Majles from Kashan, at the height of election tampering in 1961.

¹⁶⁸A close Mossadegh aide, and a leading member of the "Freedom Movement", headed by Engineer Mehdi Bazargan.

¹⁶⁹A close Mossadegh supporter who later became the Leader of the National Front, and served as the first Foreign Minister of Iran, in Engineer Mehdi Bazargan's Provisional Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

¹⁷⁰A close Mossadegh supporter, who later became the Islamic Republic's first Ambassador to Switzerland.

¹⁷¹Rouhani, F., *Ibid.*, pp. 127-128.

¹⁷²Katouzian, H., *The Political Economy of Modern Iran, Despotism and Pseudo-Modernism, 1926-1979*, Macmillan, London, 1981, p.147.

states, that, "Although the Iran Party improved its membership because of its pro-Mossadegh attitude and the greater political participation of the public, it still remained numerically small"¹⁷³, and "ideologically" dependent on Mossadegh and the broad popular movement behind him, that came to be known as the National Front"¹⁷⁴.

The description given by Katouzian, best describes the milieu in which Bakhtiar, as a supporter of Mossadegh (who has been described as "never having become or been a party politician"¹⁷⁵) had felt most comfortable, in all his political years in Iran, and later up to the time of his untimely death in exile. The direct consequence of this was that for all the time spent by Bakhtiar in Iran from 1946 to 1979, he only moved around in either the elite, intellectual circle of his European trained contemporaries, or within the confines of his family clan¹⁷⁶. Bakhtiar's contact with people outside of these two scopes, despite his years of activity in the Iran Party and the National Front, was incredibly limited. This limitation first manifested itself in a major way when Bakhtiar was called upon to form a cabinet, and later when it came to choosing his close network of advisers in exile. In both instances, Bakhtiar had to rely on secondary advice and suggestions from close and trusted associates, whose advice proved most often to be less than satisfactory¹⁷⁷.

¹⁷³According to Amir Hossein Amir Parviz, himself a one time member of the Iran Party, total membership of the Party never exceeded the several hundred figure (Interview, London, 13 February 1995)

¹⁷⁴Katouzian, H., Ibid., p.170.

¹⁷⁵Ibid., p.148.

¹⁷⁶This was constituted of people from all the echelons of the Bakhtiari tribe.

¹⁷⁷This topic was a matter of particular reference between the writer and Bakhtiar during the course of six hour car journey from Los Angeles to the residence of former President Gerald Ford, in January 1984. During this trip, Bakhtiar so much as admitted that during all his years in Iran, his movements were limited to only a few destinations (he never went anywhere other than to the home of some close friends or relatives, and

Apart from the Iran Party, the National Front was originally supported by three other main political organizations: The "Hezbe Zahmatkhashan Iran" (Toilers Party); The Mujahedin Islam; and The Iranian Nations Party. By the time of the overthrow of the Mossadegh government in August 1953, the National Front had been abandoned by both the Toilers Party¹⁷⁸, and the Mojahedin Islam, led by the Ayatollah Seyed Abolghasem Kashani. The more insignificant Iranian Nations Party, an ultra-right wing, nationalist group led by Daryush Forouhar¹⁷⁹, remained loyal, though its contribution was of minor significance¹⁸⁰.

The Rise of Bakhtiar As A Key Opposition Figure And The Resurrection of the National Front

In the aftermath of the 19 August 1953 military coup, that finally removed Mossadegh's active participation in Iranian political life¹⁸¹, almost nearly all his senior colleagues in

the elite French Club, on whose Board of Directors he had served), and that at all times, his range of friends and colleagues had remained very narrow and confined (ie. rotating around people who visited him at his home, family friends, and political allies whose movements and mingling with the general population was in any case limited during the last 25 years of the late Shah's rule in Iran).

¹⁷⁸The Toiler's Party was to split into two separate factions, of which a splinter, "Titoist Group", that came to be known as "Nirouye Sevom" (Third Force), that was led by Khalil Maleki, continued to remain faithful to Mossadegh and the National Front. However, the Toilers Party itself, led by Mozafar Baghai, broke off with Mossadegh and by August 1953, were supportive of his downfall. Later, when Bakhtiar was nominated to form a government, Baghai was amongst the first, outside the traditional National Front, to condemn his nomination, and by letting it be known that he was, himself, available to form a cabinet.

¹⁷⁹That called for the restoration to Iran of the provinces forfeited in the 19th Century to Russia, and the like. However, Forouhar, himself, would later play an important role in the future activities of the National Front, as well as the provisional Islamic government of Engineer Mehdi Bazargan in 1979.

¹⁸⁰Rouhani, F., Ibid., p. 132.

¹⁸¹Following his removal from office, Mossadegh was tried and sentenced to three years solitary confinement in the prisons at the Eshratat-Abad headquarters of the 2nd Armored Battalion. In 1956, he was freed and sent to his residence outside

cabinet, as well as many in the National Front, were not only arrested and put in prison, but were also barred from any future participation in politics¹⁸². The net implication of this action that was taken at that time by the military government of General Fazlollah Zahedi, was that the path was made clear for the emergence into the political limelight of a number of "second tier personnel" from within the ranks of the National Front and its political affiliates. Amongst the prime beneficiaries of this development were figures such as Bakhtiar, and Engineer Mehdi Bazargan, who with a number of others began immediately to pursue their activities under the guise of a hastily arranged, clandestine organization, under the main auspices of a leading Mossadegh supporter within the ranks of the clerics, Ayatollah Reza Zanjani, which went by the name of "Moghavemate Melli" meaning "The National Resistance Movement"¹⁸³. Within a pre-SAVAK Iran, this new movement was able to organize occasional demonstrations (at the trial of Mossadegh and against the negotiations with the international oil companies, etc.)¹⁸⁴. More importantly, they organized a demonstration against the restoration of diplomatic ties between Iran and the UK on 7 December 1953 (as well as the visit to Teheran of Vice-President Nixon, which took place two days later on December 1953), in which three students were shot dead. The annual marking of this event, was to become a ritual and a symbol of anti-Shah protests up to the time of the

Teheran, where he was effectively restricted from any public communication (Diba, F., "Mossadegh - A Political Biography", Croom Helm Ltd., London, 1986, p.192). However, it is important to point out that the 1953 coup, did not spell an end to Mossadegh's involvement in Iranian political life. Up to the time of his death in 1967, Mossadegh continued to be influential in the affairs of all his supporters, and did continue to have, mainly through written communications, great input in the affairs of the National Front.

¹⁸²Diba, F., Ibid., p.190.

¹⁸³Interview, Sadegh Amir Hosseini (An influential colleague and Supporter of Mehdi Bazargan in the Liberation Movement), London, 24 January 1995.

¹⁸⁴Zonis, M., *The Political Elite of Iran*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1971, p.70.

revolution in 1978¹⁸⁵.

According to Bakhtiar, himself¹⁸⁶, he was approached as early as 2-3 weeks after the arrest of Mossadegh, and urged to continue the new struggle for the restoration of democracy and Constitutionalism, by forming new underground cells of resistance and producing a series of newsletters¹⁸⁷. At the same time, Bakhtiar was also made a candidate by the Iran Party¹⁸⁸ to contest a seat in the Majles, which was being elected to ratify the new oil consortium agreement signed with the major companies by the incoming Zahedi Administration.

However, several weeks prior to polling, Bakhtiar was arrested on trumped up charges of having violated the security of the state, having collaborated with the Tudeh Party, and written an article in which he had insulted the sovereign¹⁸⁹. Thus, under "section 5 of the Rules of Martial Law", he was sentenced to three years of imprisonment. Later, his sentence was commuted, and he was released after two years in prison¹⁹⁰.

¹⁸⁵Interview, A. Esna Ashari, London, 17 February 1995.

¹⁸⁶Amirshahi, Ibid., pp. 94-96.

¹⁸⁷Entitled, "Rahe Mossadegh" (meaning Mossadegh's way) and "Moghavemate Melli" (meaning national resistance).

¹⁸⁸It is important to mention that the Iran Party was not banned as a political movement in the immediate aftermath of the Mossadegh, mainly due to a tactical ploy it employed by publicly endorsing the anti-communist "Eisenhower Doctrine". As such, it was allowed to field candidates for the Majles elections (Interview: A. H. Amir Parviz, London, 13 February 1995).

¹⁸⁹ According to Bakhtiar, (Amirshahi, Ibid., p.96.), the unpublished article, which had said that the Shah should "reign and not rule", was found during the course of a search that was made of his home. During this time, Bakhtiar was also falsely accused of having had intimate collaboration with the banned Tudeh Party.

¹⁹⁰Amirshahi, Ibid., p.96.

By the time Bakhtiar was released from prison, the infamous "Sazemane Ettelaat Va Aminyate Kheshvar", more commonly known as "SAVAK", had already been established¹⁹¹, and with it, the entire "milieu" of political activity in Iran had undergone a fundamental change. Consequently, it was not until such time that the Shah was experiencing trouble abroad - particularly in Washington - that the climate was, once again, conducive for the National Front and other former supporters of Mossadegh to resurface. This opportunity presented itself, when President John F. Kennedy, took office in January 1961, and it was hastened by the appointment of the reform seeking, Dr. Ali Amini, as Prime Minister, later in that same year (May 1961).

Previously, in August 1960, the Second National Front, had been reconvened following an invitation that was issued by Dr. Gholam-Hossein Sadighi, in which Bakhtiar (along with personalities such as Allahyar Saleh, Karim Sanjabi, Abdol-Hossein Khalili and Mohammad Ali Keshavarz Sadr) had been elected to its Executive Committee¹⁹².

The Council of Second National Front was composed of a series of dignataries with no party affiliations, and a number of senior members representing the Iran Party, the Freedom Movement, and a breakaway faction of Khalil Maleki's "Nirouye Sevom", that had come to be known as the "Jame-e Socialist-ha"¹⁹³. The Second National Front, was beset with internal strife from the time of its inception. Not only was Khalil Maleki and

¹⁹¹ It was ironical that the new organization should have been headed by Bakhtiar's own cousin and contemporary, General Teimur Bakhtiar. Indeed, in his own autobiography, Bakhtiar mentions that one of his proudest achievements as Prime Minister, was to abolish an infamous institution that had been established by another member of his family (Amirshahi, M., Ibid., p.98.).

¹⁹² Sharifi, R, "Darbarehe Jebheye Melli", SAHAND - A Persian Journal of Political & Cultural Studies, Vol.4 -No. 13, p.154).

¹⁹³ Meaning the "Socialist League".

his organization's membership rejected by the new Council, in defiance of Maleki's years of devotion, loyalty and support for Mossadegh¹⁹⁴, but it also marked the last time that Engineer Mehdi Bazargan and his close associate, Yadollah Sahabi (who six months later founded the "Freedom Movement")¹⁹⁵, were to participate as active members of the Front¹⁹⁶. According to the opinion of Homa Katouzian¹⁹⁷, "the Front eventually became dominated by Dr. Mohammad Ali Khunji - a prominent intellectual who had been a very close associate of Khalil Maleki..., and Dr. Shapour Bakhtiar, a strong-willed lesser light of the Mossadegh era. In effect, Khunji became the theoretical strategist, and Bakhtiar the practical operator of the 'line' which finally led the Front, and the Iranian people who gave them loyal support, straight into a complete political catastrophe, although this should not mean that the others - and, especially, the

¹⁹⁴According to Katouzian (*The Political Economy of Modern Iran, Despotism and Pseudo-Modernism, 1926-1979*, p. 218), fears of Maleki's "superior analytical powers and organizational abilities", coupled with "the illusion on the part of some Front leaders - most notably Bakhtiar - that any direct association with Maleki would lose them the 'Tudeh Party Vote' during the next election", were critically important in the decision to keep Maleki out of the National Front.

¹⁹⁵Founded in 1960, the Liberation Movement of Iran declared its objectives in the following terms: "We are Moslems, Iranians, Constitutionalists, and Moassadeghists: Moslems because we refuse to divorce our principles from our politics; Iranians because we respect our national heritage; Constitutionalists because we demand freedom of thought, expression and association; Mossadeghists because we want national independence". (Source: Abrahamian, E., *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1982, p.450.)

¹⁹⁶According to Rahim Sharifi (SAHAND article), differences of view regarding tactics against the Shah, resulted in the publication of an article by the Freedom Movement, in which an acrimonious attack was made at the Front and its leadership. The recriminations were such that a split between the two organizations became inevitable. From that time onwards, the Freedom Movement never again acted in unison with the National Front, and instead chose to promote its objectives independently.

¹⁹⁷Katouzian's book contains a great deal of comments that relate more to the author's likes and dislikes. These "unacademic" comments, sometimes, needlessly, devalue an otherwise well researched piece of work.

prominent leaders can be absolved of their own responsibilities"¹⁹⁸.

Nonetheless, major opportunities did arise, whose timely exploitation by the National Front leadership, essentially camouflaged the state of inner turmoil that was being experienced as a result of their various internal disputes. The most prominent of these was in February 1961, when with Bakhtiar in charge of the Front's Youth Organization, 5000 students were induced to stage a very impressive sit in at Teheran University in protest against unfair practices in the second round of elections to the 20th Majles¹⁹⁹. However, some Front sympathizers have questioned Bakhtiar's judgement in calling off this important protest after only "a single night"²⁰⁰. This challenge to Bakhtiar's credibility, reflective of the type of inter-organizational tensions that had existed at the time, were explicitly rejected in an official NAMIR pamphlet distributed in 1980. In a long essay written by an unnamed Iran Party colleague, the blame for the decision to call off the sit-in at Teheran University was fully placed on all the other members of National Front's Executive Committee. The article said that while Bakhtiar was, in fact, the only member to have opposed that decision, he had, nonetheless, yielded to a majority decision, and having been in charge of the Front's Youth Movement, it was up to him to inform the students of the final decision. The same essay, also criticizes other Front leaders, for not having had the moral courage to set the record straight at a later date²⁰¹.

¹⁹⁸Katouzian, H., *Ibid.*, pp. 216-217.

¹⁹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 214.

²⁰⁰*Ibid.* Dr. Mozafar Baghai, later accused him of having acted on the orders of his cousin, General Teimur Bakhtiar, who was at the time the Head of SAVAK, with much higher aspirations (Alamouti, M., "Iran Dar Asre Pahlavi", Vol. XIV, ("Akharin Rouzehaye Zendegehi Shahe-Shahan Va Sarneveshte Akharin Nakhost Vazir Shah"). Paka Print, London, (November)1992, p. 17).

²⁰¹Morghe Toufan, NAMIR, 1980, p. 12.

In summary, despite all the internal problems, it can be said that mounting internal problems in Iran, coupled with the inability of the government to deal effectively with them, had provided the Second National Front with an opportunity to begin reasserting itself in Iranian political life. According to Homa Katouzian, the emerging climate of internal liberalization that had been prompted as a result of a growing economic crisis and the public humiliation of an earlier aborted election for the 20th Majles, had even created the possibility of the Shah turning to the National Front for the creation of a reform oriented government²⁰². Although, the Shah eventually opted for the appointment of Dr. Ali Amini - mostly as a move to appease his critics in the new American administration - it was, nevertheless, an undeniable reality that the newly reconstituted National Front, had, once again, been able to resurrect itself so as to pose a serious challenge to the Shah, who had managed, in the course of the previous seven years, to set the stage for transforming a "Conservative Plutocracy into a personal dictatorship"²⁰³.

The stage was thus set for the convening of the First "Congress" of the National Front in December 1962, and the election of the Council of what came to be known as the "Third National Front". This time, all the previous internal bickering - to the delight of the authorities - was compounded by a personal message of Mossadegh to the Congress, stressing the need to avoid naming individuals, devoid of organizational representation to the Front's Council (i.e., constant emphasis on developing the role of groups and organizations, as opposed to promoting personalities who are devoid of

²⁰²Katouzian, H., Ibid., p. 213.

²⁰³Ibid., p.193.

any organized following)²⁰⁴. This message proved to be most damaging, since of the 33 members elected to what was to become the Third National Front's Council, 19 were individuals devoid of any party affiliation²⁰⁵. Of those with party affiliations, ten members, including Bakhtiar, were members of the Iran Party, while the other three spots were occupied by Daryush Forouhar of the Iranian Nations Party, Engineer Noushin of the "People's Party", and Engineer Mehdi Bazargan of the Freedom Movement, whose membership was eventually rejected following an impassioned criticism of his Movement's "radical wing", by Dr. Gholam Hossein Sadighi²⁰⁶.

Responding to Major Issues: Bakhtiar And the National Front (1961-1963)

The period 1961-1963 was a critical period in the modern political history of Iran, given that the eventual outcome of certain major events, would lead to a consolidation of royal power, resulting, perhaps, to the advent of Ayatollah Khomeini and the victory of the Islamic Revolution in 1979. There is no question that the National Front did have a role to play in all of these events, and there is little doubt that the Front failed in all its assessments of the various challenges that were placed before it during those critical years. A case can also be made, that following its failure to prescribe a suitable

²⁰⁴Sharifi, R, "Darbarehe Jebheye Melli", SAHAND - A Persian Journal of Political & Cultural Studies, Vol.4 -No. 13, p.158. Sharifi goes into great detail about Mossadegh's opposition to individual membership of the Front, and the wrangling that had gone on between him and the Front's leadership. He states that Mossadegh's disagreement over these constitutional issues was a significant factor that contributed to the overall failure of the Second and Third National Front.

²⁰⁵Prominent among these figures were: Ayatollah Mohammad Taleghani, Gholam Reza Takhti (an Olympic Gold medalist in Wrestling), and Fereidoon Mahdavi, who later became the Shah's Minister of Commerce, and Deputy Leader of the Rastakhiz Party in the 1970s (Ibid.).

²⁰⁶According to Rahim Sharifi (SAHAND article, p.156), Dr. Sadighi, himself, later resigned from the National Front in 1963.

course of action to the various political challenges of the early 1960s, the National Front's withdrawal from front line politics for an extended period, was crucial in creating a political vacuum that was to be exploited by various Islamic groupings. Hence, by the time that the Iranian Revolution was well underway, it was the Islamic tendencies, and not the National Front, that were able to exploit the various possibilities that availed themselves, as the Shah's regime began the count down of its own disintegration.

Some of the most critical challenges confronting the National Front, in whose Executive Committee, Bakhtiar had become a powerful voice in this period were the following:

1. Their posturing vis-a-vis the reform government of Dr. Ali Amini (1961-1962).
2. Their disposition towards issues that were subsequently incorporated in the Shah's "White Revolution" (1962-1963).
3. Their disposition towards positions adopted by Ayatollah Khomeini (1963).

The subsequent positions that were adopted by the National Front, on each of the items cited above, were to have serious implications on the future disposition of the Front, as well as a direct bearing on the political agenda of the Bakhtiar government that was later formed, as a last line of defense, to halt the tide of the powerful revolution that was to sweep the country.

1. The National Front And the Government of Dr. Ali Amini

The appointment of Dr. Amini as Prime Minister, in May 1961, was a welcome opportunity for Bakhtiar and the leadership of the National Front, to promote many of their own stated goals and objectives. Amini was known to favor limitations on the power of throne, and was reputed to be devoted to general civil liberties²⁰⁷.

²⁰⁷Zonis, M., Ibid., pp.49-50.

Furthermore, Amini himself was prepared to grant important concessions to the National Front, in order to promote his own agenda of reforms: these included the curtailment of royal power and interference in the affairs of the government²⁰⁸. Indeed, for the first time since 1953, Mossadegh's picture was allowed, with Amini's personal blessings, to appear in print on 7 May 1961²⁰⁹. In another sign of goodwill, Amini, who had himself served in the first Mossadegh government, allowed the National Front, for the first time since 1953, to stage an open-air meeting, which attracted an estimated 100,000 people. The first three speakers were Dr. Karim Sanjabi, Dr. Gholam-Hossein Sadighi, and Dr. Shapour Bakhtiar, though the latter's attack on the record of the various governments since the downfall of Mossadegh, was undoubtedly, the most blistering²¹⁰. At the same time, while Amini had allowed for all press restrictions on the National Front to be lifted, there were certain guidelines which he had insisted upon. For example, during the course of the open-air meeting in the "Jalalieh Stadium", each speaker was permitted to mention the name of Mossadegh only once during the course of his entire speech²¹¹.

Despite, these gestures of tolerance, the Front began turning its guns directly against Amini's government²¹², whose primary concern at the time was the land reform program

²⁰⁸According to Katouzian, Amini was even prepared to offer some cabinet seats to the National Front.

²⁰⁹Bill, J. A., *The Eagle And The Lion - The Tragedy of American-Iranian Relations*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1988, p.142.

²¹⁰Payame Iran, No. 410, 17 November 1991(Special Bakhtiar Remembrance Issue).

²¹¹Diba, F., *Ibid.*, p.193.

²¹²Many observers including Dr. M. Alamouti and A.H. Amir Parviz (Interview, 24/2/95), believe that Bakhtiar, was perhaps, Amini's sharpest critic in the National Front. Many of those opposed to Bakhtiar, such as Mozafar Baghai, attribute this to his collusion with his cousin, General Teimur Bakhtiar, who was, at the time, suspected of

that it was trying to implement. Pressing their opposition, the Front's insisted that the article of the Iranian Constitution which provides that new elections must follow shortly after a Majles has been dissolved must be enforced²¹³, and made plans to hold a massive demonstration in Teheran on 21 July²¹⁴. In the end, their opposition to the Amini government, based on the miscalculation that they would be in line for forming a successor government, left Amini with little option but to act on the eve of their planned demonstration, by arresting and imprisoning 15 members of the National Front's Council for a period of seven and half months²¹⁵.

During this entire period, Bakhtiar was a part of a leadership that was plagued by disorganization and political naivete. In terms of a policy program, other than its call for free elections, a neutral foreign policy and "Melli" (ie. democratic-nationalist) government, the Front had failed to come up with anything more specific. This emphasis, on generalities, was a main feature of the political culture with which Bakhtiar was to become accustomed in his opposition to the Shah. Unfortunately, this

wanting to mount a coup against both Amini and the Shah.

²¹³Less than a week after becoming Prime Minister, Amini had obtained the Shah's approval to dissolve the Majles.

²¹⁴Wilber, D. A., *Iran - Past and Present*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, Eighth Edition, 1976, pp.154-155.

²¹⁵Sharifi, R, "Darbarehe Jebheye Melli", SAHAND - A Persian Journal of Political & Cultural Studies, Vol.4 -No. 13, p.156. In a number of discussions with the writer during the course of a trip to the US in 1984, Bakhtiar spoke affectionately about his relationship with his cousin Teimur. During the course of his stay in Los Angeles, he had Teimur's son come and spend a great deal of time with him, and in 1985, he personally attended his wedding in Geneva. During the course of a particular conversation, Bakhtiar vehemently denied a comment made by General Mohsen Mobasser (Teimur's Chief of Staff, during his period as military governor of Teheran in the early 1950s) that Teimur randomly resorted to extortion in order to mass a personal fortune for himself. Although it cannot be substantiated, many believe that there might have been close collusion between Bakhtiar and his cousin Teimur, particularly during the Amini administration.

was a sad relic, that was to last with him in all his days when he was in opposition to the Islamic Republic as well²¹⁶.

2. The National Front And the Shah's White Revolution

Having himself manipulated the fall of the Amini government in July 1962²¹⁷, the Shah had set the stage for his own emergence as the uncontested political master of Iran. Having appointed a trusted and loyal servant of the crown, Assadollah Alam, as Prime Minister, and having secured American support for himself, the Shah needed better ties with Moscow, and a comprehensive and progressive socio-economic and political program at home, to ensure stability and continuity for his rule.

Soon, he was able to begin the process of normalizing relations with Moscow²¹⁸, and by January 1963, he was able to put his reform package that was commonly referred to as the "Program of the Revolution of the Shah and the People" (or "White Revolution"), to a plebiscite, in which it was overwhelmingly approved. This program contained "Six Points of Principle"²¹⁹, which were by any standard, progressive

²¹⁶The fact that Amini had ordered the arrest and imprisonment of Bakhtiar, was an experience that was never forgotten by Bakhtiar, and during the course of various discussions with Amini in the 1980s, it was something that Bakhtiar jokingly alluded to on numerous occasions to many intermediaries, including the writer. However, this matter did not affect Bakhtiar's relations with Amini during their various negotiations in the early 1980s.

²¹⁷Benefiting indirectly from the actions of the National Front.

²¹⁸This meant that Moscow put a stop to damaging propaganda and other agitations, and above all, it curtailed and limited the activities of the Tudeh Party inside Iran.

²¹⁹The six points were the following: Land Reform; nationalization of forests; electoral reform - including the granting to women of the right to vote and to be elected to Majles; denationalization of state monopolies to finance land reform; company profit sharing for industrial workers; and the creation of a 'literacy corps' as part of the 'campaign against illiteracy in rural areas.

measures for the time. Therefore, the passage and adoption of the Shah's 'White Revolution' Agenda, resulted in the disarming of most of his secular political critics, including the National Front, and paved the way for a major confrontation with the traditionalist conservative clerical tendencies of the day, that were led by an emerging Ayatollah Khomeini.

However, in an attempt to secure the cooperation of the National Front leadership, prior to the announcement of the Shah's new political agenda, Prime Minister Alam paid a visit to Allahyar Saleh, and to the astonishment of many observers, told Saleh that the Shah was interested in incorporating the views of the National Front for the administration of the country. Alam was even prepared to assign cabinet seats to Front nominees and to assure the election of their representatives to the next Majles²²⁰. After several further meeting and an invitation from the prime minister to meet directly with the Shah, the Front refused to be co-opted by the Shah, and issued a three point plan that once again re-iterated its solemn belief that the Shah should "reign" and not "rule" , and that the center power of power should pass to a freely elected Majles²²¹.

Having broken all negotiations with the government, a confrontation point was once again reached when in January 1963, faced with growing publicity for the referendum to determine the future of the Shah's "White Revolution" proposals, the Front held another National Congress, which, for tactical reasons, ultimately urged the people of Iran to boycott the January 26 referendum.

At a substantive level, the National Front's response to the provisions of the Shah's

²²⁰Zonis, M., Ibid., p.74.

²²¹Ibid.

White Revolution was both vague and inadequate. This was mainly due to the fact that the Front could not bring itself to adopt a unified course of action in response to the Shah. Thus, there was a tendency on the part of some to publicly criticize the Shah - as was done by Khomeini on 4 June 1963 - while others did not consider such a course of action to be 'tactically wise' or in line with the ultimate interests of the organization. There was also another faction that was convinced that the Shah 'had stolen' his platform from views and opinions expressed previously by the Front²²², and were of the view that while the Front should give its affirmation to the content of what was being offered, it should emphasize that the corrupt and repressive government of the day was incapable of carrying them out.

Finally, a statement was issued attacking the Shah, but failing to come up with a convincing assessment or criticism of his program. The statement concluded, "We must say NO to the arbitrary rule of the Shah, his interference in the affairs of the state, the rule of terror and SAVAK atrocities, colonial domination of the country, police violations and gendarmerie oppression and the overlordship of government officials in towns and villages"²²³. This rejection of previous overtures made to the National Front which followed the sacking of the head of SAVAK, General Teimur Bakhtiar, was more than the Shah's tolerance could take, and led to the rounding up of all the National Front leadership²²⁴.

²²²The National Front's internal discussions about such issues as land reform or the right of women to vote was never communicated to the Iranian people. On the subject of land reform, by the time of the announcement of the White Revolution, there was not a single view that was shared by all members of the Front's Council.

²²³Zonis, M., *Ibid.*, p.74.

²²⁴Laing, M., *The Shah*, Sidgwick & Jackson, London, 1977, p.171. Once the National Front leaders had been arrested, the Shah went to Qom on 24 January 1963, the hub of the religiously inspired opposition to his rule, and distributed land reform deeds in the face of the hostility of the ulema. He blasted his opponents, and branded

Thus, the Front's moralistically clumsy, and wholly inadequate, response to the most important political challenge of the day, had played straight into the hands of the Shah, and served only to strengthen his position, while at the same time, highlighting the existing incompetence within the ranks of his most legitimate opposition²²⁵ .

3. The National Front And the Religious Opponents of the White Revolution

The most vocal opposition to the 'White Revolution' came from the clerical constituency, mainly as a result of the provisions calling for land redistribution in rural areas, and for granting of voting privileges to women. With respect to the latter, there were many statements by religious leaders, including Khomeini, that equal rights for women were a violation of the Shari'a²²⁶. It is important to note that the disputes of 1963 had come about following the vocal clerical protests regarding the passage of a 'local election bill', that had sparked open disturbances in October 1962. In that instance, confronted with massive and unexpected protest against the local election bill, the government had been forced to back down and annul the legislation²²⁷, but in 1963, the Shah's resolve and the intention of the government to implement the provisions of the "White Revolution", was not in any way amenable to compromise. Given that the clergy interpreted the referendum as a rejection of its demand for greater influence in the government and as a further attempt to curb on its social influence and political role, a major confrontation with the government had become unavoidable.

them "100 times more treacherous than Tudeh".

²²⁵Sharifi, R, "Darbarehe Jebheye Melli", SAHAND - A Persian Journal of Political & Cultural Studies, Vol.4 -No. 13, p.174.

²²⁶Keddie, N.R., *Religion And Politics in Iran*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1983, p. 66 (article by Azar Tabari).

²²⁷Ibid., p.68.

The clergy next made a call for the boycotting of the referendum (like the National Front), but Ayatollah Khomeini went much further, by calling the referendum "Unconstitutional", and stating that it was held under an atmosphere of intimidation, repression, and fear, while at the same time underlining that "People do not understand the full implication of their vote"²²⁸.

Continuing agitation from the clerical constituency led by Khomeini, in face of the government's strict refusal to make any concessions, ultimately resulted in repeated clashes between the army and the religious students, culminating in Khomeini's famous public denunciation of the Shah in his 'Ashura' speech of 3 June 1963. His subsequent arrest sparked large scale riots and demonstrations, that were decisively crushed by the army. During the course of the protests in Teheran, a significant development was that, apart from the followers of Ayatollah Khomeini who had come out in great numbers into the streets²²⁹, while the Bazaar was shut down in protest, students from Teheran University had also joined the ranks of the protestors. These students were led by the Student Committee of the National Front - initially organized by Bakhtiar - which was by then, the only remaining active wing of the disintegrating National Front²³⁰. While,

²²⁸Ibid., p.69.

²²⁹Led and organized by Tayyeb Haj Rezaii, a powerful figure in south Teheran's Fruit and Vegetable Market, who in 1953 had been very active in support of the Shah. Tayyeb was later arrested, tried and executed for his role in the "15 Khordad" uprising. Later, he was proclaimed by Ayatollah Khomeini to be the "First Martyr" of the Islamic Revolution. Tayyeb's eldest son, who was arrested and imprisoned along with him in 1963, later revealed many details regarding this matter to the writer, although, he always maintained that it was never his father's intention to be disloyal to the Shah.

²³⁰According to A. Esna Ashari (a National front activist and trusted Bakhtiar subordinate, Interview, London, 17 February 1995), at the time of the 15 Khordad Demonstrations, all the Front leadership was in jail, and the students that acted in conjunction with the clerics, were former Front students, who were more sympathetic to the Freedom Movement, whose membership of the Front had earlier been turned down.

they did not support the clerics in their opposition to women suffrage, they did participate in the demonstrations, promoting their own slogan of: "Reform, Yes! Dictatorship, No!". Sadly, the lack of any meaningful presence by the Front at the time, provided an opportunity for their student supporters to look in the direction of religion as a more practical symbol of opposition to the Shah. What this meant, was that with socialism and secular nationalism in total disarray, only an unscathed and widely respected Islam was proving itself more capable of challenging a system that was coming to rely on the incompetence of its secular opponents, as a main ingredient for its own survival.

With the rebellion crushed, and more than 250 persons arrested, including other National Front supporters, members of the Tudeh Party's Revolutionary Committee, and religious leaders throughout Iran, it was decided, in January 1964, to put the detainees before a military tribunal. But, in the end of all the detainees, only the leaders and founders of the Freedom Movement were actually prosecuted²³¹. Other Front leaders, having already served a year, were then released.

The Fourth National Front

From 1964-1977, the National Front slide into a period of deep hibernation, with all activities, barring some statements from certain prominent Front individuals, coming to a full halt²³². One reason for this inactivity was due to the fact that in the aftermath of the "15 Khordad" incident, the government no longer tolerated any trace of dissent,

²³¹Engineer Mehdi Bazargan and Ayatollah Mahmoud Taleghani were both sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment.

²³²eg. Condemnation of the legislation introduced by the Mansour government in 1964, giving American technical advisers immunity from trial by Iranian courts.

having arrested and imprisoned all its potential opposition. By its action in this regard, the government had essentially blocked every open channel that had hitherto existed for the expression of dissent against state policies. The natural outcome of this was the decision on the part of many militant supporters of the National Front to continue the struggle by going 'underground'. However, this was not a decision that was welcomed by all the traditional elements in the Front, who saw their constitutional rights being compromised by an increasingly dictatorial regime. But, at the same time, they considered 'going underground' or bearing arms, also to be contrary to the spirit of the very constitution, whose principles they were espousing to champion. As a result, they chose the more mundane option of remaining inactive, but true to their own principles, until such time that it was once again possible for them resurface again²³³. This decision on the part of the main stream leaders of the National Front, such as Sanjabi and Bakhtiar, was not universally welcomed and led to the emergence of major divisions within the organization, which ultimately led to the formation of a number of splinter groups, such as the "Fadayan-e Khalq" and the "Mojahedin Khalq" organizations, who were dedicated to the violent overthrow of the regime²³⁴.

It was not until the election of Jimmy Carter to the Presidency of the United States, and his call for the injection of human rights as a main foreign policy criteria, that the rigid political atmosphere in Iran was, once again, relaxed, and the Shah, "encouraged" into taking a new initiative by announcing the creation of "Fazaye Baze Siyasi" (open

²³³Interview with A. Esna Ashari, London, 17 February 1995.

²³⁴Bakhash, S., *The Reign of the Ayatollahs - Iran and the Islamic Revolution*, Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, New York, 1984, p.11. It was during this time that the "Liberation Movement" also began increasing its activities abroad, by forming Islamic Student Organizations and printing a number of anti-Shah newsletters. Later the writings of Ali Shariati, a leading Liberation Movement intellectual, also played a crucial role in using religion as a vehicle for promoting change.

political atmosphere). According to Gary Sick, "the election of Jimmy Carter came as a blow to the Shah of Iran...Carter had adopted as two principal campaign themes the issue of human rights and reduction of U.S. arms sales, each of which could be regarded as critical of existing relations with Iran"²³⁵. By this time, inflation and other growing economic pressures that had arisen as a result of an over heated economy, coupled with the Shah's decision in 1975 to abolish the, albeit obedient, multi-party political system, had created an atmosphere of discontent, which, assisted by Carter's stated concern for human rights, emboldened the political opposition to resurface once again²³⁶.

Bakhtiar And The Fourth National Front

In June 1977, in compliance with the wishes of their now deceased founder, Mossadegh²³⁷, the National Front was once again revived, and its very first session was conducted on 12 June 1977, in the residence of Dr. Shapour Bakhtiar²³⁸. The new National Front, kicked off its new political campaign with a daring open letter, addressed to the Shah and signed by Karim Sanjabi, Shapour Bakhtiar, and Daryoush Forouhar. In this letter(dated 22 June 1977) which pointedly avoided the use of the

²³⁵Sick, G., *All Fall Down: America's Tragic Encounter With Iran*, Random House, New York, 1985, p.22.

²³⁶Amongst the main political groups that exploited this emerging situation were: the National Front, led by Dr. Karim Sanjabi; the Freedom Movement, led by Engineer Mehdi Bazargan; the Radical Movement, led by Rahmatollah Moghdam-Maraghei; Junbish, led by Ali Asghar Haj-Seyed Javadi; the Iranian Group for the Protection of Human Rights, led by Bazargan, Sanjabi, and others; and the Society of Iranian Lawyers, led by Hedayatollah Matin-Daftary and Hassan Nazih.

²³⁷calling for the National Front to be an association of organizations, and not individuals - something which had been ignored by both the Second and Third National Fronts.

²³⁸Sharifi, R, "Darbarehe Jebheye Melli", SAHAND - A Persian Journal of Political & Cultural Studies, Vol.4 -No. 13, p.163.

Shah's "imperial Calendar"²³⁹, the Shah was forewarned of an explosive situation that was fast developing in the country as a result of his arbitrary rule, and was urged to relinquish dictatorship by accepting the limits imposed on him by the Iranian Constitution²⁴⁰. He was also urged to abolish the single Party system, by granting immediate freedom of expression, while at the same time respecting the human rights of all Iranians, irrespective of their political leanings, releasing all political prisoners as well as allowing all political exiles to return to the country. According to Bakhtiar, himself, copies of this letter were hand delivered to the Shah Personal Office ("Daftar-e Makhsous-e Shahanshahi) and to the SAVAK headquarters in central Teheran²⁴¹.

For the next several months, the Front held weekly meetings, also publishing a weekly newsletter for its sympathizer. By early 1978, when the political atmosphere had become fully charged up, the Front's leader, Karim Sanjabi following a meeting with Allahyar Saleh, recalled a number of former colleagues to the ranks of a new Council, that came to be known as the Fourth National Front. Once again the 31 man Council, contrary to what had originally been explicitly demanded by Mossadegh, was composed of 18 personalities devoid of any official political affiliations. Of the remaining 13 members, 12 were members of the Iran Party²⁴², and the other was the leader of the

²³⁹The imposition of the 'Imperial Calendar' was a highly provocative act instituted by the Shah which changed the Islamic character of the Iranian calendar, and based it, instead on the history of monarchy in Iran, which went back to some 2500 years. This act provoked a great deal of hostility in religious quarters, and its revocation, as a first act of the Sharif-Emami government in the Summer of 1978, was seen as the first major sign of retreat by the Shah.

²⁴⁰Sharifi, R., Ibid., pp. 163-166.

²⁴¹Private discussions with the writer.

²⁴²Whose Secretary General was Shapour Bakhtiar.

Iranian Nations Party²⁴³.

The next major development that was to have a devastating effect on the status of the National Front took place in the Autumn of 1978, when in the midst of all the disturbances that was taking place on the home front, Dr. Karim Sanjabi - without the explicit authorization of either the National Front Council or its Executive Committee, was lured into a signing a Three Point statement, on 5 November 1978, which expressed overt opposition to a continuing monarchy. To the surprise of many Front leaders, Dr. Sanjabi who was to represent the National Front in an international Conference of the Socialist League in Canada, had unexpectedly turned up in Paris, where after a meeting with Khomeini in his place of residence at Neuphe-le-Chateau, the following text was released²⁴⁴:

"In the Name of God, Sunday, 5 November 1978

1. The current monarchy in Iran with its history of disregard for the provisions of the constitution, and its constant imposition of injustice in an atmosphere of repression and corruption and submission to foreign political intrigues is devoid of any legal or moral legitimacy.
2. The Islamic Movement of Iran will never consent to the retention of the current monarchy under any set of circumstances.
3. The form of a national government in Iran, based on Islamic and democratic values must be freely decided upon by a national vote.

Dr. Karim Sanjabi"²⁴⁵

²⁴³Included in the new Council were figures such as Abdol-Rahman Boroomand, Rahim Sharifi, and Mehrdad Arfa-Zadeh, who were all destined to join NAMIR at a later stage. At Bakhtiar's insistence, Admiral Ahmad Madani was also included in the new membership.

²⁴⁴Translated into English by the writer.

²⁴⁵NAMIR, *37 Rooz Pas Az 37 Saal: Chand Goftegoo ba Dr. Shapour Bakhtiar Dar Dooran Zamamdariash* (37 Days After 37 Years), 1984, p. 143

This statement, unilaterally decided upon by Dr. Sanjabi, was considered as an act of total betrayal by both Bakhtiar, and Dr. Gholam-Hosseini Sadighi, whose main condition for having rejoined the Front had been that no single individual, including its leader, must announce any binding policy on behalf of the Front without the express mandate of the National Front Council²⁴⁶.

At the about the same time as the announcement of the declaration by Sanjabi, Bazargan on behalf of the Liberation Movement , declared that "the mass demonstrations of the previous year had shown that the people followed Ayatollah Khomeini and that they wanted the monarchy to be replaced by an Islamic system of government"²⁴⁷. Therefore, through their actions, Bazargan and Sanjabi, representing the devout but lay Liberation Movement on one hand, and the secular National Front on the other, had allied themselves fully with Ayatollah Khomeini.

Amongst the National Front's senior leadership during those tumultuous days, only Dr. Gholam-Hosseini Sadighi and Bakhtiar, feared the clergy and the type of rule that they would represent, more than the Shah and the military regime which he had represented for the previous 25 years. During numerous meetings with the Shah, first Dr. Sadighi and later Bakhtiar, had laid down their conditions for accepting to form a civilian cabinet to try and salvage the country from further strife and unrest. As conditions laid down by Dr. Sadighi, the Shah's first choice to head a new government, were too humiliating for

²⁴⁶Sharifi, R, "Darbarehe Jebheye Melli", SAHAND - A Persian Journal of Political & Cultural Studies, Vol.4 -No. 13, p.168.

²⁴⁷Abrahamian, E., *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1982, p.520.

the Shah to accept²⁴⁸, the task of forming a new government was in the end offered to Bakhtiar²⁴⁹.

Bakhtiar's acceptance of the challenge that was put before him, at a very critical time in the modern history of Iran, resulted in his immediate expulsion from the National Front, in whose Executive Committee and Council, he had loyally served since the overthrow of the Mossadegh government. In a further move, orchestrated against him by Sanjabi, the Iran Party was also asked to remove him as its Secretary General, prior to expelling him altogether from the party. However, this was an act that Sanjabi was unable to fulfill, as the matter was referred to a party investigating committee, that was never assembled due to the rapid pace of developments.

While Bakhtiar, remained hopeful that his colleagues in the National Front, would eventually come to his assistance in trying to protect and promote the secular nature of government in Iran, it was becoming more evident with each passing day, that the majority of his old colleagues were beguiled by the tempting promises of a very shrewd holy man, who was perhaps the only figure in the Iranian political scene of the day, who had a clear vision of the exact agenda that he was proposing. In this respect, the National Front's sycophantic statement on 23 January 1979, welcoming the return of Khomeini to Iran, was a devastating blow to the hope's of the Bakhtiar government, and

²⁴⁸Sadighi wanted the Shah to remain in Iran, but to transfer all his authority to a regency council. This was tantamount to an admission that the Shah was unfit, even to reign - a condition that the Shah could under no circumstance accept. Bakhtiar on the other hand, asked that a regency council be set up, but that the Shah, himself, should leave Iran on an open ended "vacation", until such time that it was possible for him to come back again.

²⁴⁹Bakhtiar's candidacy was also supported by Empress Farah, with whom Bakhtiar had had a private discussion meeting in the early Autumn, when there were no signs that the Shah was willing to hand power to any of his opponents.

an even more devastating blow to the long-term credibility of National Front and the memory of Mossadegh²⁵⁰.

The Bakhtiar Government: 37 Days After 37 Years

In a book entitled, "Iran - Dictatorship and Development", that was released in the Autumn of 1978²⁵¹, Professor Fred Halliday of the London School of Economics, enumerated four separate but realistic options that could still have been considered plausible, given the rapidly disintegrating state of affairs in Iran. According to Halliday, the four "capitalist options" - ie. barring a Soviet type, socialist take over, were the following:

1. Continued dictatorship by the Pahlavi monarch...
2. Modification of the Pahlavi regime to allow for a degree of political freedom and some participation in government by civilian politicians - a return to the situation in 1961-1962, and the in the period up to 1953.
3. Military dictatorship, after the complete removal or political neutralization of the Shah and his family.
4. A bourgeois dictatorship, under a republican regime, or with a monarchy that is of a purely constitutional kind.²⁵²

In this respect, the decision by the Shah to appoint a member of the official opposition,

²⁵⁰Sharifi, R, "Darbarehe Jebheye Melli", SAHAND - A Persian Journal of Political & Cultural Studies, Vol.4 -No. 13, p.168-171.

²⁵¹At a time when no one could have predicted the final outcome of the Iranian revolution, given that the manuscript must have been completed by at least several months prior to publication and distribution.

²⁵²Halliday, F., Ibid., p.300.

as head of a civilian government, meant that the Iranian monarch had opted for the second of the four options suggested by Halliday, at the same time that he had firmly rejected option 3, which would have imposed a military dictatorship in the country.

At a time when Dr. Karim Sanjabi and Engineer Mehdi Bazargan had joined the Khomeini bandwagon, while Dr. Gholam-Hossein Sadighi, had not been able to work out a satisfactory arrangement with the Shah, Bakhtiar was the next most senior figure, with enough stature in the ranks of the National Front, to be asked to form a government. Given the circumstances of the time, while there was a feeling that the Bakhtiar government could not prevent the advent of a new order, there was nevertheless, general acknowledgement that Bakhtiar had proven his superior courage and determination by having accepted the difficult task of placing himself squarely between the Shah and the emerging Ayatollah²⁵³.

Thus, on 6 January 1979, after more than 25 years of frustration and hardship, Shapour Bakhtiar accepted the Shah's "Farman" to become the "Forty Third Constitutional Prime Minister of Iran", and the Thirty First (and last) Prime Minister in the reign of Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi²⁵⁴. On 11 January 1979, Bakhtiar presented his

²⁵³Afkhami, G. H., *The Iranian Revolution: Thanatos On a National Scale*, The Middle East Institute, Washington, D.C., 1985, p. 107.

²⁵⁴Alamouti, M., *Iran Dar Asre Pahlavi*, Vol. XIV, ("Akharin Rouzehaye Zendeghi Shahe-Shahan Va Sarneveshte Akharin Nakhost Vazir Shah"). Paka Print, London, 1992, p.3. In his book, as well as in an interview with the writer (24/2/95), Dr. Alamouti has stated that, once news concerning the formation of a Bakhtiar government became public, a number of well known opposition figures, not affiliated with either Sanjabi or Bazargan - ie. for reasons of their own, began quietly to form an anti-Bakhtiar lobby. According to Dr. Alamouti, one of these figures, Hossein Maki, even called him at his office in the Majles, and asked him to vote against Bakhtiar. The other senior figure, with ambitions of his own for forming a government, was Mozafar Baghai, who issued a statement condemning Bakhtiar, and accusing him of many 'anti-national' activities in the past, with special reference to Bakhtiar's "Labour pact" with the Anglo-Iranian

government²⁵⁵, and his program of action to the Majles. In a comprehensive 17 point program, Bakhtiar pledged to dissolve SAVAK immediately, to end martial law, and to support Palestinian and Arab Causes²⁵⁶. Another important component of Bakhtiar's program was the release of all political prisoners (with compensation to the family of those who had lost their lives either in prison or in any anti-Shah struggle), freedom of press and expression, as well as the arrest and trial of all those responsible for the violation of the rights of the Iranian people²⁵⁷. And, finally, on 13 January 1979, Bakhtiar announced the formation of a nine-man Regency Council that would rule in the Shah's absence. The council was headed by former Senator, Seyed Jalaledin Tehrani, and

Oil Company, during his days as the Head of the Labour Ministry's Office in Khuzistan, in return for the alleged support that he was promised for his election to Majles, as a deputy from that province.

²⁵⁵Stempel, J. D., *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1981, p.158. According to John D. Stempel, a serving American diplomat in Teheran at the time, "the Bakhtiar cabinet was generally an unimpressive lot, consisting of technocrats, relatives, and minor figures who had been out of active politics for years". However, what this description fails to point out is that no leading personality of the day was willing to risk accepting a position in a cabinet that no one expected to last but a few weeks. This was highlighted by Bakhtiar's decision to nominate General Fereidoon Djam as Minister of War, and Admiral Ahmad Madani as Minister of the Interior. While, Djam refused to accept the position offered on the flimsy ground that the Minister of War, in the political system of the day, was a figure devoid of any authority in the armed forces, Admiral Madani, despite a weekly luncheon appointment with Prime Minister Bakhtiar in his office, refused to accept his portfolio, waiting to take his chance on a more solid ground (he was subsequently appointed Minister of defense in the First Provisional Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, that was headed by Mehdi Bazargan).

²⁵⁶*Ibid.*, p.162.

²⁵⁷Alamouti, M., *Ibid.*, p.39-43. According to Alamouti (a serving member of the Iranian Majles at the time), in a private meeting that was held at Bakhtiar's request in his villa, Bakhtiar had informed his hosts (all serving members of the Majles and the Senate), that he felt a number of key senior figures should be arrested and even executed for their roles in having consistently violated the rights of the Iranian people. In specific terms, he had singled out former Prime Minister, Amir Abbas Hoveida, in order to high light the point that he was trying to make. When challenged on this matter, that executing Hoveida was rather a harsh punishment to hand out, he had reiterated his view that this was nothing less that what he deserved for having so flagrantly violated the Iranian Constitution for a period of 13 years (*Ibid.*, pp.4-6).

included personalities such as NIOC²⁵⁸ Chief, Abdollah Entezam, Court Minister Ali-Qoli Ardalan, and General Abbas Gharabaghi, the Armed Forces' Chief of Staff. Once, Bakhtiar's government had received its vote of confidence from the Senate (15 January) and the Majles (16 January), there was no longer any impediment barring the departure of the Shah from Iran. However, by 21 January 1979, in a visit with Khomeini in Paris, Seyed Jalaledin Tehrani, had submitted his resignation as head of the Regency Council, and switched his allegiance to Ayatollah Khomeini. Although, this act by itself, was not a decisive factor in the final outcome of events, it was nevertheless, another serious blow that was to further undermine the credibility of the Bakhtiar government²⁵⁹.

In retrospect, it was perhaps Bakhtiar's insistence for the Shah to leave the country, that was to serve as the main factor undermining the eventual survival of his government²⁶⁰. Here, it is important to note that so long as the Shah, himself, was in Iran, the rioting and other disturbances were generally controlled - ie. despite strikes

²⁵⁸National Iranian Oil Company.

²⁵⁹In a recently published book, entitled *Davary (Judgement - Some Remarks About SAVAK)*, by General Manouchehr Hashemi, the history of animosity between Seyed Jalaledin Tehrani and the late Shah, has been extensively addressed (Hashemi, M., "Davary - Sokhani Dar Karnameh SAVAK", Aras Publications, London, 1995, pp. 298-326). In this book, General Hashemi, a senior SAVAK officer has revealed how Tehrani, who was the governor of Khorassan at the time of the Shah's White Revolution, had plotted with opposition clerics (and in particular, with Grand Ayatollah Qomi, who is today under house arrest in Mashhad) to undermine the Shah. His appointment, therefore in 1979 to the Regency Council, was as much a matter of surprise to those who had known him, as was his subsequent resignation in Paris.

²⁶⁰This is a point that has been conceded by many, who were in the close entourage of Bakhtiar in those tumultuous days. In particular, Bakhtiar's Health Minister, Dr. Manouchehr Razmara has been the most vocal about this point (interview, Paris, 23 November 1994).

which were having a crippling effect on the economy²⁶¹, law and order had been generally under control. More importantly, it was evident from the beginning that Bakhtiar's survival was contingent on him having the support of the armed forces. So long as the Shah was in Iran, and supportive of the Bakhtiar government, the armed forces, stood a much greater chance of remaining intact and supportive of the government²⁶². On the other hand, it was very difficult, as Bakhtiar found out to his cost, for the army to transfer a life time of devotion and loyalty from the person of the Shah to someone who had nothing but a history of utter contempt for him and his rule. At the same time, by insisting for the Shah to leave, Bakhtiar was also, indirectly, playing into the hands of Khomeini, who would not have been as ready to make a triumphant return to Iran, had the Shah not already left the country²⁶³.

In the end, despite all the maneuvering that went on during Bakhtiar's final stand of 37 days, in line with every speculation that had earlier been made, it was the loss of support from the armed forces that was to spell the end of his tenure as Prime Minister of Iran.

²⁶¹It is important to point out that at that particular time, the country was fully liquid, and in the "black", to the tune of some US\$15 billion, in foreign currency reserves (equivalent almost to a year's income from oil!).

²⁶²Some writers have in the past pointed out to a number of defections from the ranks of the armed forces, as well as armed insurrections in certain instances (eg. a machine gun attack in the mess hall of the Ground Forces HQ in Lavizan), as a sign that the armed forces was in a state of disintegration. But, given the size of Iran's armed forces, defections at the scales reported would not have made any major difference (bearing in mind that according to all military experts, a single Brigade of the Imperial Guards could have held out against any potential threat), so long as the armed forces command would have remained united and intact. Only the Shah, as Supreme Commander, could have held the armed forces together, and it is generally agreed by many senior military officers of the Imperial Iranian Armed Forces, that the departure of the Shah from Iran, on 16 January, was tantamount to the surrendering of the armed forces to Khomeini.

²⁶³This is a point that General Gharabaghi was adamant to refer to -Interview, 22 February 1995.

Bakhtiar and the Armed Forces

There was never any question from the very start, that the whole future of the Bakhtiar administration was fully dependent on the outcome of his relationship with the armed forces. This cooperation was particularly essential, given that all of Bakhtiar's previous allies in the National Front and the Liberation Movement, as well as the religious forces allied with Ayatollah Khomeini, had never recognized the legitimacy of his government. This situation was further exacerbated when, four days after returning triumphantly to Iran on 1 February 1979²⁶⁴, Ayatollah Khomeini nominated Engineer Mehdi Bazargan as his chosen candidate for the office of Prime Minister, at a time when Bakhtiar was still in search of some form of a political compromise with his former colleagues in the National Front and the Freedom Movement²⁶⁵.

While, Bakhtiar, was himself, more aware than any one else, of the crucial role that the army would have to play, in giving him the necessary time to win a measure of public

²⁶⁴This was the first point of disagreement between Bakhtiar and the military, who were opposed to allowing for Khomeini to return. The threat by General Gharabaghi to resign, forced Bakhtiar into preventing Khomeini from returning to Iran on 26 January, as originally planned. But later, alleged assurance by the Ambassadors of Britain and the U.S., that Khomeini would return to Qom, persuaded Bakhtiar to subsequently lift all restrictions (Ibid.). In an interview with the BBC Persian Service (Documentary entitled the "Tale of the Revolution"), Gharabaghi accuses Bakhtiar of having collaborated with the supporters of Khomeini in Iran, by asking the Commander of the Air Force to participate in, and assist with the "Imam's Welcoming Committee". Gharabaghi, maintains that it was as a consequence of this directive issued by Bakhtiar, without his knowledge, that a helicopter was provided to take Khomeini from Tehran's Mehrabad Airport to 'Behesht Zahra' cemetery, where he was able to launch his campaign. The implications of this act, according to the General, contained interpretations that were contrary to both Bakhtiar's mandate as well as interest.

²⁶⁵According to Abdol-Rahman Boroomand (personal conversations with the writer), Bakhtiar was meeting on an almost daily basis with Abbas Amir Entezam, who was his intermediary with Bazargan, and Rahim Sharifi, who was his intermediary with Sanjabi and other former National Front figures. Bakhtiar never met directly with Sanjabi or Bazargan during his time in office.

support and confidence, prior to holding free parliamentary elections that were scheduled for the Summer, he had been beset by certain major problems from the very outset. First and foremost, while Bakhtiar had been generally in favor of the fact that the Shah had bypassed certain hard-line officers such as General Gholam Ali Oveissi, by appointing General Abbas Gharabaghi as Commander of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, he was, nonetheless, taken aback by the fact that the Shah had failed to consult him in advance, prior to making his choice²⁶⁶. Matters of this nature were always a sore point with Bakhtiar, who as a devoted disciple of Mossadegh, was fully conscious of the bitter debates that had taken place between Mossadegh and the monarch, over similar issues, more than a quarter of century before. However, prior to the Shah's departure from Iran, Bakhtiar had insisted on a joint meeting between himself and the Chiefs of the armed forces, in the presence of the Shah, in which the Shah would state categorically that all future "orders" would given by the new head of government.

Consenting to Bakhtiar's request, the Shah convened a meeting on 13 January 1978 (three days prior to his departure), in which General Gharabaghi and the Commanders of the Imperial Iranian Ground Forces, Air Force, and Navy, and few other senior officers were in attendance. There, in front of Bakhtiar, the Shah had said that in all matters pertaining to the government, all orders would be issued by Bakhtiar, and on questions related to "his office", the Regency Council would relay their messages to him and provide them with the appropriate response²⁶⁷. However, both General Gharabaghi and Bakhtiar had left that meeting with substantially different

²⁶⁶During the course of many discussions with the writer, Bakhtiar had said that he had not challenged the Shah's choice at the time, in order not to upset the delicate state of affairs. However, he was intent on relieving General Garabaghi and nominating his own choice, just as soon as "things had calmed down".

²⁶⁷Afkhami, G.R., Ibid, p. 124.

interpretations of the Shah's statements²⁶⁸, which neither had been willing to scrutinize any further, for reasons of good will²⁶⁹.

Despite the acrimonious recriminations that were to take place later in exile between Bakhtiar and his supporters in NAMIR, on the one hand, and General Gharabaghi, on the other²⁷⁰, it is a fact that the working relationship between the two men had, on the whole, been as well as could have been expected, by even the most cynical observers. In fact, the serious difficulties that were to arise, had more to do with events developing outside their realms of control. That is not to say that mutual suspicions did not exist, but that other more complicated events having to do with the activities of the Ayatollah and his supporters, as well as the arrival in Teheran of Deputy Commander of NATO,

²⁶⁸This is particularly highlighted in the books that were subsequently published by both Bakhtiar and Gharabaghi in exile, and has since become a subject of great contention between the supporters and opponents of Bakhtiar. In their books, the dispute regarding this matter has been discussed in page 145 of Albin Michel's *Ma Fidelite* (Paris, 1982), and page 204 General Gharabaghi's, *Haghayegh Darbarehe Bohrane Iran* (Paris, 1984).

²⁶⁹According to General Gharabaghi, a second point of contention between him and Bakhtiar (the first being over their disagreement to allow for Khomeini's return to Iran) arose, once Seyed Jalaledin Tehrani had resigned as Head of the Regency Council. General Gharabaghi had called for a meeting of the Regency Council, in order to appoint a successor to Tehrani, so that he could sign all the military documents requiring the signature of the monarch. Bakhtiar had said that this request was unnecessary and that he, himself, would sign whatever that was needed. The General had disagreed, and insisted on holding the meeting, assuring Bakhtiar that he had no objections to him signing any document, so long as the Regency Council, had vested him with that authority. In the end, the meeting was held, and Mohammad Ali Varasteh, who was Mossadegh's Minister of Finance, was chosen as Tehrani's successor.

²⁷⁰Resulting in the publication of a number of books and articles, containing charges and counter-charges of betrayal and treachery, that could only harm the cause of all opposition forces, at home and in exile.

General Robert Huyser, "with specific messages for the military chiefs"²⁷¹, were far more crucial in determining the final outcome of events. In the end, as the Ayatollah's movement gained the greater momentum, Bakhtiar's position became increasingly tenuous, until such time that he had little choice but to make serious hints regarding his willingness to opt for a republic, albeit through non-revolutionary and legal means. Once, serious violence broke out on 9 February, requiring strong reprisals from the Armed Forces²⁷², it was because of these previous hints by Bakhtiar ²⁷³, that the military chiefs felt compelled to withdraw their support from the Bakhtiar government on 11 February 1979, by signing a "Declaration of Neutrality"²⁷⁴.

²⁷¹Urging hard line commanders not to contemplate carrying out a military coup, while at the same time supporting the Bakhtiar government. However, as the Ayatollah's position became more enhanced at Bakhtiar's expense, Huyser message could have only promoted the victory of the revolutionaries, and the disintegration of the armed forces.

²⁷²On 9 February, at Farahabad and Doshan Tappeh air bases in Teheran, a group of Air Force Warrant Officers ("Homafars"), having given salute to Khomeini at the cost of outraging the Shah loyalists, proceeded to barricade themselves in the base's armory and began to openly defy their commanders. To deal with this situation, units from the "Guard Javidan" ("The Immortals", who were the Shah's personal guards) were dispatched to quell the uprising. This led to the Homafars being reinforced, and the situation getting out of hand. It was at this point - ie. by 10 February, that the curfew was increased, and Bakhtiar, personally, asked the air force commander, General Rabii to bomb the locations where the Homafars were holding out - something which General Rabii was unwilling to do at the time. The General's failure to act decisively, had effectively sealed the fate of the Bakhtiar government, and had paved the way for the meeting on 11 February in which the armed forces was to declare its "neutrality" (All of the above have been corroborated in private discussions between the writer and Dr. Bakhtiar).

²⁷³General Houshang Hatam, the Deputy Commander of the Joint Chiefs, had argued that both Bakhtiar and Bazargan wanted to create a republic. While, one had public support, the other did not. Thus, given that what they sought, was ultimately the same, and given that Bakhtiar had been moving away from his original mandate given to him by the Shah, General Hatam had argued that it was pointless for the armed forces to back one against another (This statement from General Hatam, who was executed shortly after the revolution has been quoted by General Gharabaghi in his book, and has been corroborated by a number of senior generals in exile, who were present in that meeting).

²⁷⁴Afkhami, G.R., Ibid., 1985, p. 139.

Given that the maintenance of the integrity of the armed forces, was the primary consideration of the Generals in wake of the deteriorating political circumstances, the following document was eventually signed by them on the morning of 11 February 1979:

"The Iranian Armed Forces has always been charged with the defense of the integrity and the independence of the beloved country, and so far in any internal unrest, it has always striven to do its best to support the legal government of the day.

Given, the recent developments in the country, the High Council of the Armed Forces held a meeting at 10.30 on 11 February 1979, and for purposes of avoiding further unrest, and bloodshed, unanimously agreed to declare its neutrality, and subsequently ordered all its units to return to their barracks.

The Iranian Armed Forces has always been and will continue to be a supporter of the honorable and patriotic people of Iran, and will continue to forcefully honor and support the wishes of the honorable people of Iran.

signatories: Generals Gharabaghi, Shafeghat²⁷⁵, Fardoust²⁷⁶, Hatam, Moghaddam²⁷⁷, Najmi-Naini, Mohagheghi, Badre-ai²⁷⁸, Rabi²⁷⁹, (Admiral) Habibolahi²⁸⁰, Massoumi-Naini, Saneii, (Admiral) Mohsen-Zadeh, Jahanbani, Kazemi, Kabir, Bakhshi-Azar, Khajeh-Nouri, Amin-Afshar,, Khalatbari, Farzam, Pezman, Khosrowdad²⁸¹, Firoozmand, Rahimi-Larjani, Rahimi, and Tabatabaai.²⁸²

²⁷⁵General Jaafar Shafeghat, the Minister of War, first signed the document, but given his position as a member of the cabinet, later asked that his name be crossed out.

²⁷⁶Chief of the Imperial Inspectorate and close confidant of the Shah, who allegedly helped set up the Islamic Republic replacement of SAVAK.

²⁷⁷Head of SAVAK.

²⁷⁸Commander of the Ground Forces, and Acting Commander of the Imperial Guards, assassinated later in that same day.

²⁷⁹Commander of the Air Force.

²⁸⁰Commander of the Navy.

²⁸¹Commander of the Elite Special Forces.

²⁸²Translated into English by the writer.

Once a decision was made to issue the "Declaration of Neutrality"²⁸³, the message was dispatched for immediate broadcast to the offices of the State Radio. Once informed of the content of the declaration, the Minister of Information, Dr. Cyrus Amouzegar, appreciating the consequences of this statement, gave specific orders that the message should not be broadcast²⁸⁴. Meanwhile, apart from the Information Minister himself, employees at the Radio station had also informed Bakhtiar of its content. Thus, by the time General Gharabaghi had, himself, contacted the Prime Minister over the telephone in order to inform him of the decision which had been reached, he was told by Bakhtiar that the message was being read to him over another telephone line²⁸⁵. In that same conversation, Bakhtiar had informed Gharabaghi that he would give orders for the message to be broadcast in the next hour²⁸⁶.

In that same conversation, it was agreed that General Gharabaghi and Bakhtiar would meet at 4 pm in the same afternoon (11 February 1979), at the residence of Senator Kazem Jafroudi, in order to meet with Bazargan. It was expected that Bakhtiar would then hand his resignation to Bazargan, allowing for a peaceful transfer of power, now that the armed forces were out of the equation. The question of Bakhtiar's resignation,

²⁸³Since "neutrality" did not mean "Submission", many senior officers have criticized the fact that nearly all the Generals failed to turn up at their posts the day after the declaration had been announced.

²⁸⁴Interview, Paris, 10 August 1994.

²⁸⁵Interview, Paris, 10 August 1994.

²⁸⁶All radio messages were carefully scrutinized by Bakhtiar's office, and all statements issued by the Office of Teheran's Military Governor, were sent directly by the Prime Minister's Office, without the consent or even the knowledge of General Gharabaghi and his staff - ie. The State radio, itself would not broadcast any message - including the "Declaration of Neutrality", without the specific consent of the Prime Minister.

something that was always denied by him and a number of his close advisers²⁸⁷, despite having been broadcast by the BBC World Service on 11 February, was again recently confirmed by Engineer Abbas Amir Entezam, who later became Deputy Prime Minister under Bazargan and Ambassador to Sweden, before being arrested and imprisoned by the Islamic authorities²⁸⁸. If, the authenticity of these remarks can become validated, then greater credence would have to be given to General Gharabaghi's account of affairs, which would then imply that there was a far greater degree of collusion between Bakhtiar and his former colleagues, irrespective of the fact that they "double-crossed" him in the end.

The interpretation given by many, including General Gharabaghi, of the fact that Bakhtiar had given his consent for the armed forces' "Declaration of Neutrality" to be broadcast by the state radio, clearly implies that he had come to some form of an understanding with Bazargan and his associates - something that was subsequently denied most strenuously by Bakhtiar and his associates. However, the fact that he allowed for the message to be broadcast, and went into hiding upon leaving his office shortly afterwards, without turning up at the scheduled meeting with Bazargan and Gharabaghi at 4 pm, meant clearly that he was aware that everything had been lost, and that his brave and daring attempt to prevent a theocratic takeover - something that he had foreseen in advance of every other politician in Iran²⁸⁹, had failed.

²⁸⁷This suggestion was (again) vehemently denied by A.G. Bakhtiar, during the course of a conversation with the writer on 23 February 1995.

²⁸⁸Amir Entezam, a close associate of Mehdi Bazargan, is still being held in prison in Iran. Excerpts of a book, attributed to him (which has allegedly been smuggled out of prison) entitled, "Dar Jostejoye Haghighat" (In Search of the Truth), have been published in Nimrooz (Printed in London). Specific reference to Bakhtiar's resignation has been made in Issue No. 300, dated 20 January 1995.

²⁸⁹This statement was acknowledged by a BBC Persian Service report (08/08/91) that presented a brief biography of Bakhtiar following his assassination (Interview,

Conclusion

As a consequence of Bakhtiar's efforts during his 37 days in office, and the world wide publicity that he had attracted, his whole disposition had undergone a major transformation. This exposure had turned Bakhtiar into a national figure, who was subsequently accepted by many Iranians, as a leader who would aspire to rid the country from the theocratic dictatorship which had been imposed on them by Ayatollah Khomeini.

In effect, as a result of his brief tenure of office, Bakhtiar, had acquired the prestige and recognition, qualities needed by a nationalist leader to lead the secular, democratic opposition to the Islamic Republic. This was a challenge which Bakhtiar readily accepted, as soon as he was to leave Iran in the Summer of 1979, and this was a challenge that he relentlessly pursued until August 1991, when he was brutally assassinated in his home by agents of the Islamic regime.

Chapter 3: The Initial Period (1979-1983)

In the aftermath of the euphoria of the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran, and the start of open dissent against the newly established Islamic regime in Teheran, Dr. Shapour Bakhtiar (1915-1991), was the first, and the most internationally known and respected political figure to challenge the regime from exile.

Having made a daring escape from Iran following the release of his first taped message condemning the referendum that officially converted the country into an "Islamic Republic"²⁹⁰, Dr. Bakhtiar's message was the most credible voice that was uttered in opposition to a regime, whose true credentials were not yet clearly revealed. This was particularly significant, given the fact that at the time, each and every other political group previously in opposition to the Shah, was still enjoying a period of "political honeymoon", with Ayatollah Khomeini and his followers.

In 1979, Dr. Bakhtiar was the first major Iranian political figure to openly challenge the Islamic regime. However, by July 1981, he was joined in exile²⁹¹, by a whole host of other political figures representing the entire Iranian political landscape from left to right²⁹². However, what continued to make Bakhtiar stand out as the most favorite

²⁹⁰On 10 'Farvardin 1358' (30 March 1979), a referendum was held in Iran that officially changed the status of the country from a "Constitutional Monarchy" to an "Islamic republic".

²⁹¹Mostly in Paris, France.

²⁹²On the left, these figures included Abolhassan Bani-Sadr (the deposed President of the Islamic Republic), and the Mojahedin Khalq leader, Massoud Rajavi, who together had escaped from Iran on board an Iranian Air Force plane. On the centre and the right, these figures included Admiral Ahmad Madani, the first Defense Minister and Navy Commander of the Islamic Republic, along with Generals Gholam Ali Oveissi (the former Commander of the Imperial Iranian Ground Forces) and Bahram Aryana (the former Chief of the Imperial Supreme Military Staff). Shortly, thereafter, another

opposition candidate, were his credentials as a man of great integrity and culture, with an undeniable democratic background. By the Summer of 1979, when Bakhtiar had already launched what was to become the "National Movement of the Iranian Resistance" (NAMIR)²⁹³, he was, perhaps, the only follower of the late and celebrated Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh, who had somehow remained untarnished (and true to the ideals preached by him and his followers during the previous 25 years) in the sense that he had not allowed himself to become engrossed or associated with the emerging order under Khomeini. This point is particularly underlined, when such people as then Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan²⁹⁴, and Karim Sanjabi, the leader of the National Front, as well as Dariush Forouhar, the leader of the "Iranian Nation Party", had become deeply involved and implicated with the deeds of a regime, whose supreme leader was rapidly displaying his utter contempt for Mossadegh and his whole philosophy of government.

Despite the fact that, contrary to his own assertions, Bakhtiar had risen from relative political obscurity to assume the Premiership of Iran in the fading days of the imperial regime, and in view of the substantial amount of media coverage that had been given to the crisis in Iran -ie. the actual disruptions and civil unrest in the country, as well as the publicity awarded to the Ayatollah Khomeini in Paris - his name had, in a very short space of time, become a household name in both Iran, as well as many important

former Iranian Prime Minister, Dr. Ali Amini, also joined the ranks of the so-called "leaders of the Iranian opposition in exile".

²⁹³The slogan used by Bakhtiar at the end of all his statements was the Farsi equivalent of "Iran Will Never Die". The term "NAMIR", meaning "Do Not Die" in Farsi was coined by the writer as an appropriate acronym for the organization in 1981, in time with the launch of its English "Organ", the Voice of Iran.

²⁹⁴Prime Minister of the "Provisional Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran" from February to November 1979.

centers in the international community. This, coupled with Bakhtiar's general "comportment" during the final days of his government, greatly assisted his reputation as a "National Leader", who was universally recognized and respected for his democratic credentials and general political outlook.

By the Summer of 1979, when the initial feelings of euphoria in Iran and the international community, had begun to somewhat subside as a consequence of the brutalities displayed by the Islamic regime, Dr. Bakhtiar's star began its true rise, in that he was able to project himself as the "unquestioned Leader of all the Iranian Opposition", with the full weight of the international media behind the thrust of his message²⁹⁵. This role was assisted by the fact that with the late Shah still alive and living in exile, his entire constituency, too hesitant to voice their support for him, were solidly behind his "last appointed Prime Minister". At the same time, by his refusal to join the Khomeini bandwagon²⁹⁶, Bakhtiar had also managed to remain as the only "untainted" follower of "Mossadegh's path", and as such, he had tacitly come to take over the mantle of leadership within the National Front itself. This became more apparent when by May 1979, more hard-line elements within the Bazargan government forced the resignation of the, increasingly discredited, National Front leader, Karim

²⁹⁵It is important to note that by this time - ie. mid-1979 - in the aftermath of the wave of political executions, the highly acclaimed revolution that was to have reversed the previous regime's disregard for human rights, was fast losing its tarnish.

²⁹⁶While, this notion has been generally accepted, General Abbas Gharabaghi, the last Commander in Chief of the Imperial Military Staff under the late Shah, contests this. General Gharabaghi asserts that Bakhtiar, during the entire period of his tenure as Prime Minister, was trying to appease Ayatollah Khomeini and his supporters led by Mehdi Bazargan, whom he used to term as "a personal friend, with whom they shared many occasions in prison" (Gharabaghi, A., "Eterafat General", Nay Publications, 10th Edition, Teheran, 1988, page 363).

Sanjabi as Foreign Minister from the Provisional Islamic Government.²⁹⁷

Thus, by the time Bakhtiar arrived in Paris for his first Press Conference in the French capital's Hotel Bristol, he was the first Iranian leader since Mossadegh to have the support of both the majority of Mossadegh's constituency as well as that of the Shah²⁹⁸. Bakhtiar also had the additional advantage of having general media support and Western intellectual sympathy, and as such he was in a formidable position to launch an effective organization needed to oppose the Islamic administration in Iran.

Creating An Effective Organization

Prior to the Islamic Revolution of 1979, only forces of the 'political left', who were eventually forced to go underground, had seemed capable of creating an effective and efficient political organization²⁹⁹, not dependent upon the central government for any fiscal requirements. These included the Tudeh Party in the 1940's and the 1950's, and the radical Marxist groups the "Fedayeen Khalq" and the "Mojahedin Khalq" in the 1960's and the 1970's³⁰⁰.

²⁹⁷The only senior figure from the National Front to also remain untainted was Dr. Gholam Hossein Sadighi (Mossadegh's Minister of Interior), who had refused to accept the Premiership under the Shah, while at the same time he had refused to become associated in any way with new regime as well.

²⁹⁸The maintenance of this coalition was crucial for the future of Bakhtiar's movement.

²⁹⁹This has to be differentiated from the religious centers of opposition, which were financially self-sufficient, whilst also enjoying a much greater degree of independence in their general disposition.

³⁰⁰While the Tudeh Party was for a number of years allowed to operate freely, prior to disbandment as a legitimate political organization, all the other political movements/organizations were of a underground/ clandestine nature.

Two factors had generally dominated the politics of the center and the right in modern Iran³⁰¹: The dominant nature of certain key political figures, around whom certain coalitions or political parties had become assembled³⁰², and the total dependence of all political parties and organized political structures on direct government funding during the last 25 years of the late Shah's rule³⁰³. It is thus fair to say that members of all these parties, with the possible exception of a certain few in the National Front, were generally part and parcel of the main governing establishment.

In the aftermath of the Islamic Revolution, particularly in the honeymoon period of 1979-1981, when all the previous opponents of the late Shah were still active on the internal political scene, the only people opposing the regime and struggling to establish a credible political organization aimed at challenging the clerical regime, were comprised totally of those previously 'established' figures who had absolutely no real or tangible experience of creating an effective organization which was not supported by a huge and unlimited financial purse. It is fascinating to note the extent to which the setting up of an efficient political movement or organization, with a platform of establishing a democratic and just government was confused with a bureaucracy - much like before - in which the political leaders, played the roles of established cabinet ministers, while the followers and activists consigned themselves to playing the role of

³⁰¹ie. Post Reza Shah I (abdicated in 1941).

³⁰²eg. Mossadegh's National Front, or Ahamd Qavam's Democratic Party.

³⁰³Prior to the establishment of a one party system in Iran (The National Resurgence Party of Iran --"Rasatakhiz"-- which was totally dependent on the state for every shade of its activities (ie. meetings, publications, as well as salaries for all its employees), the other existing political parties, particularly after the late Shah's 1963 "White Revolution" (eg. "Iran-e Novin", "Mardom", and "Pan Iranist") all shared the same political platform -ie. implementation of the Shah's policies as enunciated in the programme of the White Revolution", and were all dependent on government funding for all their political activities.

good bureaucrats. Hence, so long as sufficient funds were available for sustaining this kind of a relationship, then the association could endure. But, once the bosses were, for one reason or another, incapable of meeting the financial requirements of their herd, then the organizations would soon disintegrate and become liquidated³⁰⁴.

Bakhtiar's Dilemma

The period from June 1979, when Dr. Bakhtiar, following his escape from Iran, effectively began his campaign against the Islamic Republic, until August 1991 when he was assassinated in his private place of residence on the outskirts of Paris³⁰⁵, can be broken into three distinct stages.

Each stage, with its own distinct features, covering the rise and decline of Iran's, hitherto, most active democratic political opposition movement, when studied carefully, is capable of addressing some of the most important questions that have been raised in this study.

The Initial Period (August 1979 - July 1983)

Bakhtiar, having slipped away from the grip of Islamic authorities at Teheran's Mehrabad airport in July 1979, under the guise of a French businessman, and having safely arrived in Paris³⁰⁶, was more than sufficiently motivated to begin the task of

³⁰⁴The fact that no one has attempted to activate any of the former Iranian main political parties in exile, is a tangible evidence to substantiate the point that has been made.

³⁰⁵A villa located on 37 Rue Cluseret in Sursene.

³⁰⁶Where his son, Guive Bakhtiar, an Inspector in the French Police Force was waiting for him.

organizing an effective opposition to the newly installed "Provisional" Islamic government, and its clerical supporters. He felt strongly that he had narrowly missed the opportunity of containing the revolution, within the parameters set by his own reformist government³⁰⁷.

He also felt confident that had the armed forces remained intact and loyal to his government³⁰⁸, or alternatively, had the late Shah had appointed him to his position at an earlier phase, Khomeini would never have had an opportunity of making any sort of a serious impact on the Iranian political scene³⁰⁹. Although, in his book "Mission to Iran", William Sullivan, the last American Ambassador to Teheran, has accused Bakhtiar of having wanted "to hijack the Iranian Revolution", it is a fact that Bakhtiar not only felt antagonistic to this notion, but, quite differently, he felt strongly that Khomeini and his henchmen had illegitimately hijacked and "usurped the true and democratically motivated uprising of the Iranian people against dictatorship and corruption". This belief was subsequently reinforced when the first major operation pursued by Bakhtiar in order to regain power, was through a military coup that was to have been organized by

³⁰⁷It is important to note, that while he had received his legitimacy from the Shah, in the sense that he was appointed by him to his position, he felt that events had forced the Shah to make the move that he had. Hence, he saw his government, as the first "truly national" government (meaning without royal interference) to have been formed in Iran since the overthrow of Dr. Mossadegh, some 25 years before.

³⁰⁸This is a point which is highly contested by General Gharabaghi, who claims that Bakhtiar played a very important "surrogate" role, in contributing to the disintegration of the armed forces. General Gharabaghi claims that Bakhtiar was instrumental in allowing Khomeini to return to Iran, and by providing assistance, through ordering the Commander of the Imperial Iranian Air Force to have a liaison officer in the "Imam's Welcoming Committee", that resulted in the supplying of an Air Force helicopter to transport the Ayatollah from Mehrabad Airport to Beheste Zahra Cemetery. This incident, for which Mr. Bakhtiar has been blamed, according to General Gharabaghi, was a great symbolic victory for the revolutionaries (Gharabaghi, A., "Eterafat General", Nay Publications, 10th Edition, Teheran, 1988.).

³⁰⁹This is a matter to which Bakhtiar has referred in a number of interviews, as well as in many private conversations with the writer.

an Organization called "Neghab" (meaning "mask" in Farsi) was the acronym for "Nejate Ghiame Iran-e Bozorgh", meaning "the Saviour of the Uprising of the Great Iran". Hence, it was evident by its title, that this internally formed and based organization, like Bakhtiar, was fully supportive of the uprising of the people of Iran for greater democracy, up to the point that Shah was forced to leave the country, having relinquished his powers to a lawfully appointed government which had been able to secure a vote of confidence from the Iranian parliament.

However, having fled from Iran, with essentially his life, Bakhtiar, with the exception of himself, who had as a consequence of the events of the preceding months become a well known and charismatic figure with the international media as well as many Iranians who had admired him for his courage and resistance against Ayatollah Khomeini³¹⁰, was devoid of all the paraphernalia, normally associated with becoming a credible opposition. More precisely, having arrived in Paris, Bakhtiar was neither in possession of a proper organization, nor was he in possession of adequate funds necessary to form or sustain such a political organization.

It is a fact that having arrived in Paris, Bakhtiar was not even in a position to maintain himself, and were it not for the forthcoming financial support of his 'National Front' friend, Abdol-Rahman Boroomand³¹¹, the actual task of organization building would, no

³¹⁰It is a fact that Bakhtiar by the time Khomeini has arrived in Iran, had inadvertently become the last main bastion of hope for the supporters of the imperial regime. Despite his many differences with the royalists, it is also fact that all throughout his time in France, Bakhtiar's main constituency of support continued to spring from royalist quarters, as the majority of republicans felt more comfortable with other organizations.

³¹¹Who became one of the founding members of NAMIR, and was himself assassinated in 1990. Dr. Boroomand, came from a wealthy family in Isfahan. He and his brothers were partners to Assadolah Rashidian (an important crony of the late Shah and one of the main tools of British intelligence in Operation "Boot", which had ousted

doubt, have been seriously delayed³¹².

With Bakhtiar safely placed in a Paris apartment, a collection of his close friends assembled around him, and together they began the long and somewhat time consuming task of debating about the whole subject of how the movement should be started. Perhaps the only issue in which they were all in unanimity was the fact that immediate fund raising efforts should precede everything else. This was a task in which Dr. Abdol Rahman Boroomand took the lead, and in association with his old colleagues and former business partners (such as Assadolah Rashidian and Azimi) he was able to raise, with relative ease, an initial contribution of some US\$500,000³¹³. There were other major donators at that time, particularly from the Iranian business community, such as Parviz Amir Parviz, who took over Bakhtiar's operations in the United Kingdom, and began promoting his cause from an office set up and totally funded by himself³¹⁴.

Bakhtiar's Strategy in the Initial Period

the Mossadegh government from power in 1953), and through his strong connections with the Imperial Court, they had secured a very large construction contract in Isfahan (known as the "Shahin Shahr" development), which was one of the most lucrative construction contracts in pre-revolutionary Iran.

³¹²According to Bakhtiar (personal conversations), he had arrived in Paris with a total of US\$ 1500. Once in Paris, he was moved to an apartment rented for him by Dr. Boroomand.

³¹³Shortly afterwards, following a meeting between Bakhtiar, Boroomand, and the Shah's twin sister, another contribution of US\$ 500,000 was made by Princess Ashraf Pahlavi, though relations between them had always been bad in the past, and failed to improve even after the Princess's contribution.

³¹⁴It is important to note that the time (ie. 1979-80), many Iranian businessmen were still very well off financially, and the thought that the Iranian regime led by "Mullahs" could be easily overthrown was one that was widely believed.

From the very outset, Bakhtiar was beset with the dilemma of having to cope with a longer term strategy of having a well structured organization, capable of enlisting all potential sympathizers for a protracted political struggle, while at the same time being able to exploit more short-term or spontaneous circumstances that might result in overthrowing the Islamic regime.

From the time that he launched his campaign, during the course of a press conference held at Paris's Bristol Hotel in August 1979, only days after his escape from Iran, the mounting state of chaos in Iran was already aggravating his dilemma in terms of making it unclear as to which alternative, he should give the greater precedence. Eventually, Bakhtiar decided to pursue both avenues simultaneously, but separately. This decision was assisted by the fact that any "action oriented" operation inside the country would have to be conducted in an "underground" fashion requiring a whole host of other actors, who were entirely separate from those he would task in Paris for the creation of his political organization.

The most important incident that was to change the direction of Bakhtiar's strategy during the first 18 months of his campaign in exile, was the occupation of the U.S. Embassy in Teheran by a group of radical students³¹⁵, and the taking of American diplomats as hostages³¹⁶. This actions that was immediately followed by the resignation of the first, "Liberal-Democratic" Islamic government, headed by Mehdi Bazargan,

³¹⁵The so-called "Followers of the Line of Imam".

³¹⁶Something that was to last for 444 days, from 4 November 1979 to 20 January 1981.

cleared the way for the rise of loyal Khomeini-oriented clerics³¹⁷ to positions of high office, and has come to be commonly referred to as the starting point of the "Second Revolution" which according to Ayatollah Khomeini, himself, was even "greater in importance than the first"³¹⁸.

The international outrage caused by this action in Teheran created a period of crisis, whereby Iran was effectively placed under immense international pressures, which further exacerbated an already chaotic situation which had resulted as a consequence of internal disorganization, purges, ideological battles, and displacement of competent leadership that had accompanied the revolution. According to Gary Sick, a member of the U.S. National Security Council monitoring Iran at the time, "Oil exports were running below one million barrels per day, less than half the level required to sustain operating revenues of the government. Inflation was rampant, unemployment was running near 40%, investment in manufacturing had fallen to zero, industrial production was off 50-70%, and the gross national product was down at least 20% from pre-revolutionary levels. The sanctions imposed by the U.S. and other nations were not the cause of

³¹⁷It is important to distinguish between clerics supportive and Khomeini within the clerical constituency, and the clerical constituency as a whole. It is a fact that at the time of the take over of the U.S. Embassy, there were six other Grand Ayatollahs, besides Khomeini, who were considered as "Marjas" (Source of Imitation), who each had their own constituency within Iran. They were Grand Ayatollah Kazem Shariat Madari (Qom), Grand Ayatollah Golpayeghani (Qom), Grand Ayatollah Marashi Najafi (Qom), Grand Ayatollah Khoi (Najaf), Grand Ayatollah Qomi (Mashad), and finally, Grand Ayatollah Ahmad Khonsari (Teheran). A prominent feature of Iranian politics following the occupation of the U.S. Embassy in Teheran was the rise of the "Supporters of the Line of Imam", who have continued to set the political scene even up to the time of this writing. More significantly, what this has meant in real terms is that, contrary to conventional wisdom, the clerical regime in Iran has not been one which has represented the constituency as a whole, but one which has been exclusively representative of those within the ranks of the clerics who have been unswerving supporters of Khomeini's interpretation of "Velayate Faghih".

³¹⁸Institute For Political Research, *Kodetaye Nojeh*, 2nd Edition, Spring 1989, p.57.

these conditions, but the sanctions immensely complicated the task of Iran's new and inexperienced managers who were attempting to cope with multiple crises simultaneously. At the same time, internal dissention was on the increase....Simultaneously, the border tensions with Iraq was heating up, the Kurds were once again in full revolt, tribal opposition was growing throughout the country, and sabotage in the oil fields became almost a daily occurrence. Top military commanders were shuffled and reshuffled (the top ranks of the air force were purged on the grounds that they had been accomplices of to the U.S. rescue attempt³¹⁹), and there were occasional defections of trained military personnel. The regime seemed to be on the verge of political, economic, and military collapse..."³²⁰.

Based on the above premises, a notion that was generally shared in all informed circles, it was no great surprise to find that Bakhtiar was more keenly anxious to exploit this 'extra-ordinary situation' in order to promote his cause, and using the military as the main vehicle for replacing the regime.

A glance at the chronology of significant events from August 1979 to August 1983, clearly illustrate the circumstances, as well as the possibilities which were open to Bakhtiar during this period:

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
07/79	Bakhtiar launches his campaign in Paris.
08/79	First major pro-Bakhtiar rally held in London.
11/79	U.S. Embassy in Teheran is occupied and American

³¹⁹The aborted attempt by the U.S. in April 1980 to rescue the U.S. hostages held in the American Embassy in Teheran.

³²⁰Sick, G., *All Fall Down: America's Tragic Encounter With Iran*, Random House, New York, 1985, p. 307.

diplomats are taken as hostages.

- 04/80 U.S. attempt to rescue hostages is forcibly aborted.
- 05/80 Bakhtiar's clandestine "Radio Iran" begins broadcasting from Baghdad.
- 07/80 Pro-Bakhtiar coup attempt is foiled and a number of military officers and civilians are arrested.
- 08/80 Unsuccessful attempt is made on Bakhtiar's life by the Lebanese terrorist, Anis Naccache.
- 08/80 The establishment of NAMIR is announced.
- 09/80 Iraq invades Iran, and 8 year long Iran-Iraq War begins. Despite his relations with Iraq, Bakhtiar in three separate statements dated 25 September 1980, 14 November 1980, and 16 February 1981, calls a cessation of hostilities, and the commencement of peace talks on the basis of the 1975 Algiers Treaty.
- 07/81 Bani Sadr and Rajavi arrive in Paris. Bakhtiar condemns both and rejects any notion of cooperation.
- 08/81 The Iranian Naval Vessel, "Tabarzin" is hijacked on the high seas by members of the "Azadeghan" Organization, led by General Bahram Aryana (22 August).
- 08/81 Bakhtiar and Aryana declare in separate statements their decision to work in unity for the liberation of Iran. Bakhtiar asks all his "military supporters" to report to Aryana.
- 09/81 Aryana moves his HQ to Turkey, near the border with Iran.
- 10/81 NEHZAT, the political organ of the National Movement of the Iranian Resistance (NAMIR) begins the publication of its first bi-weekly issue.
- 12/81 GHYAME IRAN, the second Bakhtiar bi-weekly, aimed at a less

'doctrinaire' audience is published.

- 08/82 VOICE OF IRAN, the political Tribune of the National Movement of the Iranian Resistance (NAMIR) in English, begins the publication of its first monthly issue.
- 09/82 LETTRE PERSANE, a pro-Bakhtiar monthly in French is published.
- 12/82 Publication of Admiral Ahmad Madani's statement in NEHZAT.
- 01/83 NEHZAT condemns communiqué issued following the meeting between Iraqi Foreign Minister, Tareq Aziz and Mojahedin Leader, Massoud Rajavi.
- 02/83 Bakhtiar's begins the campaign of urging all Iranians inside the country to participate in "Negative Resistance".
- 03/83 Bakhtiar's open call for support to former colleagues in the "National Front".
- 04/83 NAMIR supporters in Sweden are successful in bringing up the topic of "Trade Boycott" of Iran for the first time.
- 04/83 Bakhtiar's message to the Socialist International - this marks the first concerted effort on the part of NAMIR to promote its cause by contacting various important international bodies.
- 04/83 Bakhtiar's first secret visit to Saudi Arabia.
- 04/83 NAMIR first major assessment of the state of the Iranian Economy is published and distributed in a major conference in London³²¹.
- 04/83 Bakhtiar's first secret visit to Saudi Arabia.

³²¹The Conference which overtly sought to promote trade with Iran, was organized by NAMIR, as a way of seeking attention, and then humiliating the Islamic regime. This play was to a major extent successful, and the British Charge in Teheran (Sir Nicholas Barrington) was brought in, and to his embarrassment, was subjected to a situation well beyond his expectation.

- 05/83 Bakhtiar's first trip to the U.S. and meeting with U.S. officials. In a meeting with Iranian supporters in Los Angeles, he declares his support for a restoration of constitutional monarchy in Iran.
- 05/83 Bakhtiar's first visit to the United States, where he is the first major Iranian figure to address the Council on Foreign Relations.
- 07/83 Bakhtiar and Amini sign their "Agreement of Principles".
- 07/83 Bakhtiar signs a 5-Point Agreement on a "Declaration of Principles" with Dr. Ali Amini.
- 08/83 The Fourth Anniversary of the founding of NAMIR is celebrated in Paris in the presence of Bakhtiar, Amini and General Aryana.
- 08/83 First peaceful demonstration by the masses against the regime on Constitution Day (August 5), as called by NAMIR's clandestine radio broadcasts.

From this chronology, it can be clearly deduced that during the course of the 'Initial Period', Bakhtiar was most preoccupied with keeping up with the internal crisis, and assisting those elements that were secretly lining up from within the armed forces to move against the regime. Furthermore, it can be seen that whilst NAMIR, as a political organization, announced its presence on the political scene as early as August 1980 (almost exactly a year after the arrival of Bakhtiar to Paris), it was not until October of 1981, that its official publication, Nehzat, first appeared. Hence, it can be deduced that during this interim period, as well as the period before it - ie. from August 1979 - October 1981, Dr. Bakhtiar felt more compelled to give priority to matters, which were clearly more pressing than the setting up of his political organization in exile. It is a fact, that until such time that the possibility of attaining any tangible result from those options were not seriously eroded - ie. effectively after when the Iraqi advance into Khuzistan had been halted, Bakhtiar was not willing to divert his full attention to NAMIR. (Blaming

Bakhtiar for giving added encouragement to Saddam Hussein to attack Iran, once his own plans for gaining power by using the military had come to nothing, the Islamic authorities have accused Bakhtiar of having wanted to set up an Iraqi supported puppet regime in the "oil rich" province of Khuzistan, comparing him to the former leader of Katanga, Moussa Chombe, who was accused of murdering the Congo's independence leader, Patrick Lumumba³²²).

Bakhtiar's First Major Opportunity

As stated, the occupation of the U.S. Embassy by radical students, and the taking of American diplomats as hostages, had given Bakhtiar a God sent opportunity to infiltrate and recruit disenchanted (though somewhat subdued³²³) personnel from within the military, with the aid of his clandestine political-military organization "Neghab", with the ultimate aim of launching a military coup against the Islamic Republic.

However, all plans for such an eventuality were being shadowed by other plans, drawn in Washington, for the rescue of the American hostages held in the American Embassy in Teheran. While, these plans were completely separate and independent of one another, the ultimate fate of the rescue mission that was launched on 24 April 1980, was not without significance to the outcome of the plans that were being advanced by "Neghab"³²⁴. As it turned out, through an "in credible series of mishaps"³²⁵, the failure

³²²Institute For Political Research, *Kodetaye Nojeh*, 2nd Edition, Spring 1989, p. 108.

³²³Given the humiliation that had been handed to the armed forces by the victorious revolutionaries.

³²⁴The Islamic authorities suggest that the CIA had tried to coordinate both operations, suggesting also that the CIA was responsible for planning "Nojeh" - (Institute For Political Research, *Kodetaye Nojeh*, 2nd Edition, Spring 1989, p.63).

of the rescue mission was unable to promote a more favorable atmosphere for the advancement of Bakhtiar's plans³²⁶. Nonetheless, the ease with which Iranian airspace had been penetrated, and Iranian radar bypassed, was cause enough for fingers to be pointed at some elements within the military, such as General Hadi Shadmehr, the Chief of Staff³²⁷, and General Bahman Amir-Baqeri, the Commander of the Air Force³²⁸. General Amir-Baqeri who was subsequently arrested in June 1980, was particularly accused of having transferred anti-aircraft batteries from Teheran to Kurdistan only days before the American operation, and for subsequently ordering the destruction of

³²⁵Carter, J., *Keeping Faith - Memoirs of a President*, Bantam Books, New York, 1982, p.518.

³²⁶It is an interesting speculation to think how "Neghab's" chances might have been enhanced had the American rescue mission not have been the dramatic failure that it was - ie. if the operation had managed to even get to Teheran, as opposed to becoming aborted in the desert. Had the rescue operation succeeded, it is possible to envisage several factors, which could greatly have enhanced the prospects of the types of military intervention that was being sought at the time: (1) Tremendous loss of prestige, and great humiliation for the regime (similar to that inflicted on Idi Amin, following the Israeli raid on Entebbe in 1976); (2) Such a loss of prestige would have greatly encouraged all disenchanted elements within the armed forces, boosted their morale and increased their chances of participation in any planned coup against the regime; (3) The fact that the blow - i.e., the military initiative taken to free the hostages - had been planned and executed by 'America' would have been interpreted as a positive encouragement for the military, in that there would no longer be any illusion that this was a regime 'which was brought to power and protected by the Americans' (this was to some degree achieved even though the mission failed); And finally, (4) the degree of chaos and disruptions that would have had to be created for purposes of distractions in Teheran in order for the plan to succeed, would in all probability have set the stage and assisted the creation of a favorable atmosphere for the execution of any military plan in the future. However, as it turned out, the net result not only failed to achieve any of the factors mentioned above, but instead served to bolster the image of 'Iran's invincible revolution', leading to a serious loss of morale amongst all potential forces opposed to the regime. This feeling of extreme depression was further exacerbated by Khomeini in his famous statement when he said, "Carter Ghalati Nemitavand Bokonad!", meaning that "Carter cannot do a damn thing!

³²⁷Who was to lose his job over the incident, though (then President) Bani Sadr kept him on as his "Military Adviser".

³²⁸Bakhash, S., *The Reign of the Ayatollahs - Iran and the Islamic Revolution*, Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, New York, 1984, p. 118.

the abandoned American helicopters left at Tabas³²⁹. Furthermore, both Generals Amir-Baqeri and Shadmehr were also accused of "having adopted an aggressive tone vis-a-vis Ayatollahs Montazeri and Meshkini³³⁰ "only one day prior to the American operation", and "for having revealed certain pro-monarchy sentiments"³³¹.

Obviously, while neither Generals Shadmehr and Amir-Baqeri were not in any way involved with "Neghab", their continued presence in their respective positions, would most likely have been of enormous benefit to the plotters. As it turned out, their removal from office only weeks before the launch of the coup, must, in all likelihood, have had an adverse effect on the morale of the plotters. This was later exacerbated by the announcement on 25 May of a thwarted coup announced by a clandestine radio broadcast from Iraq³³², and subsequent announcement by the Chief Judge of the Military Revolutionary Tribunal, Mohammad Reyshari that another attempt, planned by the Paris Based organization of General Gholam Ali Oveissi for 12 June, had also been discovered³³³ .

³²⁹Insinuating that by doing so, he had allowed for the destruction of all evidence left over by the fleeing Americans to be completely destroyed. Also, a great deal of capital was made because of the fact that during the course of the bombing, an Iranian Revolutionary Guard, Mohammad Montazer Ghaem, who was the Commander of the "Pasdaran" in Yazd, was killed. Apart from Amir-Baqeri, the then Islamic President, Abolhassan Bani Sadr was also blamed for having sanctioned the bombing.

³³⁰Both very close to Khomeini (Montazeri being his chosen heir at the time).

³³¹Daneshjoyan Mosalman Payro Khate Emam, *Neghareshi Bar Majeraye Tabas*, Teheran, 17 June 1981, 143-145.

³³²Hiro, D., *Iran Under the Ayatollahs*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1985, p. 155.

³³³Bakhash, S., *The Reign of the Ayatollahs - Iran and the Islamic Revolution*, Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, New York, 1984, p. 118. However, this assertion has been denied by Colonel Ahmad Oveissi, brother of the late General Oveissi (interview: 31/08/94)

Nonetheless, irrespective of these setbacks, coupled with the regime's extreme vigilance primarily because of the failed American rescue attempt, plans that were finalized by Bakhtiar and "Neghab", as far back as March 1980 were neither postponed nor canceled, and according to the Islamic regime, the plotters had also obtained the benediction of Grand Ayatollah Shariat Madari, and had even gone as far as renting a house for him in Teheran^{334 335}.

The Nojeh Project

It is now established that Bakhtiar intended, and was successful in compartmenting the proposed "Operation Red Alert"³³⁶, to launch a plan with military support, centered at the "Nojeh" Air Base near Hamadan³³⁷, which aimed to swiftly seize power by striking

³³⁴Institute For Political Research, *Kodetaye Nojeh*, 2nd Edition, Spring 1989, p.37. (It should be pointed out that in order to discredit Grand Ayatollah Shariat Madari, the Islamic regime attempts, somehow, to suggest that Shariat Madari's "treachery" which was established as a consequence of his links with Sadeq Qotbzadeh, in their "plan to stage a coup in 1982", went as far back as his active involvement in Nojeh - despite the fact that the regime was never able to prove that at the time or time after that.)

³³⁵Ibid., p.37.

³³⁶Ibid.

³³⁷"Nojeh" was the third name given to the same air base. Prior to the revolution, the air base was called "Shahrokhi". Immediately after the revolution, it was named "Hor". However, following the unrest in Kurdistan in 1979, the air base was named after an air force pilot by the name of "Major Mohammad Nojeh" who was killed there in action (Source: Kayhan, 23 August 1979).

out the leaders of the Islamic regime (including bombing the residence of Khomeini in Jamaran) and occupying all the strategic centers in Teheran³³⁸, from the crowd of cronies and colleagues who had congregated around him in Paris.

In fact, based on information that has been revealed by many of the senior actors involved in "Nojeh", the role actually played by Bakhtiar, himself, apart from providing financial assistance and some mediation with certain tribal elements, was to a large extent minimal.

The actual plan in Iran was devised by a small number of former National Front/Iran Party members, who were acting together with a number of retired military officers. Prominent amongst the organizers were: Mohammad Baqer Bani Ameri³³⁹, a retired Gendarmerie Colonel who was in over all charge of the military wing that also included retired Generals Saiid Mehdiyoun³⁴⁰, and Ayatollah Mohagheghi³⁴¹. Their efforts in exile

³³⁸Chaperon, J., & Tournier, J., *Enquete Sur L'Assassinat De Chapour Bakhtiar*, Edition 1, Paris, 1992, p. 67.

³³⁹In an interview with the writer in London on 03/12/94, Colonel Bani Ameri stated that while all the details regarding the planned coup was carried out by him and other colleagues in Iran, they were all under the impression that Bakhtiar would taken steps in Europe to brief senior politicians and diplomats regarding the situation in Iran, in a move aimed at obtaining their tacit support for the promotion of the planned coup. Sadly, this was not to be, and apart from the Iraqis, no other foreign power was informed of what was in the pipeline.

³⁴⁰Former Commander of the Iranian Air Force. Reflecting on his discussions with General Mehdiyoun (who was arrested and released by the authorities prior to the coup), the Iranian intellectual, Ehsan Naraghi, in his book, "Des Palais Du Chah Aux Prisons de la Revolution", Balland, Paris 1991 (Translated into Farsi by Saiid Azari, Rasa Publications, Teheran, 1993. pps. 345-350), asserts that "simple, unaware, but well meaning military officers of the Iranian air force - like Mehdiyoun - were manipulated by 'some ambitious politicians' into participating in coup that could not, under any circumstance, have succeeded, given the popularity of Khomeini and the regime at that particular time". Naraghi quotes Khomeini as having said, "Were those pilots who were aiming to bomb my house and other government offices, not planning to eventually land somewhere?".

was assisted by General Amir Fazli, a retired air force officer (introduced to Bakhtiar by General Djam), who was briefly in charge of IRAN AIR prior to the revolution.

In the civilian wing, the most prominent figures were: Reza Marzban³⁴², Engineer Parviz Ghadessi³⁴³, Abolghassem Khadem, Javad Khadem³⁴⁴, and Manouchehr Ghorbanifar³⁴⁵. To complement their plan, the cooperation of many tribal leaders throughout Iran had been solicited through the person of Bakhtiar, himself (eg. the Qashqais)³⁴⁶.

Despite its failure, there is no question that an enormous amount of precision planning had gone into organizing this attempted coup, without any major external support or benediction. While, Iranian sources attempt to attribute the planning of this operation to the "CIA, Reactionary Arab regimes (inclusive of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the Gulf states

³⁴¹A commander with the Iranian Gendarmerie.

³⁴²Former Iran Party/ National Front colleague, and loyal supporter of Bakhtiar.

³⁴³Who later became the head of Neghab's Civilian Wing.

³⁴⁴The son of Abolghassem, and Minister of Housing in Bakhtiar's government.

³⁴⁵Ghorbanifar, who was to achieve fame in the "Irangate" incident, was introduced to Bakhtiar by Generals Djam and Mobasser, through Bakhtiar's Thurlow Street office in London. However, according to General Mobasser (former Chief of National Police), "Bakhtiar had been warned to test Ghorbanifar prior to entrusting him with anything sensitive" (interview: 30/8/94). Given Ghorbanifar's confirmed connections with the Islamic regime, as made evident, later, in the "Irangate" incident, it is strongly speculated that he may also have been the Islamic regime's "Trojan Horse" in this operation. However, according to General Manouchehr Hashemi (interview, London, 24 April 1995), the former Director of SAVAK's 8th Political Bureau (counter-intelligence), Ghorbanifar (whom the General knew quite well) had not yet developed any connections with the regime and was quite sincere to Bakhtiar at the time of the Nojeh Project.

³⁴⁶Institute For Political Research, *Kodetaye Nojeh*, 2nd Edition, Spring 1989, p. 42.

and Iraq), along with tacit "EEC" approval"³⁴⁷", there is no other tangible evidence, apart from the financial assistance that were given to Bakhtiar by Iraq (at a time that the Iran-Iraq had not yet broken out), to substantiate these allegations. On the contrary, according to documents seized by the radical students at the American Embassy in Teheran, the line previously recommended by U.S. diplomats in Iran, such as V.L. Tomseth in September 1979, was to keep away from all "emigres", including Bakhtiar³⁴⁸.

According to Bakhtiar, a budget of around 100 Million Tomans (something in excess of \$12 million) was allocated for this project, which included costs for purchasing weapons, acquiring intelligence, and paying the cost of support elements inside the country, etc.³⁴⁹. However, the role of Iraq in having provided assistance for this operation was crucial. Apart from finance, not only did "Radio Iran", Bakhtiar's clandestine station in Baghdad became available in time, but by keeping the border area with Iran in a state of constant mobilization, the Iraqis were able to assist the plotters, by allowing them to have well maintained and fully armed fighter planes, ready for take off at all times.

In the end, as a consequence of the betrayal of one air force pilot³⁵⁰, as well as other corroborated evidences that had become known to the security authorities via a number

³⁴⁷Ibid., p. 108. It is important to point out that apart from periodical articles, there has been no compilation of facts regarding "Nojeh" prepared by any exile source, including "Neghab" and NAMIR.

³⁴⁸Daneshjoyan Mosalman Payro Khate Emam, *Asnade Laneh Jasousi*, Vol. 16, Office of Islamic Publications, Qom, 1985, p.77.

³⁴⁹This was revealed during the course of many private discussions to the writer.

³⁵⁰Captain Iradj Soltanji, who was told to bomb Khomeini's residence in Jamaran.

of different sources³⁵¹, the attempt was foiled and a number of civilian and military officers, mostly from the air force, were arrested. Many of the officers, irrespective of the undetermined nature of their involvement in the plot were immediately executed at Khomeini's behest³⁵², despite claims of protestations made to the contrary by some of his leading advisers³⁵³.

Organizing NAMIR

Consistent with the age old Iranian tendency to look for and concentrate more on an individual, as opposed to a collection of individuals for leadership, the way Bakhtiar proceeded initially, and the eventual shape that his political organization was to take, were more closely reminiscent of Bakhtiar's own personal likes and past experiences, rather than the long debated recommendations of the organizing committees which he had gathered and appointed to study the best options for the launching of the new organization. In this respect, emulating General De Gaulle had become a way of life for Bakhtiar, and hence the organization was named after De Gaulle's war time movement against the Nazis, and came to be known as the National Movement of the Iranian Resistance³⁵⁴. It is important to note, that in terms of timing, the actual public

³⁵¹eg. The Tudeh Party and the Mojahedin who had been given earlier notice of the proposed plan (discussions between Marzban and Rajavi's Deputy, Moussa Khiabani)...

³⁵²A complete list of those executed were subsequently published in August addition of VOICE OF IRAN, as well as in the book entitled, "IRAN: In Defense of Human Rights", which was produced by NAMIR in July 1983. However, it is important to note that many of the civilians who were arrested in conjunction with "Nojeh" were not executed till 13 months after the discovery of the plot.

³⁵³Bani Sadr, A., *Khianat Beh Omid*, Paris, 1991, p.192.

³⁵⁴Its acronym, NAMIR instead of N.M.I.R., was coined by the writer in 1981. Reason for this was that the slogan, "Iran Will Never Die", came to be identified with Bakhtiar, and was reflected at the end of all his speeches and other statements. Apart from the fact that the term -"NAMIR" was a much more 'catchier phrase than "N.M.I.R." -

announcing of this movement did not take place until after the failure of the planned military operation at "Nojeh".

Due mainly to Bakhtiar's own lack of management skill and experience³⁵⁵, coupled with his confined movement and associations in Iranian society prior to his assumption of office³⁵⁶, disturbing signs of misplaced trusts and unsuitable selections in terms of colleagues and associates, very soon became a feature of the Bakhtiar 'entourage'. While, the assembling of this motley crowd served to boost Bakhtiar's ego, such that he was able to justly claim that while neither of his associates would acknowledge the supremacy of any other colleague, they were all united in acknowledging his own supremacy as "leader". However, apart from becoming a negative exercise in confidence building, what this strategy was failing to address was the setting up of a coherent, forward looking infrastructure, capable of coming to terms with the various

it also meant "do not die" in Farsi, and was thus conceived as a more appropriate acronym for an organization, whose main slogan was that "Iran Will Never Die".

³⁵⁵This is, even, corroborated by US Embassy reports as far back as 1954 (Source: Daneshjoyan Mosalman Payro Khate Emam, *Asnade Laneh Jasousi*, Vol. 20, Office of Islamic Publications, Qom, 1985, p.46.

³⁵⁶Here, it is important to note that while Bakhtiar had been a prominent member of the National Front for a very long period of time, his contacts and circle of friends and associates was a very limited one. According to his cousin and one of his cabinet Ministers, Abbas Gholi Bakhtiar, Shapour Bakhtiar, who had been even cast aside by his own family because of his political feelings, was essentially a "loner", and a person who shied away from public gatherings and the like (interview in London, 2/2/94). Hence, when the time came for him to step forward and assume office, in choosing senior members of his government, he was greatly dependent on the advice and recommendations of his close friends and confidants - composed mainly of men of good intentions, but, nonetheless, of mediocre credentials. A look at the composition of his cabinet, with a very few exceptions, underlines the mediocrity of his choices (though in fairness to Bakhtiar, it must be said that men of "higher timber" were unwilling to step forward in his direction at that particular time. In exile, this same problem once again confronted him, and once again he was encircled with a motley group of conflicting ideologues and bureaucrats, whose only point in common was in trying to deploy the person of Bakhtiar in order to promote their own particular agenda and objectives.

problems then confronting Iranian society, while at the same time presenting a general image that there was; also, a determined and capable leadership which was able to successfully come to grip with any future problems that might confront the Iranian nation.

The personalities tasked by Bakhtiar during the 'Initial Stage' to come up with a working manifesto were all Paris based³⁵⁷, and consisted of a mixture of exiled theoreticians and academics - such as ex-Tudeh/leftist sympathizers like Hossein Malek³⁵⁸ and Molood Khanlari³⁵⁹, and Engineer Ezat Raastgaar - all of whom had been universally opposed to the previous regime, and a number of close associates from the National Front and the "Iran Party"³⁶⁰. Prominent amongst the Iran Party³⁶¹ associates were Rahim Sharifi, Amir Hossein Amir Parviz, who despite his background and past affiliations, had been

³⁵⁷Interview with A.H. Amir Parviz, 28 January 1994.

³⁵⁸Brother of Khalil Maleki, the Leader of "Niroyee Sevom" (Third Force), a break away group from the Tudeh Party, that had questioned the supremacy of Moscow and its interferences in the affairs of the Party.

³⁵⁹An ex-Tudeh supporter who had served as a research assistant to Jean Paul Satre, and who was to later edit NAMIR's French language publication, "Lettre Persane". Also, two of Molood Khanlari's daughters Mahshid (Amirshahi) and Shahrashoob were also employed by the Bakhtiar organization. Mahshid, a journalist, was responsible for translating into Farsi Bakhtiar's autobiography, *Yekrang*, originally entitled *Ma Fidelite* (Albin Michel - Paris, 1982), while her sister was in charge of NAMIR's clandestine radio broadcasts from Cairo (prior to her sacking following disclosures that she had been broadcasting leftist and Mojahedin propaganda from the Cairo base. Prior to heading the Cairo Station, Shahrashoob had been part of the initial team that had headed Bakhtiar's Paris office.).

³⁶⁰According to A.H. Amir Parviz (interview 28/1/94), the founding members of NAMIR were the following: Ahmad Mirfendereski (Bakhtiar's Foreign Minister during his tenure), Kazem Jafroodi (former Senator and Majles Deputy), Molood Khanlari, Hossein Malek, Rahim Sharifi, and Engineer Ezat Raastgaar.

³⁶¹The "Iran Party" was Bakhtiar's own party, in which he had become its Secretary General. The Iran Party was amongst a number of political organizations and reputed individuals whose loose association around Dr. Mossadegh, had come to be known as the National Front.

a serving member of the Ministry of Agriculture and had risen in the ranks of that Ministry to become its Minister, in the preceding months prior to Bakhtiar's own assumption of the premiership³⁶², and finally, Ahmad Khalilolahe Moghaddam³⁶³. These were joined by Dr. Abdol Rahman Boroomand - Bakhtiar's closest friend and supporter throughout his "wilderness years" in Iran, and a number of other senior National Front members such as Hamid Zolnour and Mehrdad Arfazadeh, who were able to leave Iran shortly after the disbanding of the National Front by the mullahs.

The very first document that was printed in late 1980, following long deliberations by this team was entitled, "Mabani Andishehayeh Siyasi Va Barnemeh hayeh Ejrai Shapour Bakhtiar"³⁶⁴, and was more reflective of the political orientations of its authors, though it has now been established that the main author was none other than one of the initial ideologues of the movement, namely Engineer Ezat Raastgaar³⁶⁵. In this important document, contrary to Bakhtiar's own repeated assertions that he was a "Social Democrat", there were important assertions attributed to Bakhtiar, himself, that he was

³⁶²Amir Parviz had become Minister of Agriculture in the government of Sharif Emami and continued in that position in the Military Government of General Azhari. Thus, when Bakhtiar himself became Prime Minister in December 1978, having stated that he would not be appointing any body to a cabinet post who had served in any previous government after Mossadegh, he was forced to exclude Amir Parviz from his own cabinet. However, having arrived in Paris, he was no longer barred by any constraints, and as such, Amir Parviz served as one of his close associates until he was seriously wounded in car bomb attack in London in 1987.

³⁶³A member of the Iran Party, whose many writings such as *Hezbe Tudeh Dar Khedmat Erteja Va Imperialism* (The Tudeh Party in the service of Reactionarism and Imperialism), and *Baraye Aghahi Nasle Javan* (For the Information of the Younger Generations), were widely printed and distributed by NAMIR during the initial years.

³⁶⁴Simply translated, it meant "The Political Thoughts and Action Programs of Shapour Bakhtiar".

³⁶⁵Interview with Engineer Ezat Raastgaar, Paris, 23 November 1994.

a "Socialist"³⁶⁶. Though, it soon became very clear, that due mainly to a lack of organizational discipline, Bakhtiar himself had failed to read the document in advance of its publications, nonetheless, its distribution was to cause great confusion and unrest amongst many of his supporters.

From 1981-1983, the role played by Hossein Malek and Molood Khanlari was instrumental in shaping the presentation of Bakhtiar's movement in exile³⁶⁷, in that the majority of articles and statements that were originally produced and subsequently published by NAMIR, were essentially a reflection of views shared by these two individuals³⁶⁸.

According to Dr. Cyrus Amouzegar³⁶⁹, who served as Minister of Information in Bakhtiar's government, during the initial days, some of the people who gathered around Bakhtiar, soon after his arrival in Paris, consisted of certain individuals, who

³⁶⁶NAMIR , *Mabani Andishehaye Siyasi Va Barnemeh haye Ejrai Shapour Bakhtiar*, 1980, page 5.

³⁶⁷In the 'Initial Stage', many writings by Hossein Malek, such as *Ideology Va Farhang* (Ideology and Culture) etc., were printed and distributed by NAMIR amongst its supporters for indoctrination purposes. Common in most of these writings was the overt hostility of Malek to almost everything carried out in the previous regime. This, was to have a negative effect on the whole progress of the Bakhtiar movement, as with the passage of time, it became clear that the main bastion of support for Bakhtiar was to come from none other than the supporters of constitutional monarchy. It is a fact that many nationalist groups, with sympathy for constitutional monarchy, failed to join Bakhtiar's movement, as a result of having come into contact with Malek. The "SOROODEMA" group in London, consisting of young intellectuals, university personnel, and professional technocrats, is a case in point.

³⁶⁸By looking at three separate issues of a publication entitled *Nameh Nehzat*, which was produced earlier but printed by NAMIR in 1983, it will be seen that there are a total of 7 articles which have been authored by Malek (in his own name) and Khanlari (under her pen name Talaat Rokni). These articles written by Malek, were reflective of the main line of thought being projected by the Bakhtiar camp at that time.

³⁶⁹Interview, Paris, 10 August 1994.

subsequently rose to prominent positions amongst the monarchists, such as Dr. Sassanfar³⁷⁰, Dr. Houghoghi and Dr. Shahin Fatemi. However, most of these early activities took place while most of Bakhtiar's former colleagues during his brief period of tenure in office were still in Iran³⁷¹. Signs of disagreements amongst the early advisers soon became evident, as most of the pro-monarchy members were for the creation of a more comprehensive "Council" in which Bakhtiar's role was more limited than that of a "Supreme Leader" - something that Bakhtiar, based on his own previous experience with Dr. Karim Sanjabi and Dariush Forouhar in the National Front, was totally unprepared to accept³⁷². Thus, what transpired was the gradual creation of a first "Supreme Council" directly responsible to Bakhtiar, and another Council (later referred to simply as "Nehzat") which was to include key figures in what eventually became NAMIR. While, the orientation of Bakhtiar's "Council" was generally "Right of Center", the orientation of "Nehzat" - ie. NAMIR, was generally the reverse. This was aimed at giving Bakhtiar the "best of both worlds", but in practice, it served only to contribute to more inevitable chaos.

³⁷⁰According to Amouzegar, it was Dr. Sassanfar who coined the name of what was to become Bakhtiar's "Nehzate Moghavemate Melli", which sounded very much like De Gaulle's movement which eventually liberated France, and was the very example which ^{he} hoped to emulate.

³⁷¹It was not till the end of 1980, that most of Bakhtiar's trusted cabinet ministers, such as Mirfendereski (Foreign Affairs), Amouzegar (information), Razmara (Health), and Abbas Gholi Bakhtiar (Commerce) were able to escape from Iran and arrive safely in Paris.

³⁷²According to Amouzegar (interview: 10 August 1994), Bakhtiar had often voiced an opinion that he had always felt cheated and held back by Sanjabi during his National Front days. On the hand, Dariush Forouhar, during the course of a visit to Europe in the Summer of 1993, had spoken to Amouzegar of a consistency in Bakhtiar's long standing "selfishness..." - hence, the animosity that continues to remain amongst former National Front members belonging to the Bakhtiar and Forouhar camps.

By the end of 1980, prominent members of the "Council" were Parviz Ghadessi³⁷², Javad Khadem³⁷³, Manouchehr Aryana³⁷⁴, Abbas Gholi Bakhtiar, Ahmad Mirfendereski, Manouchehr Razmara, Cyrus Amouzegar, and finally, Senator Kazem Jafroudi³⁷⁵. At the same time, the main group of actors in "Nehzat" consisted of Molood Khanlari, Hossein Malek, Rahim Sharifi and Engineer Rastgaar. Apart from Bakhtiar himself, only Dr. Abdol Rahman Boroomand, was an original founding member of both groups, though later at Bakhtiar's insistence, other members of the "Council" were also assigned to the "Nehzat" in order to balance its composition, and prevent it from becoming too dogmatic.

Early Activities outside France

The first "Campaign Trip" made by Bakhtiar to a destination outside France was to London in August 1979. During the course of this visit, a programme was organized by a committee of Bakhtiar supporters in London. Prominent amongst the committee members were Parviz Amir Parviz and Mohammad Daneshkhau³⁷⁶. Through their efforts, a protest march against the recently installed Islamic government and in support of Bakhtiar was organized in which several thousand Iranians (along with a very large police presence, numbering well into the hundreds) participated. This was by far the largest demonstration of its kind in any Iranian opposition rally held in London before

³⁷²One of the main architects of the failed Coup at "Nojeh".

³⁷³A Bakhtiar cabinet Minister (Housing) and early confidante.

³⁷⁴Bakhtiar's Minister of Labour.

³⁷⁵A seasoned politician and a Bakhtiar relation (his daughter was married to Bakhtiar's son and they had a joint grandson).

³⁷⁶Father of the Financial Times journalist, Shahrezad Daneshkhau, and a devoted follower of Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh, who was responsible for the production of the first major pro-Bakhtiar publication, entitled, *Morghe Toufan*.

or since that time. During this trip, Bakhtiar was also interviewed by the London media, and most notably the BBC Persian Service, in which, apart from his scathing attacks upon the clerical establishment in Iran, certain excerpts of his speech to the crowds were also broadcast to Iran.

Subsequently, through the financial assistance of Parviz Amir Parviz, a "London Office" was set up in a flat at Thurlow Place in Knightsbridge, which was frequented primarily by General Fereidoon Djam, the former Chief of the Imperial Military Staff³⁷⁸, and a host of other high ranking of military officers, including Lt. General Mohsen Mobasser, the former Commander of the National Iranian Police Force. The establishment of the "London Office" was, in fact, the very first center that was set up to advance the cause of Bakhtiar's movement in exile. It preceded the establishment of a Paris office by sometime, given that even by late 1980, Bakhtiar was still conducting his affairs from his Paris flat (having expressed unreadiness in October 1979 about forming a structured organization³⁷⁹), while most of his advisers were meeting in make shift places or their own apartments. Furthermore, given that military officers, led by Djam, were the main users of the London Office, a precedent was also set which ultimately led to the establishment of "NAMIR's Military Wing" (NAMIR-MW), which aimed to develop strong ties with the military establishment in Iran, with a view of soliciting their support and involvement in any Bakhtiar inspired action against the ruling clique.

Although the "Thurlow Place Office", did not endure for a long period of time, and was

³⁷⁸General Djam had been nominated by Bakhtiar for the post of Minister of War in his cabinet, but had refused to accept the nomination at that time.

³⁷⁹Interview: Amir Hossein Amir Parviz, 28 January 1994. This revelation gives further credence to the assumption that Bakhtiar was more hopeful of returning to Iran through a different mechanism.

dismantled following Djam's decision to cease active cooperation with Bakhtiar³⁸⁰, it did nonetheless, provide Bakhtiar with a detailed report regarding the state of the Iranian Armed Forces at that time. Also certain key personnel, later involved in "Nojeh" such as Air Force General Amir Fazli and Manouchehr Ghorbanifar were introduced to Bakhtiar via the London Office. In particular, playing a prominent role in this whole affair, was Manouchehr Ghorbanifar, who under the pseudo-name of "Souzani", was to play a crucial role as "project paymaster", in charge of a Bakhtiar provided budget that was estimated to have been around \$10 million. Ghorbanifar, who was introduced to Bakhtiar by General Djam³⁸¹, had by 1986 turned complete coat, having become a key figure in the "Irangate" scandal of 1986, in which he had served as an intermediary between the U.S. Government and the clerics in Teheran who were engaging in discussions for the swap of U.S. military supplies for hostages in Lebanon³⁸².

It is important to note that during the course of the initial 18 months from 1979 to early

³⁸⁰According to Amir Hossein Amir Parviz (interview, 21/4/95), General Djam never actually came to the "Thurlow Place Office" on more than a half dozen occasions. His main subordinate, Lt. General Mohsen Mobasser, came more often, and according to him a written proposal was prepared and later sent to Bakhtiar in Paris (according to Amir Parviz, the report was hand carried by the wife of Bakhtiar's cousin and close assistant, Abbas Gholi Bakhtiar). General Mobasser stated (phone interview, 21/4/95), that General Djam never received any response from Bakhtiar, regarding the proposal whose preparation he had supervised, and it was due to this that the "loose cooperation between them came to an end". A "distance" between Djam and Bakhtiar emerged following the start of the Iran-Iraq War, when Djam began to privately criticize Bakhtiar for not having severed his ties with the Iraqis. During a dinner arranged by the writer, in 1984, at the request of Francis Fukiyama (working for RAND at the time and preparing a report on the Iranian Military), General Djam came out and made reference to this matter during the course of the evening. However, his objections to Bakhtiar's ties with Iraq were not sufficient enough to prevent him from writing to Bakhtiar and asking him to give his nephew a job in NAMIR. In a telephone interview with Djam on 23/9/94, Djam seemed anxious to underplay any association which he might have had with Bakhtiar in the Fall of 1979.

³⁸¹Source: General Mohsen Mobasser.

³⁸²New York Times, *The Tower Commission Report*, Bantam Books, New York, 1987.

1981, the search for an organizational format had been greatly influenced by one other important factor which was to play a crucial role in defining Bakhtiar's subsequent political strategy in the following years. This was to be the outcome of debates with other emerging and prominent opposition figures, such as General Gholam Ali Oveissi, General Bahram Aryana³⁸³, Dr. Houshang Nahavandi³⁸⁴, and finally, with the former Iranian Prime Minister, Dr. Ali Amini.

Competition and Disagreement with Other Opposition Leaders

There is no question that Shapour Bakhtiar, was the first prominent Iranian political figure to come out in public opposition to the Islamic regime³⁸⁵. In fact, Bakhtiar is even credited to have begun his campaign prior to his arrival in France, and at a time when he was still in hiding in Iran. His first cassette message, distributed in Teheran and reported widely by the international media, was on the day when the provisional Islamic government of Mr. Mehdi Bazargan held the first major referendum in which the country was officially converted into an "Islamic Republic" (10 Farvardin 1358 or 31 March 1979). In this message Bakhtiar had urged people "not to take part in the voting" and had warned them that "by following Khomeini in this way, they would be leading themselves into a dark and unknown path"³⁸⁶. Once Bakhtiar was able to leave Iran,

³⁸³Former Chief of Staff of the Imperial Iranian Armed Forces, and brother of Bakhtiar's Labour Minister and Council Member.

³⁸⁴Former Cabinet Minister and Chancellor of Teheran University as well as the former powerful Head of the Empress's Office in Iran.

³⁸⁵This fact was acknowledged by Bagher Moin of the BBC Persian Service, in an account that was broadcast to the Iranina nation on 08/08/91 following Bakhtiar's assassination (interview, 3 May 1995).

³⁸⁶Amirshahi, M., *Yekrangji*, Farsi translation of Albin Michel's *Ma Fidelite*, Paris, 1982, p.240.

and establish himself in Paris in July 1979, he was again the first to come out publicly and state that he would be attempting to organize an effective resistance against the excesses of a brutal and backward regime, that was fast revealing its true nature to everyone, including the outside world. Based on this and his previous background, Bakhtiar considered himself to be the "natural Leader of the opposition", a position that he was not willing to share with anyone else³⁸⁷.

However, by mid-1979, certain political figures from the previous regime, notably Generals Gholam Ali Oveissi and Bahram Aryana, as well as former Minister of Science and Higher Education, Houshang Nahavandi, who was himself arrested and imprisoned by Bakhtiar during his period in office, were actively seeking support to organize an effective military and civil campaign against the new regime. This emerging situation was further complicated by the fact that the late Shah of Iran was still alive and in particular communication with General Oveissi. Also, Dr. Nahavandi, who was previously the head of the Empress's office in Teheran was also in communication with the Shah, via the Empress.

Although, they were all united in their opposition to the Islamic regime, the content of the messages that were being disseminated by these figures were substantially different, in that while Bakhtiar was trying to distance himself from the Shah and the previous regime, the others, who were on better speaking terms with one another, were of the view that the previous regime "was not all bad, and that they had a proud record

³⁸⁷Prior to the publications of Nehzat and Ghyame Iran, on 17 August 1979, Bakhtiar had placed an advert in LE MONDE saying that he and a number of others would be putting out a daily, anti-regime newspaper called "NAMEHE ROUZ". According to Daneshjoyan Mosalman Payro Khate Emam, *Asnade Laneh Jasousi*, [Vol. 28, p.62], this publication also enjoyed the support of Hedayat Matin Daftari's National Democratic Front.

which was full of major achievements, and certainly most defensible"³⁸⁸.

Whether a more conciliatory and diplomatic attitude by Bakhtiar, may have assisted the promotion of better dialogue amongst these groups, is a matter for speculation, but as matters unfolded, disagreements about various issues that were based on the past, very soon became a subject of serious internal bickering and recriminations.

Meanwhile, by early 1980, the monarchists, as a consequence of the "anti-Khomeini mood" that was being cultivated by the international media due the various nefarious acts that were being committed by the Islamic Republic³⁸⁹, were starting to feel more self-assured and less intimidated by the aura of the Revolution that had displaced them. A direct result of this was the airing of their open support for the deposed Shah, and their utter distaste for all those who had opposed him - including Bakhtiar³⁹⁰. And, while there were open lines of communication between Bakhtiar advisers and the others, it was soon becoming apparent that getting them to work together under one roof was an impossible feat.

³⁸⁸This point was reiterated during the course of several discussions conducted by the writer with General Oveissi and Dr. Nahavandi from March-July 1980.

³⁸⁹eg. Torture, imprisonment, and execution of its opponents, along with the highly contentious and illegal occupation of the American Embassy in Teheran and the holding of its diplomats as hostages.

³⁹⁰It is important to note that during the "London March" in support of Bakhtiar during the Summer of 1979 (in which the author participated), the overwhelming number of those taking part were supporters of constitutional monarchy and devoted followers of the late Shah. However, as the revolution was still in its early stages, they were still too intimidated to chant any pro-Shah slogans. Hence, given the composition of those who took part in that march, the demonstration, though pro-Bakhtiar on the surface, was as much a statement of affirmation for the previous regime. This was a very important point that was unfortunately lost to Bakhtiar and his advisers at that time.

At the same time, Bakhtiar's own lack of personal contact with the Shah³⁹¹, coupled with certain controversial statements made by him regarding "the Un-Nationalistic nature of the Iranian Armed Forces"³⁹² etc.³⁹³, drove a serious and un-repairable wedge between him and the exiled military community, as well as its leaders such as Oveissi, and many others.

This situation was further complicated when by early 1980, Hassan Nazih, a Mossadegh supporter and the former head of the Lawyers Guild in Iran, who had closely collaborated with Bakhtiar in his days of opposition to the Shah and was generally considered as one of the main political figures of the Iranian Revolution, was sacked from his post as the Head of the National Iranian Oil Company by the Islamic authorities, and forced to flee to exile. While, Nazih was, himself, willing to cooperate with Bakhtiar on an equal footing, he was not prepared to work under him³⁹⁴. At the same time, many former National Front colleagues and intellectuals in exile were expressing reluctance to cooperate with Bakhtiar, on the grounds that he had "violated a sacred code, and had compromised his principles by accepting the title of Prime Minister from the hands of the Shah"³⁹⁵! This attitude was similarly underlined, when Admiral Ahmad Madani, the "Middle Class's Alternative" in Iran's first presidential

³⁹¹In a personal conversation with the author, Bakhtiar stated that he only spoke with the Shah on one occasion from the time that he had left Iran to the time when the Shah died in Cairo in July 1980.

³⁹²Meaning that the Armed Forces was under foreign (ie. U.S.) influence.

³⁹³Amirshahi, M., *Yekrangi*, Farsi translation of Albin Michel's *Ma Fidelite*, Paris, 1982, p. 231.

³⁹⁴Personal discussion between Nazih and the author conducted in Nice in November 1980.

³⁹⁵According to National Front and Bakhtiar activist, Azizollah Esna Ashari, one of the most notable figures amongst this category of people was the British based intellectual Homa Katouzian.

elections, having arrived in Paris using Bakhtiar's network (and at his expense), refused to form any kind of an alliance with him³⁹⁶.

By Late 1980, this aggravating situation was even more exacerbated when former Prime Minister, Dr. Ali Amini was persuaded to throw his hat into the ring, and following consultations that took place between him and a number of his key advisers at that time³⁹⁷, the "Front For the Liberation of Iran" (FLI) was subsequently launched in 1981 (with CIA support and funding)³⁹⁸, in direct competition with Bakhtiar and his newly emerging "National Movement of the Iranian Resistance" (NAMIR).

By this time, following the death of the late Shah on 27 July, 1980, his eldest son Reza Pahlavi II, had on 31 October 1980, declared himself as the new Shah, and had quietly thrown his support behind the FLI³⁹⁹. Also, with the exception of Dr. Nahavandi who by this time had faded into the background⁴⁰⁰, all the others including General Oveissi, at the Young Shah's behest⁴⁰¹, had come to accept a working relationship with Dr. Ali

³⁹⁶This has been corroborated in interviews with Abbas Gholi Bakhtiar, who escaped from Iran together with Madani, and Dr. Cyrus Amouzegar, Bakhtiar's Minister of Information and a close friend of Admiral Madani.

³⁹⁷Most prominently Dr. Shahin Fatemi and Islam Kazemieh.

³⁹⁸While, the original FLI manifesto was did not commit itself to re-establishing monarchy in Iran, it was, nevertheless, composed mainly of senior monarchist figures, and included nearly all the prominent figures in Paris who had failed to establish any kind of a meaningful dialogue with Bakhtiar.

³⁹⁹This was due to the fact that activists in the FLI had been more willing to contact him and seek his views and cooperation. In this respect, the Bakhtiar organization, while not hostile, was very aloof, and disinterested in wanting to have any consultations of a serious nature with the new Shah, a personality whom they did not take very seriously.

⁴⁰⁰Having come to a realistic assessment regarding his disposition.

⁴⁰¹General Oveissi's brother, Colonel Ahmad Oveissi, had been appointed as the Young Shah's adjutant by Mohammad Reza Shah, and had remained by his side from

Amini, and had agreed to come under the umbrella of the FLI⁴⁰². Only General Bahram Aryana, and his organization called "Azadeghan" (Free Souls), remained outside the FLI, and having achieved the dramatic (and news-making) take over in the high seas of three Iranian Naval Patrol Boats that had been delivered by the French government to the Islamic regime, he had opted for setting up of a military camp in Turkey, from where he was intending to woo the military establishment inside the country to rise to his call⁴⁰³. While, unwilling to have anything to do with Oveissi, Bakhtiar's attitude towards Aryana whom he considered as a "learned nationalist", was totally different. Thus, Bakhtiar not only supported Aryana financially⁴⁰⁴, he instructed both Nehzat and Ghyame Iran to print any articles and statements put out by Aryana. The high point of this relationship was reached, when in the aftermath of the seizure of the "Iranian Ship Tabarzin". Bakhtiar instructed all his military supporters to join Aryana⁴⁰⁵. To mark this as a special occasion, Bakhtiar also ordered the publication of a special issue of

the day that he was born.

⁴⁰²At least, at the time when the movement was officially launched. In his book about William Casey entitled *Veil*, Bob Woodward refers to the fact that CIA was eventually given a presidential mandate to "conduct exploratory discussions with various anti-Khomeini exile groups to see which, if any, might be able to mount an opposition" (Woodward, B., *Veil: The Secret Wars of the CIA 1981-1987*, Simon And Schuster, New York, 1987, page 111-112). Eventually, the FLI was to become the flagship of the CIA in the Iranian opposition, to the detriment of the Bakhtiar organization, with whom the CIA was never able to reach the same level of cooperation.

⁴⁰³Something that eventually did not work for many reasons, the most prominent of which was the reluctance of the Turkish government to serve as launching point for such activities.

⁴⁰⁴Including personal health care and hospitalization fees (disclosed in a private conversation to the writer by Bakhtiar himself).

⁴⁰⁵This was also confirmed by General Manouchehr Hashemi (interview, London, 24 April 1995), who had also obtained the support of the Young Shah in Cairo for the joint Bakhtiar-Aryana efforts. He had subsequently taken a number of military officers for a special training program to Israel.

Ghyame Iran on 25 August 1981, to underline the importance of this "Joint Strategy"⁴⁰⁶.

It can be assumed that the creation of the FLI, was partly due to the failure of Bakhtiar and his initial group of advisers to utilize the unique position that they had as the sole bearers of the opposition flag. Differences of style, rather than substance, as well as self righteous and dogmatic attitudes on the part of Bakhtiar, himself, and a number of his close colleagues, during the early years resulted in a situation, such that by early 1981 - ie. several months still before the arrival of former Islamic President Abolhassan Bani Sadr and Mojahedin Leader Massoud Rajavi - the main Iranian opposition, consisting of traditional forces, was effectively divided into two main camps, and Bakhtiar, although the more credible of the two, was no longer the sole leader of the Iranian Opposition. This particular situation (that was to last till early 1986, when Dr. Ali Amini, was forced by circumstances to stand aside) was further complicated in August 1981 by the arrival in Paris of Bani Sadr and Rajavi.

What Bakhtiar desperately wanted was to dictate terms on his own conditions, a matter that was proving more difficult with the passage of time. It is often argued that a more magnanimous, and less dogmatic Bakhtiar, in the early days when his authority was unchallenged, could well have prevented the emergence of the FLI, or at least, lessened the effects of the numerous useless and time consuming squabbles that were to ensue following its establishment⁴⁰⁷.

⁴⁰⁶The release of this statement was received warmly in military circles, and on 1st October 1981, the strategy was able to receive the blessings of Major General Hassan Arfa, a leading and prestigious member of the 'Old Guard'.

⁴⁰⁷Prominent amongst these were the scathing and rather personal attacks which were made by Molood Khanlari in issue 28 of Nehzat (November 1982), as well as another scathing attack from the ex-Tudeh dignitary, Fereidoon Keshavarz that was printed in issue 8 of Ghyame Iran (April 1981).

What was generally perceived to be wanted by the general public in Iran was the creation of the so-called "Dream Team" - ie. "The Shah/Bakhtiar Ticket". And, while Bakhtiar, himself, was not opposed to this, his "Cognitive Rigidity"⁴⁰⁸, towards certain non-issues that were reflective of his past experiences, prevented him from ever developing the types of personal relationships with the Young Shah and some of his key advisers, that would have resulted in the outcome which everybody, including himself in the "moderate opposition", badly wanted. This important failure in communication, which could easily have been avoided during the initial period of his activities, hurt Bakhtiar more than any other political figure with whom he was in competition⁴⁰⁹. While, this potentially avoidable failure did not visibly impair Bakhtiar's near term progress and the successful of launching of NAMIR, it did, nevertheless, initiate a problem that was fragmentary and contrary to the general direction of his objectives, for which a significant price was eventually exacted⁴¹⁰.

Bakhtiar's "Foreign Policy" (1979-1983)

Though Western trained and educated, the understanding of 'foreign policy' and the workings of modern day international politics and its complexities, were not one of Bakhtiar's strong points⁴¹¹. However, during the early years, when Bakhtiar was still

⁴⁰⁸A phrase that was coined by the Shah's Political Counsellor, Dr. Shahriar Ahy, to describe the impasse.

⁴⁰⁹This is mainly because, as the leading contender, he could have come to terms with the Shah, at no cost to any of his principle, and have remained at the helm, in circumstances that no one else amongst his competitors could have struck such a deal.

⁴¹⁰From late 1979 onwards, Bakhtiar became a villain amongst nearly all the exiled monarchist press for his gratuitous comments and insults against the Shah and the former figures of his establishment.

⁴¹¹In contrast with the late Shah, this matter became known to the writer in the first meeting that was held with Bakhtiar in October 1980.

hopeful of regaining power, using available domestic resources, at a time when the Islamic republic was still unconsolidated and disorganized, he was not in need of a coherent foreign policy as such, apart from the good working relationship which he had been able to achieve with Saddam Hussein. This, is not to say that during this period, he did not welcome establishing contacts with other foreign leaders (eg. President Anwar Sadat who invited him to Egypt and gave him a radio station in 1982), but the fact remains that his single most immediate requirement from a "foreign" source- ie. finance, had been provided by Iraq.

The fact that for most of 1979-1981 he was concentrating on the internal scene in Iran, allowed all his political competitors in exile, an important 'lead time' for establishing international contacts of their own, primarily at Bakhtiar's expense.

By 1982, however, understanding the fact that the struggle could no longer be won in a 'quick fashion', Bakhtiar began focusing more attention on establishing better relations with key countries such as the United States, Britain, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia. While, the subject of these relations require separate consideration, that will be dealt with independently in a later chapter, the fact that Bakhtiar was no longer isolated from receiving other view points, helped Bakhtiar in taking major steps in correcting the course that his organization was taking, and by establishing an acceptable "Modus Vivendi" with his political competitors. Thus, by August 1983, Bakhtiar had not only signed an "Agreement of Principles" with Dr. Ali Amini⁴¹², but had declared his open support for the re-establishment of constitutional monarchy in Iran, and was thus in position to embark on the most constructive period of his political campaign.

⁴¹²Which effectively harnessed the likes of Molood Khanlari and Hossein Malek, and sidelined them from the main thrust of NAMIR's activities.

Chapter 4: THE INTERMEDIATE STAGE (1983-1987)

The period from 1983-1987 marks the time in which Bakhtiar began for the first time to make his impact felt as leader of an organized political force. This period, coinciding with the beginning of the slide in the popularity of the Islamic regime in Iran, also marked Bakhtiar's period of popular ascendance and credibility as a national figure with audiences both at home and abroad. The state of the popularity of the regime, beginning with the time frame applicable to Bakhtiar's plans during the "Intermediate Stage" of his activities, is an issue which has been dealt with in pages 51-52 of the first Chapter. There is no question that visible signs of dissatisfaction were beginning to appear across the country soon after the victory of the revolution, and by the time that Bani-Sadr and the Mojahedin were forced to flee into exile by August 1981, they had become widespread and apparent. Following the ouster of Bani-Sadr and the Mojahedin, the last remaining member of the Grand Coalition which had toppled the Shah in 1979, was the Tudeh Party, which was itself finally outlawed in May 1983. Therefore, by the middle of 1983, all political constituencies - i.e., the monarchists, the National Front, the Communists, the Mojahedin, etc. - had all been banned from active participation in Iranian political life, and were all consequently forced into underground opposition against the regime. Furthermore, it is important to underline that opposition to the regime was not limited to just the secular political establishments. Indeed, by early 1983, the overwhelming majority of the Shiite Moslem religious establishment in places like, Qom, Mashhad and Najaf, were opposed to the nature of Islamic government as defined by Ayatollah Khomeini (A list of important clerics in Qom, Mashhad, and Teheran who had been targeted by NAMIR for cooperation against the regime had been prepared). Manifestations of this clerical opposition had already been witnessed by the unpopular humiliation that was inflicted on Grand

Ayatollah Kazem Shariat-Madari, one of the most reverend figures in the world of Shiism, who was implicated with Sadegh Ghotbzadeh for having plotted to overthrow the Islamic Republic. While, voicing open and outright opposition against any government (bearing in mind that even clerical opposition to the Shah took 37 years to manifest itself)- let alone one headed by an eminent clerical personality - ran counter to the traditions of the conservative clergy, nevertheless, loud voices of discontent were being echoed not only from supporters of the now "demoted" Shariat-Madari, but also by other Grand Ayatollahs and "Sources of Imitations", such as Grand Ayatollah Hassan Tabataba'ii Qomi in Mashhad⁴¹³. Thus, while the outside world continued to remain unaware of the true degree of dissention within the ranks of the Iranian clergy, it was an acknowledged fact within the Iranian clerical community, that an overwhelming majority of the religious constituency were opposed to Khomeini's interpretation of "Velayate Faghih", and the dangers of public resentment to which the Islamic Republic was exposing the entire constituency.

Perhaps their most successful endeavor against the Islamic regime, was the propaganda that the opposition movements, as a whole, were able to generate which had a devastating effect in tarnishing the image of the Islamic regime at home. These efforts were further complemented by the attitude on the part of many leading western democracies, led in particular by the United States. It is a fact that, at the political level, the relations between many of the major European countries, such as Britain and France, had failed to reach a "take off" stage, even prior to the exacerbation of relations

⁴¹³In his interview with the Teheran daily, Bamdaad on 10 March 1980 following his visit with Khomeini, Ayatollah Qomi had spoken openly about the "brutalities, injustices and other un-Islamic deeds of the Islamic Republic". As a result of his open and outright criticism of the regime (the most blatant to come from a religious leader of great stature), Qomi's movements were gradually restricted and eventually, he was put under house arrest.

that had resulted following the seizure of the United States Embassy in Teheran and the holding of its diplomats as hostages.

So in summary it can be concluded that while the regime had been successful in consolidating its hold on power, it had nevertheless, through acts of wanton cruelty and barbarism, deprived itself of its earlier popular image. The most important litmus test which confirmed this was the popular response to Bakhtiar's call for a peaceful demonstration on August 5, 1983 - the Iranian Constitution Day - in which thousands of Iranian jammed the streets of Teheran, causing major traffic jams from the center of the city to the prosperous northern suburbs which was subsequently reported in the French daily, Le Monde, of 7-8 August 1983.

As already mentioned in the previous Chapter, by early 1982 Bakhtiar had come to a realistic conclusion that he could no longer count on any 'spontaneous and quick series of events' to turn the tide against the Islamic Republic, which had been riddled at the time with great organizational chaos. Moreover, by that time, he had become fully aware that the start of the Iran-Iraq War⁴¹⁴, and the failure of the Iraqi armed forces to

⁴¹⁴The Iran-Iraq War began with the Iraqi offensive on 21 September 1980. Occasioned by a boundary dispute over the Shatt-al-Arab waterway, it fundamentally arose because of Saddam Hussein's fear of a weakening of his absolute power base in Iraq by Iran's encouragement of the Shiite majority in Iraq to rise against the Sunni government. According to Shahram Chubin, "From Iraq's perspective the time to strike - preventively perhaps - was unlikely to be better than in 1980, before the revolution put down its roots, while its forces were in disarray, and while its relationship with both superpowers and most regional states were at best strained. Iraq's miscalculation was nearly total in that it overestimated its own capabilities while misconstruing the nature of its adversary and the sources of power at the latter's disposal.... Iraq's inability to capitalize on surprise in the early weeks of the war to military effect was not as serious as its failure to fashion a clear political objective. It seems to have expected a quick collapse of the regime, or a willingness to sue for peace, based on limited losses" (Chubin, S., "Iran and the War: from Stalemate to Ceasefire", in Karsh, E. (Edited), "The Iran-Iraq War - Impact and Implications", The Jaffee Center For Strategic Studies, Tel-Aviv University, 1989.). However, contrary to Iraqi perceptions and those of a majority of its opponents, the Islamic regime used the war to harness the energies of

take advantage of the existing state of disarray within the Iranian military establishment, had led to a great resurgence of popular sentiment on the part of the general population in favor of the regime, and against the invading "foreign aggressor", and those who were, by implication, tied to them⁴¹⁵.

What this meant, in real terms, was that it was no longer possible for Bakhtiar to overthrow the Islamic regime as a result of some 'quick coup-like operation'. Instead, it had become evident that nothing short of a "longer term", well planned and organized strategy was likely to prove successful in dismantling a regime that was rapidly consolidating itself as a consequence of the Iraqi aggression⁴¹⁶.

While the realization of this reality, is without question the most important reason that lay behind the organizational evolution that was to take place within NAMIR, the fact that such a route was taken only after a series of successive failures "in other areas", was a highly damaging factor, which the new organization never really came to grip

the mobilized revolutionary rank and file, settle domestic scores, while consolidating power at home. It was not until eight years later, when it was totally exhausted and facing total defeat, in wake of the tremendous international assistance that was being given to Iraq, that it accepted a UN sponsored ceasefire.

⁴¹⁵There is no question that enemies of Bakhtiar, given his earlier contacts with Saddam Hussein and the fact that NAMIR operated a radio station from Baghdad, were attempting to link him in a negative way with Iraq, thus casting doubts about his integrity as a true nationalist. A very notable example of this, was in an article entitled, "The Iranian Followers of Saddam Hussein", written by Dr. Shahin Fatemi [who was later sacked from his position as deputy to Dr. Ali Amini (in the FLI)], in the 3-17 March, 1986 issue of IRAN VA JAHAN.

⁴¹⁶According to A. Esna-Ashari, a Bakhtiar confidante, even at this "late date", Bakhtiar was uncomfortable with the idea of a setting up a new organization that would be involved in any long term, or protracted struggle (interview: 3 October 1994).

with⁴¹⁷. Indeed, many of Bakhtiar's close advisers at the time were of the view that in the aftermath of the various important and time consuming efforts- the most prominent of which had been the "Nojeh Project" - Bakhtiar had, in fact, lost "heart" and had become content leading the "Comfortable life of a well known statesman in exile"⁴¹⁸.

Irrespective of any such speculations, it is a fact that by late 1981, despite a series of undeniable disappointments, as a consequence of a number of critical lost opportunities, Bakhtiar was able to bounce back, and push ahead with the construction of a credible opposition movement in exile, the like of which no other liberal-democratic group was able to match during his lifetime. Indeed, it is a fact that at its peak, in terms of size alone, apart from numerous cells inside the country, NAMIR had offices in almost all the major cities in Western Europe and North America, as well as numerous clandestine safe houses and offices in important neighboring countries such as Turkey and Pakistan⁴¹⁹. Even in 'politically' remote countries such as India, many Bakhtiar supporters were able to become very actively engaged in propagating his viewpoints, and lobbying with the local government officials in support of his political platform.

This period, despite the fact that it did not contain some of the 'dramatic qualities' of the initial period, is probably the most important period of Bakhtiar's struggle in exile,

⁴¹⁷The desperate search for a "Quick Fix", was always given greater priority than the need to build a solid organization, capable of enduring the times.

⁴¹⁸This was the view that was being expressed by Dr. Cyrus Amuzegar, Bakhtiar's Minister of Information, as early as 1983. But this was not a universally shared view amongst Bakhtiar's key advisers. Everyone, almost to the man, was convinced of the unpopularity of the regime, and of the potential Bakhtiar enjoyed for leading the opposition to Khomeini. The only area of doubt centered around his ability to give proper leadership and management to the movement.

⁴¹⁹It is also a fact that by maintaining a radio station in Baghdad, NAMIR was also in a position to liaise with the Iraqi officials, particularly the "Iraqi Mukhaberat" (Secret Service) that was in overall charge of NAMIR's activities in Iraq.

due to the fact that during this time, Bakhtiar was able to project himself in a way that could have seen him take power with all the semblances of a credible national leader. To illustrate this point, had any of Bakhtiar's previous attempts at acquiring power succeeded in the previous years - eg. the Nojeh Project, then the Islamic authorities could have always claimed that they had been overthrown by "an unpopular, externally instigated, military coup", given that the unsavory face of the Islamic regime had by that time not actually revealed itself in full focus to the general population. Furthermore, it is also a fact, that without the terrible sufferings that were to ensue as a consequence of the protracted war with Iraq, despite the chaotic state of affairs, no serious dent had actually appeared in the general masses' view of Ayatollah Khomeini during the initial years. For example, very few people in 1980 or 1981 would actually contest the belief that, at the time of the Nojeh Project, Khomeini was still a highly revered and popular figure in Iran. However, by the mid-1980's, this perception had been drastically altered, and such factors as, the high casualties in the war, and others such as economic decline, rising unemployment, and gross violations of human right, had all made a serious impact on the previous popularity of Khomeini and his Islamic regime.

What this meant was that Bakhtiar's efforts were, for the first time, able to be projected in different terms, and also for the first time since the day that the late Shah had exposed him to national and international limelight⁴²⁰, Bakhtiar was able to be seen in the role that he had unsuccessfully tried to present himself, in all the years before and after 1978. Another words, so long as Khomeini's unpopularity was not clearly established, it was difficult for both Iranians as well as others in the international community to grasp a true measure of Bakhtiar's potential as a national figure, with any

⁴²⁰There can be no question that the late Shah of Iran by appointing Bakhtiar as Prime Minister, began the process that led to Bakhtiar becoming a household name in both Iran as well as in "corridors of power" in the West.

sort of a standing with the Iranian people.

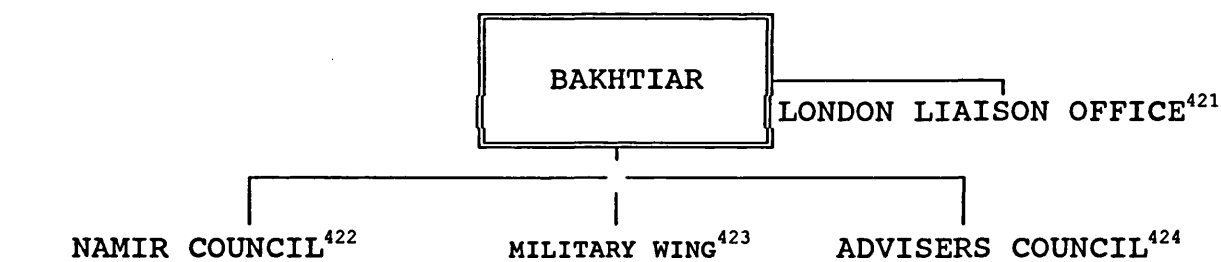
The bitterest irony is that while Bakhtiar was able to demonstrate this potential during this period, he was, for reasons to be explained in later chapters, still unable to reap the full rewards of his potential.

Promoting NAMIR As a Credible Organization

1. Forming the Required Structures

As mentioned previously, by late 1981, it had become fully clear to Bakhtiar that he was in for a much longer and a more protracted struggle that he had originally thought. Under these circumstances, he was aware that his own personality alone, was not sufficient to ensure cohesion amongst his supporters and success on the political field. Thus, what transpires during this period, is Bakhtiar's own personal commitment in seeing the promotion of NAMIR and its ability to project itself as a viable political organization.

CHART 1: OVERALL STRUCTURE OF THE BAKHTIAR ORGANIZATION



⁴²¹Headed by Mehrdad Khonsari, and in charge of Foreign Policy Coordination.

⁴²²This was a body of some 26 members, all appointed by Bakhtiar. While, all decisions and policies related to NAMIR was technically supposed to go through this body, in actual fact, the Council essentially 'codified' Bakhtiar's various pronouncements into policy for the organization.

⁴²³This organization, and its personnel were totally compartmented such that it had no contact with either the NAMIR Council or the Council of Advisers. Only Bakhtiar, and for a time, Boroomand were aware of its personnel and activities. However, there was collaboration between it and the London Liaison Office.

As indicated above in Chart 1, by the start of this period, Bakhtiar had been able to give some form of an "overall" structure to his organization, given the very important fact that there were many amongst his followers who had refused to officially register with NAMIR. This matter was dealt with through dealing with these figures either directly or by having some intermediary in NAMIR or the Council of Advisers deal with them.

(a) The Council of Advisers

The role of Bakhtiar's "Council of Advisers" acquired great importance with time, as most of its members were based in Paris, and as such, were able to meet on a regular weekly basis with him in person⁴²⁵. A very important mission that was delegated by Bakhtiar to his "Council of Advisers", was the creation of "Special Field Committees" that were to draw policy plans which were to be implemented once power had been seized. While, these committees were formed at the behest of Council members, the main criteria for membership was competence in one's respective field (eg. Agriculture, Industry or Foreign Affairs, etc.), and not loyalty to NAMIR or Bakhtiar. However, it was evident that the results of any such finding could only be utilized by some organization with the potential capability of making use of their research. In all some seven

and for a time, Boroomand were aware of its personnel and activities. However, there was collaboration between it and the London Liaison Office.

⁴²⁴This body, which convened every week, consisted mainly of personalities who had held office in Bakhtiar's government in Iran. Later, it was extended to include some others who were resident in Paris. Also, nearly all members of this body held a seat on NAMIR's Council as well. This meant, that in actual fact, Bakhtiar, himself, gave much greater credence to this "Kitchen Cabinet", than he did to the NAMIR Council which, at the best of times, never met more than a number of occasions during the course of an entire year.

⁴²⁵ Those participating in what was to become known as the "Wednesday Meeting", were all members of the NAMIR Council, and most had served in Bakhtiar's Cabinet in Iran.

committees (Banking, Petroleum, Economic Affairs, Foreign Affairs, Education, Social Affairs and agriculture), headed by prominent technocrats were formed, who were able to quickly come up with a series of reports that were then presented to Bakhtiar. The most immediate benefit of these reports was that they helped to keep Bakhtiar fully briefed of the latest state of affairs in different areas, which were all of crucial importance to the future of the country. Hence, he was able to direct his criticisms of the Islamic regime, with knowledge and authority, and as such, he was able to project himself as a national leader who had "a handle on all the relevant issues concerning the future prospects of the Iranian nation". Unfortunately, these committees did not last very long, and following the successful conclusion of their initial reporting during 1984-1985, they began to fade into inactivity and eventual dissolution.

For nearly all of Bakhtiar's period of activity in exile, the Advisers Council consisted of: Senator Kazem Jafroudi, Ahmad Mirfendereski, Morteza Ghadimi, Manouchehr Razmara, and Abbas Gholi Bakhtiar, Sadegh Sadrieh, Mohammad Moshiri, and Abdol Rahman Boroomand.

(b) The NAMIR Council

More than one half of NAMIR's Council members, not including those who also served in the "Council of Advisers" was composed of figures who were active solely within the confines of NAMIR, and even within NAMIR's Executive Committee, only its Chairman⁴²⁶, was both a member of the NAMIR Council and Bakhtiar's Council of Advisers⁴²⁷.

⁴²⁶First, Dr. Abdol Rahman Boroomand, and later another Bakhtiar crony, M. Moshiri.

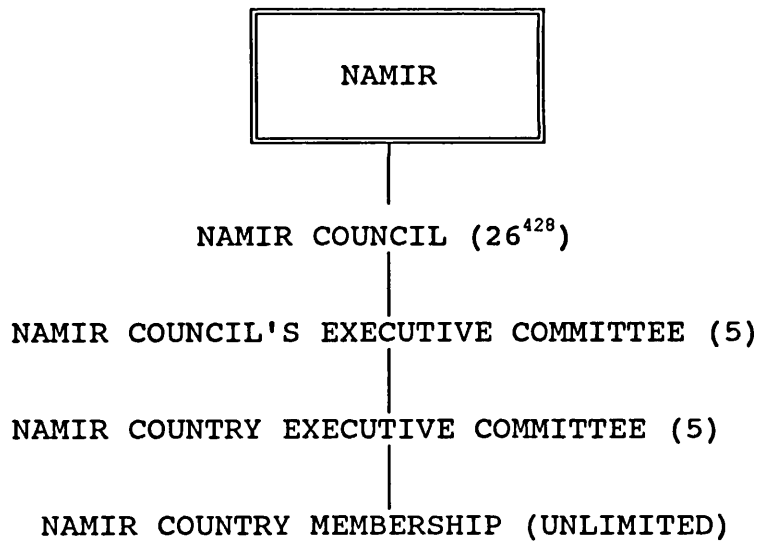
⁴²⁷It is important to note that Bakhtiar as leader of NAMIR, was himself, not the Chairman of NAMIR's Executive Committee.

For much of Bakhtiar's thriving period in the early to mid 1980s , the composition of the NAMIR Council consisted of the following individuals, listed in the groupings to which they had generally aligned themselves with (See Appendix 2 for more details regarding each of the personalities): (1) **The "Boroomand Bloc"** (i.e., people who voted with Boroomand, who were mainly of National Front/ Student Confederation origins): A.R. Boroomand, Ali Shakeri, Mostafa (Hamid) Zolnour, Chahrokh Vaziri, Mehdi Kharazi, Mahmoud Hejazi, Hamid Sadr, Hassan Naghibi, Homayoun Mehmanesh, Sadegh Sadrieh, and Iradj Pezeshkzad. (2) **The Monarchist/Traditionalist Bloc**: Senator Kazem Jafroudi, Ahmad Mirfendereski, Morteza Ghadimi, Manouchehr Razmara, and Abbas Gholi Bakhtiar. (3) **The "Independent" Bloc**: Amir Hossein Amir Parviz, Mohammad Moshiri, Rahim Sharifi, Hossein Malek, and Ezat Raastgaar, Mahsheed Amirshahi. (4) **The Tribal Bloc** (most of these members voted with the Boroomand Bloc): Fariborz Karimi, Abdollah Ghobadian, Shahbaz Zargham Pour, and Fereidoon Boyer Ahmadi (the man responsible for Bakhtiar's murder, who was admitted to the Council as a "substitute member" in the late 1980s).

Every member of NAMIR's Executive Committee was charged with performing a particular function -eg. there was one person in the committee who was in charge of one of the areas listed below:

- a) Organization
- b) Finance
- c) Propaganda
- d) Political Education
- e) Operations

CHART 2: OVERALL STRUCTURE OF NAMIR



As illustrated in Chart 2, these duties, were in turn, duplicated down the line by the Executive Committee members of NAMIR's branches in other countries⁴²⁹, as well as those NAMIR cells that were formed inside the country. Furthermore, their exact terms of responsibilities were again more clearly elaborated in the NAMIR Constitution that was finally ratified and distributed by mid-1983.

(c) NAMIR-MW

Finally, there was the all important matter of dealing with military personnel, who, given their previous background and mental disposition, were totally suspicious of all intellectuals and technocrats, who formed the bulk of NAMIR's emerging elite⁴³⁰. As

⁴²⁸The number in the bracket refers to the number corresponding with the full membership of that committee.

⁴²⁹Who in turn, formed the relevant committees by including interested personnel from the membership.

⁴³⁰It is a fact that most military officers blamed the intellectuals more for the revolution (which in their view was synonymous with the advent of Khomeini) than the clergy, and as such, had the tendency to see them more as the real enemy. Thus,

Chart 1 further demonstrates, from the very day of appointing Brigadier General Amir Hossein Shahrदार, a highly qualified, experienced and able, officer of the Imperial Iranian Ground Forces to command his military office, Bakhtiar ensured that the general and his staff dealt with him, and only with him, well compartmented from the ranks of other NAMIR activists. Apart from Dr. A.R. Boroomand, prior to feuding with General Shahrदार, only the Head of the London Liaison Office (as explained later), for reasons of coordinating various plans, was allowed by Bakhtiar to be in close and constant contact with the Commander of NAMIR-MW.

2. NAMIR's Political Strategy (1983-1986)

Once the prospect of a quick military take over was no longer on the agenda, it was essential for NAMIR to adopt policies and stands, compatible with the wishes and aspirations of the majority of the Iranian people.

Perhaps, the most important single issue which contributed on a massive scale to underline the unpopularity of the Islamic regime by the mid-1980's was the continuing Iran-Iraq War, whose futility, following the expulsion of invading Iraqi troops from Iranian territory, was becoming increasingly more apparent which each passing day. In fact, the general population never fully understood why the promise of "billions of dollars" in compensation had failed to sway the regime of the Ayatollah to cease hostilities? However, apart from what was left of the initial die hard supporters of the

getting them to cooperate with people, particularly those who had an elaborate record of anti-Shah activities, was essentially a non-starter, which Bakhtiar understood very well and never encouraged from the outset.

Ayatollah⁴³¹, hardly any Iranian was taken in with such promises as "liberating Qods via Kerbala"⁴³². Thus, apart from his own personal convictions, and the constant clamoring of the Iraqi regime for wanting to end the war in the mid-1980's, Bakhtiar and NAMIR, correctly gauged the sentiment of the Iranian people to be one that was completely opposed to the policies zealously pursued by the Islamic regime in this crucial area.

Thus, a strategy to make "opposition to the war"⁴³³, the center piece of NAMIR's policy against the regime was very quickly adopted and various propaganda schemes were developed by the elaborate propaganda machine that had been created by NAMIR, as shown in Chart 3, to promote its objectives. There is no question that once again, Bakhtiar was the first amongst all Iranian opposition figures to declare his opposition to the war. He was also the first in initiating a very effective publicity campaign aimed

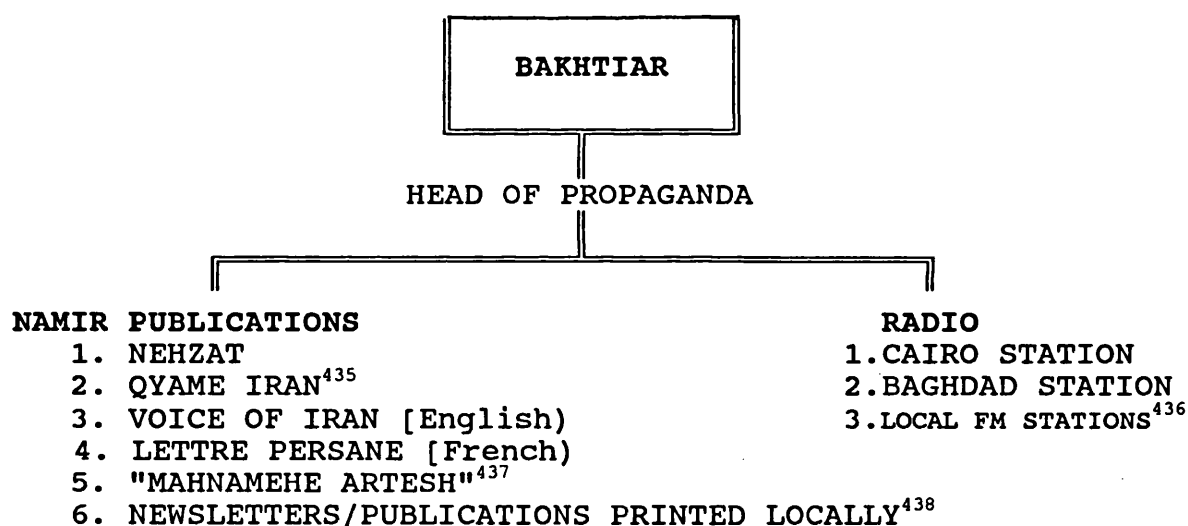
⁴³¹In an interview with a serving member of the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the author was told that according to sources from within the Ministry, most of the personnel killed or injured during the first two years of the war, were staunch Islamic supporters of the Ayatollah, who had been the first to volunteer their services. The Foreign Ministry official was of the view that "Iranian people should one day construct a statue of Saddam Hussein in gold, for his services in having rendered the country rid of these unsavory characters".

⁴³²This was the famous slogan used by the Islamic regime meaning that the road to the liberation of Palestine (Qods) went through the holy city of Kerbala in Iraq. This meant that in order to liberate Palestine from the Zionists, it was essential to first liberate Iraq from Saddam Hussein.

⁴³³Bakhtiar was committed to bringing the war to a quick termination, for he felt that it was serving no purpose, other than allowing the mullahs to become more firmly entrenched in power at home. By "opposition to the war", he meant a cessation of all hostilities and withdrawal of all forces to the previously established borders, on the basis of the 1975 Algiers Treaty, which would then be followed by a new and honorable peace treaty with Iraq. He did not mean capitulation, nor did he mean acceding to any of the demands which had been made by Saddam Hussein (e.g., re-drawing of Iran's borders with Iraq, and independence for the Arabs of Khuzistan, etc.). It is important to point out that his position was clearly understood by a majority of Iranians, and while there were great resentments in many quarters regarding the fact that Bakhtiar was receiving Iraqi funds and operating a radio station from Baghdad, there was never any doubt regarding what he actually meant by repeating his assertion of being opposed to the war, and making this a major theme of his opposition campaign against the Islamic Republic.

at promoting his view. Obviously, the adoption of such a policy had the great advantage of being also supported by nearly all the major Western powers, as well as the Soviet Union, who were, first and foremost, interested in curtailing the expansion of any more "Khomeini-inspired" fundamentalist governments in the Middle East. Apart from the uniform concern in wanting to prevent the collapse of Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq⁴³⁴, the West, in particular, was interested in ensuring that the war remained confined to those areas on land, so that neither international shipping in the Persian Gulf, nor the flow oil could be affected in the least way.

CHART 3: THE BAKHTIAR PROPAGANDA ORGANIZATION



⁴³⁴Through massive supply of highly sophisticated arms, including the agreement by France to transfer a number of "Super Etendard" fighter aircraft, equipped with Exocet Missiles to Iraq - something which Bakhtiar never opposed! (NEHZAT, 3 November 1983).

⁴³⁵During the height of Bakhtiar's activities (1986), a special edition of Qyame Iran was printed for distribution inside Iran.

⁴³⁶In a number of cities, NAMIR members were able to set up their own local NAMIR radio stations, as well as a "Local Telephone News Service".

⁴³⁷This was a special publication printed by NAMIR Military Wing, for distribution amongst military personnel inside Iran. Like the special edition of Qyame Iran, this publication came into being at a very critical stage during Bakhtiar's campaign.

⁴³⁸These publications varied according to conditions in various locations. For example, in Los Angeles, where there was a large Iranian population, PAYAME

Bakhtiar was convinced that the perpetuation of the war, served only to promote the interests of the ruling clique in Iran, who had used the war as a means of consolidating their strangle hold over the Iranian people, and thus, the sooner the war was ended, the sooner the country could get rid of its corrupt and inept rulers⁴³⁹. However, it was not until 5 August 1983, and then only quite accidentally, that both him and NAMIR were to stumble on this reality in quite a dramatic fashion. During the course of a regular broadcast a few days before the 77th Anniversary of the Iranian Constitution of 1906 (ie. 5 August), "Radio Iran", the Voice of the National Movement of the Iranian Resistance, in a broadcast to the Iranian nation asked all people opposed to the regime, and to its "policy of warmongering" to gather peacefully in the streets in a display of solidarity with NAMIR. Though, the request was vaguely phrased in order to ensure no loss of face in case of no response, the appeal was tremendously well received and supported in Teheran, and the resultant presence of large crowds of people, took the regime by complete surprise, and exposed many of its vulnerabilities⁴⁴⁰. In a "knee jerk reaction" aimed at asserting its authority and flexing their muscles, the regime responded by an immediate and indiscriminate campaign of arbitrary arrests. However, given the lack of support for charges that it could reasonably

EMROOZ was printed and distributed on a daily basis. Given the local situation in Los Angeles, and the possibility of revenue through advertising, the Bakhtiar Organization's direct assistance to this newspaper, which was being produced more widely than either NEHZAT or Qyame Iran, was fairly limited. In countries like Germany, Turkey, or India, numerous newsletters were produced and distributed in local languages. In short, during this period, the message of Bakhtiar and NAMIR was being echoed more broadly than that of any other Iranian opposition figure or organization, with the possible exception of the "People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran".

⁴³⁹This is the view expressed by Bakhtiar on numerous occasions to the writer.

⁴⁴⁰Such as their inability (ie. what to do) to cope with large and potentially hostile mass gatherings, something that the regime had had no previous experience of encountering.

levy against the various arrested individuals, the Islamic authorities had no final choice but to ultimately release the overwhelming majority of those it had detained.

Nonetheless, the impact of this peaceful demonstration was quickly taken note of in the Iranian exile communities around the world, and while Bakhtiar's reputation was further enhanced by taking the credit for this initiative, other opposition leaders were not, just the same, deflected in claiming a piece of the glory for themselves⁴⁴¹.

Promoting "Negative Resistance"

A net result of this experience, was the adoption and the promotion, by Bakhtiar, of the "Concept of Negative Resistance" to complement his anti-war campaign. While, the promotion of the "Concept of Negative Resistance" was put in force as early as February 1984, it was not until a whole year later that they were fully articulated and made known to the public in Iran. Supported by a strong team of younger, and more active elements within NAMIR⁴⁴², who had formed an "Action Group" in Paris to monitor its progress, this campaign that was launched in early 1985 was to lead to a series of events that would mark Bakhtiar's highest point of credibility and achievement as an opposition leader.

The Campaign of "Negative Resistance" was fully launched by Bakhtiar in a radio

⁴⁴¹eg. Nazih, Madani, and in particular, many supporters of the Young Shah, who claimed that it was due to his call, in the first instance, that the whole demonstration had been sparked off.

⁴⁴²This group was, nevertheless, composed of sufficiently senior, ex-anti Shah activists, such as Mahmoud Hejazi, Hamid Sadr, and Mehdi Kharrazi, who were all full members of the NAMIR Council.

message in February 1985⁴⁴³. In his message Bakhtiar asked that the Iranian people should adhere to the following instructions:

1. Not to deposit any money with regular banking institutions that were run by the government.
2. Not to purchase unnecessary items that were the sole monopoly of government shops.
3. To minimize their purchases of petrol and other oil products.
4. To prepare a comprehensive list of all government officials who were indulging in acts of corruption.
5. To identify and introduce all persons and organizations, charged with protecting the regime.

Given the brutal nature of the Islamic regime, this concept was specially designed to activate the general population in ways that would not make its opposition either obvious or subject to immediate retribution by the regime⁴⁴⁴.

In March 1985, in the course of his New Year's radio message to the Iranian people, Bakhtiar further intensified his two pronged policy of "Negative Resistance" and "Opposition to the War", and was greatly assisted by a most welcome anti-war

⁴⁴³Qyame Iran, No. 108, 15 February 1985.

⁴⁴⁴For example, in an interview with the French Journal De Dimanche on 12 February 1984, Bakhtiar claimed that he had, in the course of radio appeal, asked the people of Iran to remain within the confines of their homes from the previous Friday morning up to 6 pm of the day after (ie. Saturday) - this meant no shopping etc. He claimed that according to the reports which he had received, his appeal had been "80% successful in 12 major cities throughout Iran". However, Bakhtiar was unable to receive any independent confirmation in the international press regarding his claims.

"Fatwa"⁴⁴⁵ that was issued, in that same month, by Grand Ayatollah Hassan Tabatabai Qomi⁴⁴⁶ in Mashhad⁴⁴⁷.

Demonstrating Internal Support And General Credibility

Having also intensified his attacks on the Islamic regime, by rejecting any "Western Inspired Notion" that "moderate factions within the ruling establishment should be encouraged to obtain the upper hand in the battle to succeed Khomeini"⁴⁴⁸, by May 1985, Bakhtiar was ready to embark on the most important gamble of his political career. In a radio message to the Iranian people on Wednesday 15 May 1985, he urged the Iranian people to fill the street of all major cities throughout Iran, in protest against the Iran-Iraq War. This important gamble paid off, and at a period when his credibility in Western circles was beginning to wane as a consequence of 'passing time

⁴⁴⁵A religious Edict.

⁴⁴⁶Grand Ayatollah Hassan Tabatabaii Qomi, born approximately in 1910, has been a major figure in Iranian religious life since the early 1960s. A "source of Imitation", he became the leading Ayatollah in Mashhad following the death of Grand Ayatollah Milani, and was an ardent opponent of the late Shah, whom he had criticized since the early 1960s, following his decision to pursue his so-called "White Revolution". Having been a vocal critic of the Shah during the (mainly Khomeini inspired) riots of 1963, Ayatollah Qomi was the only other senior cleric to be arrested with Ayatollah Khomeini. Like Khomeini, he was exiled (internal exile in the town of Karaaj, on the outskirts of Teheran) from 1963 to 1978. Following the revolution, and his triumphant return to Mashhad, he was the first "Source of Imitation" to publicly and openly challenge Khomeini's interpretation of "Velayate Faghih", and his brand of Islamic government (Bamdaad, 10/03/80). By the early 1980s, he was first placed under great pressure, with his telephone lines being cut, and later he was placed under house arrest. Nonetheless, his prestige is such that the regime is unable to move against him directly, and as a result he has been able to communicate with the outside world through written messages smuggled from his house and distributed in Europe by his son, Hojat-ol-Eslam Mahmoud Qomi. He is still a powerful figure, as well as the last remaining senior Ayatollah of the Khomeini era (this information and further references to Ayatollah Qomi have been compiled through numerous interviews with his son, Mahmoud, the last of which was on 28 April 1995).

⁴⁴⁷Qyame Iran, No. 111, 29 March 1985.

⁴⁴⁸Qyame Iran, No. 106, 18 January 1985.

and a lack of any tangible results', Bakhtiar was able to demonstrate to all Iranians and foreigners alike, that his credibility far from having waned, was at its peak, and that he and NAMIR, were without question, the most credible opposition to the Islamic dictatorship in Iran⁴⁴⁹.

The 17 May 1985 demonstrations in Teheran and other major cities throughout Iran, as reported by the international press⁴⁵⁰, clearly marked the highest point of Bakhtiar's entire campaign in opposition. The support he obtained through his appeal came at a most crucial time, enabling him to piece together a most sophisticated plan of action that would constitute his last major effort at toppling the Islamic regime.

Attempt At Creating A Political Consensus

In the previous chapter, some aspects of conflict, competition, as well as cooperation between Bakhtiar and other opposition figures has been discussed. However, one of the greatest factors which prompted Bakhtiar to address this issue more seriously, was

⁴⁴⁹One of the Iranian government's first reactions to the 17 May demonstrations called by Bakhtiar was the expulsion from Iran of Mr. Trevor Wood, the Reuter Correspondent on grounds of "biased reporting" (Financial Times, 24 May 1985). In a separate message broadcast by the Islamic Republic in English at 1717 gmt on 17 May, the Iranian government's reaction were recorded as follows: "While more than a million people took part in Friday mass prayers in Teheran, a few hundred supporters of the defunct Shah resorted to childish displays in the capital today to show their liking of corrupt and unrestrained monarchical ways. The silly display was completely coordinated with the imperialist news agencies. One of them, the bankrupt US news agency, UPI, reported demonstrations by hundreds of thousands of people in Teheran and other cities!" (Source: BBC's Summary of World Broadcasts, Part 4, The Middle East, Africa and Latin America, ME/7955/A/5, 20 May 1985).

⁴⁵⁰The demonstrations were covered by the following international newspapers: The Financial Times of 18 May 1985 (an article by Kathleen Evans); The International Herald Tribune of 18-19 May 1985; and Le Monde of 19-20 May 1985. In addition, two letters on this subject, written by the writer, appeared in The Daily Telegraph of 24 May 1985 and The Financial Times of 6 June 1985.

the increasing level of contacts that he was beginning to have with influential international politicians, who were beginning to sense that the Islamic Revolution was fast starting to lose its original luster and popularity within Iran.

Therefore, in circumstances where international attention was being forcefully drawn on potentially viable alternatives to the clerical dictatorship, Bakhtiar and NAMIR, both stood to attract a great deal of attention. So, as Bakhtiar became more exposed to a greater number of important politicians from the outside world, one of the most important alterations which he made to his agenda, was the drive 'to be seen to be wanting' to forge some form of a national consensus with other "democratic" Iranian political activists and organizations, with whom he had no philosophical differences. There was little doubt that, as a consequence of this initiative, his image would be greatly enhanced, and he would be seen in the magnanimous role of an elder statesman, greatly concerned with the promotion of "unity" amongst his compatriots, as opposed to someone who refused to accept anyone or anything other than himself or NAMIR.

This was particularly so from 1982 onwards⁴⁵¹. While, in the past, Bakhtiar had a tendency to brush others aside, it was seen that this attitude was having a negative effect on parties - both Iranian and foreign - whom he was trying to attract for sympathy and assistance. So, devising a comprehensive, and at the same time genuine, strategy

⁴⁵¹In April 1982, while discussing the situation with a delegation of British Conservative Parliamentarians from the "BOW Group", whom he had invited to Paris, a question frequently posed to him, concerned his role and attitude with respect to others who were in opposition to Khomeini. This encounter, along with the discussions that were held, served to underline to Bakhtiar, in a most vivid fashion, the need to give greater consideration to the overall presentation of his image. The same point was also made on a number of occasions by American officials to Bakhtiar's representative in the Washington discussions.

to combat this problem became a high priority. This was particularly important, since Bakhtiar's main competitor⁴⁵², former Prime Minister Ali Amini, had entered the active opposition on a platform entitled "Ashtiye Melli" meaning national reconciliation.

The strategy which subsequently emerged, was one in which Bakhtiar would speak positively of all democratic elements, while close advisers would maintain contact with principal figures in other camps, in order to enhance 'the feelings of good will', as well as the genuineness of the sentiments that were being expressed⁴⁵³. At the same time, these contacts awarded an opportunity for exploration and exploitation of potential areas of cooperation with various camps. An outstanding example of what was achieved was the "Agreement of Principles" that was signed between Bakhtiar and Dr. Ali Amini, on 19 July 1983⁴⁵⁴. In this symbolically important statement, that was signed following long hours of hard work and negotiations between the Bakhtiar and Amini teams of advisers, the two leaders agreed on the following items:

- "1. The acceptance and endorsement of the Constitution of Iran (1906), and the unquestionable rejection of what had been imposed on the Iranian nation as the "Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran" through terrorism, intimidation and repression of the Iranian nation.
2. The confirmation of the regime of constitutional monarchy with unchallenged stress on the sovereignty of people and the faithful implementation of the will of the general public.

⁴⁵²In the sense that he was appealing to members of the same constituency.

⁴⁵³It was clear to NAMIR, that no benefit could be derived from this strategy if the feelings being expressed were judged to be merely tactical. While, the desire was to try and enhance the standing of Bakhtiar, it was felt that this could be better achieved through contact and persuasion, rather than conflict and competition.

⁴⁵⁴Reported in Le Monde of 24-25 July, 1983.

3. Emphasis on the need for the separation of religion from government, with due respect for all religions.
4. Affirmation of respect for the national traits of the people of Iran in so far as it did not harm the national integrity and freedom of the country.
5. The acceptance and regard for the rights and freedoms specified in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights."⁴⁵⁵

This agreement was further capped, when Amini, Bakhtiar, and General Bahram Aryana, shared a common platform in Paris to mark the 77th Anniversary of the Iranian Constitution⁴⁵⁶, and spoke of their "common quest and efforts for the liberation of Iran", to the dislike of some dogmatic figures, particularly within the ranks of NAMIR - such as Moloud Khanlary, who did not want Bakhtiar to be openly involved with the "likes of Amini etc."

On a similar note, when in an article published by The Listener on 2 November 1984, Baqer Moin, the current head of the BBC Persian Service, alleged that "within the monarchist camp, there were major differences of views between Bakhtiar and Amini, who were once striving to forge a united front⁴⁵⁷", once again, as a consequence of coordination, a letter, signed by both Amini and Bakhtiar, was sent for publication to The Listener, rejecting Moin's allegation, while, at the same time, stressing the level of cooperation that already existed between the two former prime ministers and the son

⁴⁵⁵Voice of Iran, No. 9, August/September, 1983.

⁴⁵⁶In August 1983.

⁴⁵⁷This is not a verbatim account of what Moin said.

of the late Shah⁴⁵⁸. The subsequent publication of the Farsi translation of this text⁴⁵⁹, was a source of tremendous gratification within the ranks of both NAMIR and FLI⁴⁶⁰, and served to boost morale in the Iranian exile community⁴⁶¹.

However, it is essential to point out that not all of the high level consultations that were being made, were leading to statements of agreement. Perhaps, one of the most damaging statements made by NAMIR, was following the breakdown of negotiations between Bakhtiar advisers and those of Reza Pahlavi, over the creation of the so-called "Constitutional Councils"⁴⁶² in various exile communities. This announcement by NAMIR which was printed in NEHZAT⁴⁶³, became a source of great resentment amongst hard line monarchist elements, and only served to further intensify their existing hostilities towards Bakhtiar.

But Bakhtiar remained undeterred, and was seen pursuing this important strategy in a

⁴⁵⁸This text was drafted by the writer, who at the time was a close Bakhtiar Adviser. Following consultations with the Iradj Amini, the son of Dr. Ali Amini who discussed the matter with his father, the draft text was accepted and signed.

⁴⁵⁹NEHZAT, No. 95, 28 February 1985.

⁴⁶⁰Dr. Amini's "Front for the Liberation of Iran".

⁴⁶¹In interview with Bagher Moin (London, 3 May 1995), he acknowledged that this was perhaps the only occasion when the two leaders had demonstrated unity of purpose by co-signing a particular statement.

⁴⁶²This was a project that was conceived by some of the Young Shah's close advisers, who wanted to set up "elected Councils" in different cities, to promote the cause of constitutional monarchy. At the beginning Bakhtiar agreed to co-sponsor this project with Amini. But when signs appeared that elements hostile to Bakhtiar were trying to manipulate the Councils to further their own positions, Bakhtiar pulled out, and later denounced the Councils, as puppet organizations in the hand of corrupt and disreputable elements of the previous regime. His denouncement of this project, in a BBC Farsi interview in July 1985, sealed the fate of the Councils, and within the next 12 months, Reza Pahlavi had also disassociated himself from them.

⁴⁶³No. 97, 14 March 1985.

more comprehensive way that also included important opinion makers, from outside the ranks of the constitutional monarchists as well. Prominent amongst Bakhtiar's targets for the promotion of the consensus that he was seeking, were some of his previous friends and associates within the ranks of the "National Front"⁴⁶⁴, as well as many within the ranks of the "moderate clergy" within Iran⁴⁶⁵. The only group Bakhtiar always condemned and refused to have any connections with, were the Mojahedin and their supporters in the so-called Council of National Resistance, which included certain former National Front figures such as Hedayat Matin Daftari, the grand-son of Mossadegh, whom Bakhtiar had known for many years in Iran⁴⁶⁶.

In conclusion, as Bakhtiar became more involved in a comprehensive campaign to project himself as the only natural alternative to the religious dictatorship in Iran, and as many important politicians and heads of states in Western capitals and Middle Eastern countries began seeing him in this light during the course of this period, Bakhtiar was able to act positively, and with a great deal of self confidence, in projecting himself as one well capable of promoting and attaining political consensus

⁴⁶⁴"Bakhtiar's Open Call for Support to former Colleagues in the National Front", NEHZAT, No. 33, 10 February 1983.

⁴⁶⁵This policy towards the "Moderate Clergy" was first announced by Bakhtiar during the course of a speech to a group of British Conservative Members of Parliament in London's Carlton Club in February 1984. This theme -ie. that there were great differences within the ranks of the clergy in Iran, the majority of whom, like Bakhtiar, were against the role depicted for them by Khomeini in Iran - was consistently emphasized from 1983-1987, while efforts were made to expand contacts and communication with leading clerics, supportive of this position inside Iran.

⁴⁶⁶Once Matin Daftari- revered by the Mojahedin because of his family ties with Mossadegh, had joined the Mojahedin, Bakhtiar used to jokingly say in private meetings that "Why does Matin Daftari keep constantly emphasizing that he is the grand-son of Mossadegh, and not the son of Senator Matin Daftari (a right wing crony of the late Shah)?" In answering this rhetorical question, he always added "that when you looked at the genealogy of a mule, you always found that only its mother was a horse!"

within important constituencies⁴⁶⁷, which constituted an overwhelming majority in the Iranian political landscape.

Promoting An Active Foreign Policy

During the Initial Period (1979-1983), the absence of a sophisticated foreign policy strategy to complement Bakhtiar's various plans and activities was a crucial factor. Indeed, Bakhtiar is on record for having said in a number of interviews⁴⁶⁸, that during the planning stages of the "Nojeh Project", he never had any conversations regarding it with any "major power". Only, during the final stage, prior to the start of the Nojeh operation, is he on record for having said that he had made a request for assistance to "the Americans"⁴⁶⁹, which was, in any event, ignored⁴⁷⁰. However, it is a fact that for the greater part of the Initial Period, Bakhtiar was devoid of the team essential for making the necessary contacts in the field of foreign affairs, and he, himself, was devoid of the necessary background and experience to successfully fill this void⁴⁷¹. While, there had been some minor contacts with U.S. officials in 1979⁴⁷², in which the father of Bakhtiar's son-in-law, Retired Major General Habibolla Mokhateb Rafii, had

⁴⁶⁷ie. the monarchists and the clergy.

⁴⁶⁸Including, in private conversations with the writer.

⁴⁶⁹Always unclear as to whom he was referring.

⁴⁷⁰In a 1983 interview with David Sells of BBC Television's Newsnight programme, he is on record for having said that "I only asked the Americans for some transport facilities to deliver arms to my people".

⁴⁷¹The man nominally in charge of Bakhtiar's foreign policy team, Ahmad Mirfendereski, did not arrive in Paris until more than 4 months after the failure of the "Nojeh Project".

⁴⁷²Daneshjoyan Mosalman Payro Khate Emam, *Asnade Laneh Jasousi*, Vols. 55, Office of Islamic Publications, Qom, 1985.

acted as an intermediary⁴⁷³, none of these had fulfilled any purpose for Bakhtiar, and by early 1983, all of these low level contacts had come to a complete stop⁴⁷⁴.

Efforts to embark on any kind of a serious foreign policy program⁴⁷⁵ was also impaired due to two other important factors: First and foremost, most foreign governments, still in a state of shock given the ease with which the late Shah's regime, with Bakhtiar as its last serving Prime Minister, had been overthrown by Ayatollah Khomeini, were genuinely interested in wanting to establish good relations with the new Islamic Republic. This meant that they were not (at least at the time) interested in 'courting any opposition to it'⁴⁷⁶. Secondly, Bakhtiar himself, having received the initial seed money

⁴⁷³Major General H. Mokhateb Rafii, a retired officer of the Imperial Iranian Ground Forces, upon retiring from the armed forces had been invited by the then Foreign Minister, Ardeshir Zahedi, to come and work in the Iranian Foreign Ministry. In 1973, upon Zahedi's appointment as Ambassador to Washington, he joined the Imperial Iranian Embassy in Washington, and while in that position, he was able to come into contact with people in the Pentagon and the intelligence community. Thus, he was in a position to assist Bakhtiar in the early stages, by arranging some introductory meetings for him. However, none of these meetings, apart from an introductory purpose, were of any significance, and, according to disclosures that were later made in meetings with U.S. officials, the General had been unable to help Bakhtiar make any form of a positive impression in the minds of those who had come to evaluate him. However, the CIA had been able to benefit from these meetings by establishing direct contact and updating their files.

⁴⁷⁴This was, on the one hand, due to the fact that the CIA, by 1982, was in the process of promoting Dr. Ali Amini's "Front for the Liberation of Iran" (FLI), in competition with NAMIR, and on the other hand, the Americans were still very hopeful of coming into some form of an accommodation with the Khomeini regime. Thus, when Bakhtiar came to Washington in January of 1984, no one in the CIA was prepared even to meet with him.

⁴⁷⁵Which meant, by inference, that you would have to be taken seriously by foreign governments as well.

⁴⁷⁶Here, it is important to mention that the British government -during the entire period of Bakhtiar's lobbying efforts, and most particularly the Foreign Office, were most cautious never to be seen talking with the Iranian opposition. In fact, the campaign that was suggested to Bakhtiar by the Liaison Office for the U.K., took note of this important constraint, and sought only to keep the British government informed of developments. However, no such restrictions existed for British members of parliament interested in the promotion of democracy in Iran, and it was thought best that by concentrating on

required to finance his early activities⁴⁷⁷, was so involved in his own schemes, that he never actually allocated the time and effort required to seek international support, consultation or benediction for his various plans.

However, in the aftermath of the failures of the initial years, it had become obvious that it was essential for Bakhtiar to make a serious effort at obtaining international support. This, in effect, meant embarking on a serious lobbying effort in various important centers of power around the world, with a view to obtaining two key elements: moral support as well as financial (and other) assistance⁴⁷⁸.

Establishment of the 'Shapour Bakhtiar Liaison Office'

Beginning in January 1984, a special office, independent of NAMIR and headed by Mehrdad Khonsari⁴⁷⁹, was established in London for the purpose of promoting the foreign policy aims and objectives of the Bakhtiar organization. However, the ground work for the establishment of this office had effectively been in motion since Khonsari's first meeting with Bakhtiar in Paris in October of 1980.

From 1980-1984, reporting only to Bakhtiar himself, Khonsari had been in charge of promoting ties with three key foreign policy centers - Washington, London and Riyadh,

a handful of credible members of parliament, that they would be in a much better position to relate important issues of concern from NAMIR to the British Government, and provide some form of a response accordingly.

⁴⁷⁷From certain wealthy Iranians in the first instance, and from Saddam Hussein at a later stage.

⁴⁷⁸Apart from funds, NAMIR was in desperate need of good intelligence and technical assistance required for enhancing its communications with the various important centers of power inside Iran.

⁴⁷⁹A former Iranian diplomat and Bakhtiar confidante.

all of which had their own priorities for closely monitoring developments in Iran.

Much earlier, in March 1982, Khonsari and Mirfendereski, had together visited the United States and met with senior key officials in the United States Department of State and the National Security Council. However, their reception was at best frosty, and although they were received courteously, it became quite clear to them that the newly established Reagan Administration was, contrary to conventional wisdom, looking for ways of "trying to understand the Islamic leadership", and somehow coming to terms with them. In a meeting at the State Department, Peter Constable who was^{at} that time the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, told the Bakhtiar delegation that he considered the Islamic regime to be a "nationalist" one, and despite existing grievances with the United States, he felt that in global terms, and in particular vis-a-vis the Soviet Union, the US and Iran were pursuing the same mutual interests in "parallel" to one another. At the National Security Council, Dr. Geoffrey Kemp, the Senior Director for Middle East⁴⁸⁰, while less naive in his appraisal of the Khomeini government, was nonetheless very skeptical of the true potentials of the Bakhtiar movement.

Following the first meeting with U.S. officials in March 1982, and up to the end of the Intermediate Period (January 1987), Khonsari held further high level talks in Washington on more than twenty separate occasions. By July 1985, these talks had been advanced to a stage that a meeting in the White House Situation Room was scheduled, in which very senior U.S. officials, including the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency⁴⁸¹ and the Deputy National Security Adviser to the President of the

⁴⁸⁰Kemp, while previously a Professor of International Politics at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, had been Khonsari's M.A.L.D. thesis supervisor.

⁴⁸¹William Casey.

United States⁴⁸², and a number of other senior officials were present. Following that meeting, the ground work was set for Bakhtiar, himself, to travel to the United States and hold "final" talks with the National Security Adviser to the President. Following that visit by Bakhtiar to Washington in February 1986, a whole package of measures to assist Bakhtiar with his proposed plan of action was then formally approved by the United States Government⁴⁸³. The underlying reason at the time for a change in the attitude of certain senior White House officials, such as Admiral Poindexter was due to the fact that at the same time they had become increasingly frustrated with the Khomeini regime, they were simultaneously being presented with a viable plan of action, whose contents could be verified. Given that contacts with the Iranian military was an important component of the plan, no one in the administration seemed to have any problems, so long as the existence of the contacts and the viability of the plan could be independently established.

Identifying Foreign Policy Targets And Making a Plausible Case For Support

The foreign policy agenda for Bakhtiar and NAMIR, entailed taking into account, and coming up with a plan of action with regards to those countries with a potential of having some kind of a major political input in the affairs of Iran. This meant pursuing a selective, rather than a comprehensive policy of attaining one's interest, given that available resources, both in terms of manpower and finance, were extremely limited.

⁴⁸²Admiral John Poindexter, who in late 1985 succeeded Robert McFarlane as National Security Adviser to the President, prior to resigning as a consequence of the "Irangate Scandal" in November 1986.

⁴⁸³It is important to state, that USG approved Bakhtiar's plan, subject to a successful evaluation of its suggestions. But, where this differed from other USG programs, lay in the fact that this course of action was not suggested by the CIA, as an "information gathering operation", but by the White House as a policy measure.

Therefore, starting in 1982, it was decided to come up with a list of "priority countries", with whom Bakhtiar should try and promote his objectives. From 1979-1982, apart from France, Iraq and Egypt, no serious contact existed between Bakhtiar and any other foreign government. However, as a consequence of his relationship with these three important countries, Bakhtiar had been able to achieve the following:

1. FRANCE: In France, he had been able to obtain political asylum, and "round the clock" police protection⁴⁸⁴. Furthermore, the French government had placed no restrictions on his contacts with the media, and had unofficially offered his organization a tax free status. Additionally, the French authorities were very helpful in granting asylum to Bakhtiar supporters and were amenable to granting visas for Bakhtiar contacts to visit France on short notice⁴⁸⁵. However, France never had a history of being a "political heavy weight" in Iran, and its interests were mostly in the economic field. Thus, apart from financial assistance which Bakhtiar, in any event, never requested, the French were as forthcoming as could be expected. In addition, Bakhtiar, being a "Francophone", as well as someone who was fully knowledgeable of French traits and customs⁴⁸⁶, he was regarded with special sympathy by many French dignitaries during his period of exile in France.

2. IRAQ: With Iraq, as early as May 1980, Bakhtiar had been able to secure the

⁴⁸⁴the French "CRS" were in charge of his security following the unsuccessful attempt that was made on his life in July 1980.

⁴⁸⁵They were helpful in turning a blind eye to questionable documentation, such as forged passports etc, offered by his associates. Indeed, for most of the 1980's many Iranian activists (particularly , active military officers) left Iran secretly for Turkey, from where they travelled with forged documentation to Paris in order to meet with Bakhtiar. After the meeting, they left France, went back to Turkey, before quietly slipping back into Iran. The French were most cooperative, and from time to time, they were supplied with "tid-bits" of intelligence that was acquired following these meetings to keep them happy and interested.

⁴⁸⁶Bakhtiar had been educated in Beirut and Paris, and his first wife, who was the mother of his four children was also French.

operation of his first clandestine radio station. Furthermore, as a consequence of his visit to Iraq, prior to the start of the Iran-Iraq War in September 1980, he had been able to secure an adequate level of funds to finance his organization and many of its important projects (eg. Nojeh)⁴⁸⁷. After the start of the War, difficulties arose vis-a-vis the amount of exposure that could justifiably be given to any continuing relationship with Iraq. Nonetheless, despite a number of statements from Bakhtiar and NAMIR, concerning the war⁴⁸⁸, which the Iraqis did not like, the relationship (including the radio station) succeeded to endure, and more importantly, further periodic funding of NAMIR did not come to a halt⁴⁸⁹. However, there were certain strains in the relationship that needed close scrutiny from time to time. For example, in the mid-1980's, the news of Iraq's first use of chemical weapons against Iran was reported by all the major news agencies in the world, and was broadcast to Iran by a number of important radios such as the BBC and the VOA. However, the Iraqi authorities did not allow Bakhtiar's radio station in Baghdad to broadcast this news in its program. Unable to achieve any breakthroughs in Baghdad, this matter was then raised with the Iraqi Ambassador in Washington (Nizar Hamdoon, who is currently Iraq's Ambassador at the United Nations)⁴⁹⁰. He was told that the whole aim of having a radio station was to undermine

⁴⁸⁷The money which Bakhtiar received from Iraq constituted the bulk of the capital that was to finance the majority of NAMIR's expenditure for most of the 1980's. Although, the actual sum received was known only to Bakhtiar and Boroomand, the speculation which has been made by many of Bakhtiar's close advisers, put Saddam Hussein's contribution to the Bakhtiar purse anywhere from US\$30 million to US\$70 million.

⁴⁸⁸In particular, NAMIR's insistence that the dispute must be settled on the basis of the 1975 Algiers Treaty, which Saddam Hussein had unilaterally abrogated prior to invading Iran.

⁴⁸⁹It is was an acknowledged fact that apart from the initial bulk sum that was given to Bakhtiar by Iraq, a monthly budget of around US\$200-250,000 was also being made available to him.

⁴⁹⁰By the writer during a private meeting.

the Khomeini regime, and to win the trust and the support of the Iranian people. So, it was self defeating, if NAMIR's radio was the only station that was not reporting this highly significant incident. The Iraqi official, understood this point, and following his intervention with Baghdad, all the imposed restrictions were lifted. This was one of those rare occasions when the advantage of having a second radio station was particularly underlined, for during this entire period, NAMIR had the luxury of stating its case and protecting its credibility by reporting this news from its other radio station in Cairo.

3. **EGYPT:** In a visit to Egypt shortly after the death of the late of Shah of Iran (July 1980), Bakhtiar had been able to strike a close friendship with the Egyptian President, Anwar Sadat. Sadat had offered Bakhtiar a great deal of assistance, including the setting up of a second clandestine radio station. He had also offered to give military training to elements introduced by Bakhtiar, and to lobby his cause with other Arab rulers. However, it was not long after their meeting that Sadat was assassinated, and as a result, only the commitment regarding a second clandestine radio station for NAMIR, was actually kept by the new Egyptian administration⁴⁹¹.

By 1982, apart from the countries cited above, it was decided to embark upon a serious

⁴⁹¹Here, it is important to point out that while the Baghdad station was essentially cost free (ie. salaries of personnel, travel costs to and from Paris, and the cost of telephones etc., were all paid for by the Iraqi authorities), NAMIR was responsible for every item of expenditure in Egypt (which at times included paying money to the radio authorities in order for them not to reduce the sound output of their broadcasts). Any failure in Egypt, on the part of NAMIR, to deal with the wants of minor officials was such that it could adversely affect the whole broadcast of its programs. Thus, from time to time, based on reports concerning audibility that was received from Iran, a technical expert was sent to Cairo to discuss the situation with the relevant Egyptian authorities. Once, a remuneration of some kind was paid (eg. a 'Cartier' watch for the Head of the section), then the sound improved very quickly, and NAMIR broadcasts were heard throughout Iran, even as far as Khorassan and Baluchistan.

lobbying campaign that would include the following countries as well:

1. The United States
2. The United Kingdom
3. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

While, the above list of countries became NAMIR's "number one" targets for lobbying, it was also decided that some special effort was also needed to "keep in touch" with Israel⁴⁹², Turkey⁴⁹³ and Pakistan⁴⁹⁴, three very important regional states with clear interests in any future political outcome in Iran

The only other major international actor with serious political interests in Iran, not taken into consideration on the grounds of not alienating all the others, was the Soviet Union⁴⁹⁵.

⁴⁹²This was essentially dealt with Bakhtiar, himself, in private meetings with Israeli officials in Paris.

⁴⁹³Amir Hossein Amir Parviz, was asked by Bakhtiar to fulfill this function in Turkey. In the course of his high level discussion with former Prime Minister (now President) Soleiman Demirel in 1984, the Turkish authorities turned down Bakhtiar's request for a radio station. They cited the importance of trade links with the Islamic Republic, and only committed themselves to assisting NAMIR supporters with appropriate visas to help their immigration status etc. (interview with A.H. Amir Parviz, 5 October 1994). Turkey was also a very important staging ground for NAMIR-Military Wing (MW), and although their activities proceeded without any hinderance from the Turkish government, many of its personnel, including three senior officers, were assassinated in Istanbul.

⁴⁹⁴Here, only NAMIR's Military Wing maintained an active presence. But, movements through Pakistan from Iranian Baluchistan were made on a regular basis, and NAMIR-MW personnel were on very good terms with local officials, such as the Pakistani police etc. All of these were short of any actual "diplomatic" contact. But the government in Rawalpindi never tried to make life difficult for NAMIR in Pakistan.

⁴⁹⁵Bakhtiar felt that he could always initiate contacts with the Soviet Union at the "appropriate time", using his Foreign Minister, Ahmad Mirfendereski, a well known "Russophil", with more than 30 years of experience in dealing with the Soviets, having also served as Iranian Ambassador to Moscow for a period of more than six years in the late 1960's and the early 1970's. However, during a visit to Geneva, he had been

Achieving A Notable Breakthrough

While the campaign to lobby support for Bakhtiar had gotten off the ground by early 1982, it was not until the annual "haj" pilgrimage of 1983 that a first major breakthrough was achieved.

By the middle of 1983, following more than 18 months of consultation and time consuming background research work by the Liaison office in London, Bakhtiar had been able to travel to both Riyadh (April) and Washington (May), where he was able to meet and discuss his plans and policies with a number of very key and important people. His trip to Riyadh was a particular success, in that having arrived aboard King Fahd's private jet⁴⁹⁶, he was welcomed by the Saudi Crown Prince, Abdollah bin Abdol Aziz, with whom he was able to strike a very cordial relationship⁴⁹⁷. While, in Riyadh,

introduced to a Russian Journalist by Ali Mostofi, himself an Iranian journalist living in Switzerland. After that meeting, Mostofi had tried to arrange a trip for Bakhtiar to visit Moscow. However, as revealed by Bakhtiar himself to the writer, prior to accepting any invitation, Bakhtiar raised this matter with one of his American contacts, and sought the views of Washington regarding any such trip. The response from Washington was lukewarm and cautious, but not negative. However, prior to any final decision, Mostofi died of a heart attack in Geneva, and the whole issue was defused.

⁴⁹⁶Which was sent by the Saudi government to Le Bourget airport in Paris to transport him and his team of advisers (a delegation of six members in total).

⁴⁹⁷Based on the writer's experience and a series of discussions that have been held with many knowledgeable people on Saudi affairs, contrary to conventional wisdom, the Saudi ruling family was in many ways, not at all displeased to see the Pahlavi monarchy overthrown in Iran, because they were, by and large, very displeased with the way that the late Shah had treated them. This was a psychological factor, and had more to do with the way that the Shah had always looked down on them, than on what he had actually done against them. Indeed, it is a fact that in reflection, the late Shah not only, never, ever, did anything against them, but instead, he had done what ever he could to strengthen their rule in their country. However, it is also a fact that he had always looked down on them, for which he has not be forgiven to this date, even though his successors have called for the down right overthrow of the Saudi monarchy. Based on this brief explanation, the Saudis were originally quite pleased to see the creation of an 'Islamic' government in Iran, and they were most anxious to lead good and friendly

he also met with Prince Sultan, the Second Deputy Prime Minister, and in Jeddah, he was welcomed by Prince Majed, the governor of the Hejaz Province, who subsequently made all the arrangements for Bakhtiar and his party to perform the ritual of "UMRA", by visiting the holy Mosque in Mecca. During the course of this trip, Bakhtiar was treated like a head of state, and though there was no detailed mention of any forthcoming assistance⁴⁹⁸, he and his delegation were made to believe that Saudi Arabia was anxious to pursue their contacts with them.

Producing An Anti-Khomeini Farsi Newspaper During "Haj"

In July 1984, the representative in London of the Saudi Arabian daily, Al Madinah⁴⁹⁹ quite coincidentally⁵⁰⁰ contacted the head of the Bakhtiar Liaison office, and

relations with the Khomeini regime until such time that it became obvious to them that Khomeini had other plans. The riots in Mecca in 1979, and the open call for Khomeini that the custody of the holy shrines in Mecca and Madinah should be handed to an international Islamic committee, as well as Iranian attempts to add an anti-American, political connotation, in support of their own revolutionary message, to the annual Haj pilgrimage, were matters which the Saudi leadership could not ignore. Also once, the Iranians had been able to eject the Iraqis from Iranian territory, and had taken the upper hand in the conduct of the war with Iraq, the Saudi ruling family felt threatened and insecure. Hence, they increased their levels of support to Saddam Hussein, and increased their channels of communications with potentially viable Iranian opposition groups. According to Ahmad Al-Sheibani, a scholarly Arab writer in the employ of the Saudi Crown Prince, apart from Reza Pahlavi who had visited the Kingdom in the early 1980's, the Saudis had also established contact with Sadeq Qotbzadeh, Admiral Ahmad Madani, and representatives of the Mojahedin Khalq Organization. However, of all the groups mentioned, the respect which they came to have for Bakhtiar was perhaps the greatest of all.

⁴⁹⁸Apart from general exchanges of view, the content of the Saudi broadcasts in Farsi were discussed with the Crown Prince (who was, himself unaware that the Saudis were broadcasting in Farsi language at all). While, not specifically mentioned, this conveyed the message that Bakhtiar would greatly prefer to move his main radio station from Baghdad to Riyadh and to broadcast on medium wave, if allowed. The only other area in which the Saudis could give assistance, was the financial field, which Bakhtiar did not mention at all during the entire course of his first visit.

⁴⁹⁹Abdol Bari Atwan, who is now the Editor of the Palestinian daily Al Qods.

asked if he was able to lead a team of journalist to produce a Farsi version of Al Madinah for the Iranian pilgrims⁵⁰¹, who were scheduled to arrive for the annual Haj in August of that year⁵⁰².

The opportunity to produce such a publication, was like a God sent opening, for it was capable of demonstrating to all Iran watchers in the outside world, not only the unpopularity of the regime, but also the true potential of the democratic alternative, as presented by Bakhtiar. It is important to point out that in all the previous years since the advent of Khomeini in Iran, one of the most favorite "lines" used to under play the importance of what was being said by the democratic opponents of the regime, was to suggest that "they were all too Westernized, and as such, their message was not a potent one with the Islamic masses". Thus, the opportunity to produce a newspaper, targeted for an Iranian audience from inside the country, provided an opportunity and posed a challenge that could dispel all such doubts.

Given this background, the proposition made by the Saudi daily was accepted⁵⁰³, and

⁵⁰⁰Coincidental in the sense that there was no envisioned plan on the part of the Saudi newspaper, Al Madinah to come out with an anti-Khomeini Farsi publication. What they wanted was nothing more than a Farsi publication to provide information to the visiting Iranian pilgrims. However, the fact that such an approach was made to the writer, provided NAMIR with a unique opportunity for addressing a genuine 'home audience', and gauging their sentiments towards the regime.

⁵⁰¹Estimated that year to be in excess of 100,000 people.

⁵⁰²It is essential to point out that this contact was not due to some pre-planned strategy which the Saudi government had, but simply because of an initiative on the part of the newspaper's editor to produce a publication in Farsi for the Iranian pilgrims.

⁵⁰³While Al Madinah wanted to sign a contract offering a lump sum salary for services to be performed, the Head of the Liaison Office asked that the newspaper only provide room and board in a top class hotel in Jeddah for the duration of the trip (in line with the prestige of the delegation), and that the team would then seek no salary. This was so that the Iranians would get to stay in a respectable hotel, and not in some mediocre rest house, where as it turned out, the Pakistanis who were employed to

a team of four journalists, one typist and one photographer, all supportive of the Bakhtiar cause, were quickly assembled and taken to Jeddah⁵⁰⁴, where the first issue of "AL Madinah in the Farsi Language", with a circulation of 50,000⁵⁰⁵, was published on 27 August 1984. The content of the publication, while respectful of Islam and the holy ritual for which everyone had come to Saudi Arabia, was clearly unsympathetic to Khomeini, and carried news and analysis on Iran which would not normally have appeared in the Iranian press⁵⁰⁶.

The reaction from the Islamic regime to the very first issue of this publication, was both swift and vehement. In a statement that was issued on behalf of the "Imam"⁵⁰⁷, Khomeini's representative to the Haj, Hojat-ol-Eslam Moussavi Khoiniha, stated that it was "Haraam"⁵⁰⁸ for Iranian Moslems to either purchase or read this newspaper. Also, in a speech that was given great prominence by in the major Iranian daily, Kayhan, he launched a scathing attack on the "Saudis and Monarchists responsible for its production". Furthermore, at an official level, the Iranian Charge in Jeddah, in a note to the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, protested against the publication of this

come out with an Urdu version of Al Madinah were booked to stay. He then asked Bakhtiar, himself, to pay the salary of the team that he was taking to Jeddah.

⁵⁰⁴Cyrus Amuzegar, a reputable journalist and Bakhtiar's Minister of Information, was chosen as the newspaper's editor.

⁵⁰⁵The largest circulation of any Iranian daily printed outside Iran to this day.

⁵⁰⁶One of the most important news items concerned the peaceful anti-regime demonstrations of 5 August 1983 (77th Anniversary of the Iranian Constitution), inclusive of comments regarding Bakhtiar's speech on that day in Paris. In another page, an anti-regime poem, dated 11 February 1979 (the day when the Islamic government was installed), written by the famous contemporary Iranian poet, Nader Naderpour was also published.

⁵⁰⁷ie. Ayatollah Khomeini.

⁵⁰⁸ie. forbidden.

newspaper in the strongest possible terms, and urged the Saudi government to put an end to any further productions of this newspaper⁵⁰⁹. Perhaps, one of the most important aspects of these reactions was that it made the Iranian pilgrims aware of the existence of such a publication, and once the second issue appeared, three days later, on 30 August 1983, almost every single copy of the newspaper was sold. This amazing response from the ordinary Iranians, acting against the clear instructions that had been given to them, was sufficient to demonstrate clearly that "even religious Iranians were eager to hear what others had to say, and that they were not the widely depicted obedient robots⁵¹⁰, whose control was in the hand of the ruling clique in Iran"⁵¹¹.

However, after having come out with six issues, the Saudi government put a stop to any further publications of the Farsi Al Madinah. But, in exchange they had been able to secure a very important concession from the Islamic Republic - namely, an agreement from them not to stage any demonstrations in the holy cities of Mecca and Madinah⁵¹². Just the same, the Saudi government also asked that the Iranian team of journalists to

⁵⁰⁹Private interview with the writer and a serving member of the Iranian Embassy in Jeddah, in the writer's hotel room in late August 1983.

⁵¹⁰The International Herald Tribune, on 17 November 1983, published a letter sent by an Iranian pilgrim with the initials "R.K.", from Jeddah, in which direct reference was made to the publication of "AL Madinah in Farsi", and the fact that the Revolutionary Guards present in Saudi Arabia were preventing Iranian pilgrims from purchasing the newspaper.

⁵¹¹It is important to note that some 10-15% of all the Iranian pilgrims were estimated to be members of the Revolutionary Guards, sent to maintain order and to keep an eye on the various movements of the Iranian pilgrims. On at least one occasion during the Haj, the writer and an Iranian photographer were stopped and threatened in the streets of Mecca by "Islamic Patrols", and the Iranians working for AL Madinah were constantly followed during their visits to Mecca, in order to ensure that they did not speak with other Iranians. It was due to these difficulties, that discussions with Iranian pilgrims were usually held in make shift hospitals that were run by other Islamic countries, such as Pakistan etc.

⁵¹²An agreement which the Iranians honored for the next two years.

remain in the Kingdom until the Haj was over, so that they could resume publication if the Iranians reneged on their agreements.

Once the first three issues had come out, the Head of the Iranian team, had travelled to Washington and had personally briefed senior members of the National Security Council, and in particular, the Director of Research, Dr. Norman Bailey, of the developments in Jeddah. A content analysis of the publications which was carried out by the NSC, as well as corroborated accounts verifying the extent of panic on the part of the Islamic authorities, was enough to drastically alter all previous moods of skepticism, paving the way for the Bakhtiar team to receive a proper hearing from then on.

Without question, the 'Al Madinah experience' had proven without a shadow of a doubt, something that would never have been possible to expose or demonstrate in any other milieu. And, the professional way in which the Bakhtiar team conducted itself, created a situation in which the matter was able to be properly exploited for the benefit of the cause.

In addition, a copy of Farsi Al Madinah, was, on each occasion, also sent to a very large mailing list of Iranians in exile⁵¹³, which had the added advantage of keeping the Iranian community also abreast of what had been achieved in Saudi Arabia. Thus, by the time that the team returned to Europe by early October, the position of the Bakhtiar organization had been greatly enhanced, and a very suitable ground work had been prepared, particularly in Riyadh and Washington, for the promotion of constructive and responsive dialogue.

⁵¹³ Provided by NAMIR.

Promoting Bakhtiar in the United Kingdom

During this entire period, a major campaign for the promotion of NAMIR had also been started in the United Kingdom. As mentioned previously, a British parliamentary delegation from the Conservative Party's "Bow Group"⁵¹⁴ had travelled to Paris in 1982 and had met with Bakhtiar. Shortly after their return, two members of the Bow Group who had travelled to Paris⁵¹⁵, and who were closely affiliated with the Head of the Liaison Office, began a concerted effort to promote Bakhtiar and NAMIR's democratic platform in Britain. From 1983-1986, with their help, and the help of others⁵¹⁶, NAMIR had been able to hold a number of fringe meetings at various political party conferences, and had successfully lobbied Bakhtiar's cause with a cross section of British parliamentarians⁵¹⁷.

⁵¹⁴Led by Derek Praag, MEP and Keith Best,MP.

⁵¹⁵Michael Stephen and Nirj Deva, both subsequently elected to Parliament in the 1992 General Election.

⁵¹⁶Such as the present Liberal-Democratic Peer, Lord Richard Holme.

⁵¹⁷Although, Bakhtiar had been warned by his Conservative friends (letter dated 29 July 1985 from Nirj Deva) that any contact with the Labour or the Liberal-Democrats would not create a positive impression with Mrs. Thatcher, this - contrary to the advice also given to him by the Liaison Office- did not dissuade Bakhtiar from pursuing a lobbying campaign with the other political parties as well. Based on many private conversations with the writer on this subject, it was clear that Bakhtiar, a social democrat himself, was greatly deceived by the attention and the early success which the British Social Democratic Party achieved in its early stages. He had thus come to believe, that there was no way in which the British Conservative could once again attain an overall majority in the next general Election (1987). Thus, he did not want "to put all his eggs in one basket", and opted with a policy that only served to alienate many important supporters in the Conservative ranks away from him. While, the Liaison Office in London was not against the general thrust of Bakhtiar's arguments, it generally felt that the policy that was being pursued by Bakhtiar in Washington and Riyadh were short term in nature, and required the acquiescence of all the serving governments. Thus, it was the Liaison Office's view that Bakhtiar should not create any unnecessary ripples at a time when it was important to have the serving British government on one's side.

Although, progress was at best very limited, given the general nature of the British government's attitude towards all exiled political groups⁵¹⁸, nonetheless, the Head of the Liaison Office was able to promote a respectably high profile of NAMIR by meeting in person with a number of key senior Cabinet Ministers⁵¹⁹, as well as the British Prime Minister⁵²⁰, during the course of various Conservative Party functions.

Recognizing the importance of Britain, as a 'knowledgeable political actor in the international scene', the strategy being pursued on behalf of Bakhtiar, was to keep the British authorities generally aware of contacts in Washington and Riyadh, while cultivating "Back Bench" support for Bakhtiar and NAMIR, particularly from the ranks of the Conservative Party, in the House of Commons⁵²¹. In pursuit of this objective -ie.

⁵¹⁸As expressed to the writer in a private meeting at the Carlton Club on 16 June 1986, by Richard Ryder MP, who said that the British Foreign Office "did not like to consult with resistance groups, and preferred only to deal with governments".

⁵¹⁹eg. Nigel Lawson, Michael Heseltine and David Mellor (while he was a Junior Minister in the Foreign Office) etc.

⁵²⁰In a reception at the Carlton Club, when introduced to the Prime Minister, Mrs. Thatcher asked about Bakhtiar's general situation, and quickly noted that he had recently visited London. She ended by saying that he was facing a very difficult situation.

⁵²¹There was concern at the time, not to divulge too much information to the British authorities. This was particularly because, in the aftermath of the defection (from the Soviet Embassy in Teheran) of the Soviet KGB Officer, V. Kuzichkin to London, there was a strong belief amongst the exiled Iranian intelligence community, that information obtained from him during debriefing sessions regarding Soviet activities in Iran, had been passed on to Teheran, resulting in the final crack down against the Tudeh Party in May 1983. Based on discussions at the time with many senior Iranian intelligence officers (such as General Mohsen Mobasser), there was little doubt in anyone's mind that Kuzichkin's revelations to the British authorities in London had been passed on to the Iranians, resulting in the expulsion of 18 Soviets diplomats from Iran in 1983. In subsequent discussions with General Manouchehr Hashemi, the former Head of SAVAK's 8th Political Bureau (Counter Espionage), the General confirmed (interview 28 April 1995), that while no mention is made in Kuzichkin's book of his role in the purges that were made of the Tudeh Party in Iran, he was, nevertheless, an important player, in that the information he provided the British authorities was of crucial significance. According to General Hashemi, the Head of the Soviet Division in the successor organization to SAVAK, has personally confirmed to him the authenticity

of "attaining passive British approval", from 1984-1986, Bakhtiar, himself, visited London on three separate occasions, and his talks with key opinion makers, particularly in Parliament⁵²² and the media⁵²³, helped project his image as the most acceptable and respectable alternative, that was available at the time to challenge the Khomeini regime.

Conclusion

Backed by a credible and democratic political organization and a whole host of very important and influential new relations in the international arena, and having secured the broadest consensus considered possible to attain, by mid-1985 when he had been able to demonstrate his popular credentials to both the people inside and outside Iran, Bakhtiar was finally ready to launch his final plan of action, which had been comprehensively and meticulously prepared by NAMIR Military Wing, in cooperation with NAMIR's civilian elements, and put together by the London Liaison Office.

of the speculation which is made of Kuzichkin's critical role in this area. In short, as far as NAMIR was concerned at the time, the general perception was that British intelligence had a close a relationship with its Iranian counterpart, and as such it was best to keep one's important cards very close to one's chest.

⁵²²And many senior British politicians such as Edward Heath and Francis Pym.

⁵²³Including the BBC Persian Service, which was very helpful in arranging interviews with Bakhtiar during all of his visits to London.

Chapter 5: BAKHTIAR'S LAST HURRAH: OPERATION WHITE STAR - A PLAN MISMANAGED

In the aftermath of the publication of the Al Madinah 'In the Farsi Language', during the 1983 Haj Pilgrimage, at which time, certain potential vulnerabilities of the Islamic regime became exposed, it further became evident, particularly in Washington and Riyadh, that a new appraisal of all previous perceptions regarding the Khomeini regime had also become possible. One direct consequence of such an appraisal, in Saudi Arabia, resulted in Bakhtiar being invited for a second visit to that country in February 1984, less than a year after his first trip in April 1983. Nonetheless, during the course of this visit⁵²⁴, which was arranged for purely "political reasons"⁵²⁵, Bakhtiar and his team were caught in somewhat of an "off guard" position, in that having not been given an opportunity to go beyond mere rhetoric by any major party, with the exception of Saddam Hussein⁵²⁶, and constantly under pressure over the previous years to project themselves as sufficiently credible alternatives to the Islamic regime for purposes of just receiving a serious hearing, they were somewhat unprepared by the prospect of being asked by a major regional actor, in quite literal terms, what it was which they precisely expected to gain at the end of their deliberations.

⁵²⁴Bakhtiar was received by the Saudi Crown Prince, as well as the Saudi Minister of Defense.

⁵²⁵Bakhtiar's first visit was arranged on the pretext that he wanted to go to Saudi Arabia in order to perform the "Haj Umra". All official visits with Saudi dignitaries were thus made, under the pretext that he was being received as a foreign visitor who had come to perform his religious duties - a rightful request on the part of any Moslem, which the Saudis could not deny as "Custodians of the Holy Shrines".

⁵²⁶Who had pursued an indiscriminate policy of supporting almost every potential opposition to Khomeini.

During the course of this visit, in which Bakhtiar was for the first time accompanied by the Commander of NAMIR-MW, and two military members of his staff⁵²⁷, it was obvious that some form of a military contingency plan was part and parcel of any ultimate strategy that he had envisaged for regaining power in Iran. While, this notion was completely true, it is important to point out that, until the time that Bakhtiar had been forcefully and directly confronted with this issue, he had failed to give any serious consideration to preparing such an essential blueprint that would outline the exact shape and form of the steps that he would need to take in order to secure his final objective⁵²⁸.

Thus, for the first time since its conception by Bakhtiar, the need for NAMIR to have an "Operational Plan of Action", had inadvertently come about, and it was in the private jet returning the NAMIR delegation to Paris in late February 1984, that Bakhtiar instructed the Commander of NAMIR-MW and the Head of the London Liaison Office to urgently draw upon all the resources available to NAMIR, and prepare a comprehensive plan of action for the overthrowing of the Islamic regime, in which Bakhtiar's specific requirements for accomplishing this mission would be clearly illustrated⁵²⁹.

Coming Up With A Comprehensive Plan of Action

⁵²⁷The writer was also a member of the Bakhtiar delegation.

⁵²⁸This was mainly due to the fact that the organization as a whole had not become focused on a particular objective.

⁵²⁹ It must also be said that what was to later become a most carefully conceived, sophisticated operation plan for 'overthrowing' the Islamic Republic in Iran, entailing the cooperation of nearly all the major segments of Iranian society and political life, was something that had to "evolve" over a period of time as a consequence of various other activities, and was not something that could have originally been in mind and around, at the time that the organization was being conceived in the initial stages.

Very shortly after Bakhtiar's return from his second trip to Saudi Arabia, contacts between him and the CIA were once again resumed, following the intervention of Dr. Geoffrey Kemp at the National Security Council⁵³⁰. There is no doubt that the interest shown by the Saudis, was a very important factor that helped Bakhtiar clear the air, and begin the start of a new chapter of "Cooperative" relations with the American government. But, in a way similar to what had previously been experienced in Saudi Arabia, the lack of a clear-cut plan of action, entailing in precise terms, how Bakhtiar expected to gain power in Iran, was a serious missing factor that was crucial for sustaining credibility and interest in his movement, during the subsequent meetings⁵³¹. However, by June 1984, this vacuum had been partially filled, and what turned out to be the 'first draft' of 'Operation White Star' was finally produced⁵³².

Here, it is important to mention that during the course of Bakhtiar's second visit to Washington in January 1984, he was invited to a luncheon, hosted by a sympathetic

⁵³⁰Following a first meeting that was scheduled in Bakhtiar's home in Paris, the senior CIA agent who was based in Washington, and had come specifically for the purpose of resuming CIA contacts with the Bakhtiar Organization, after introducing Bakhtiar to the agent in Paris who was the "Case Officer For Iran", specifically asked that all of Bakhtiar's former contacts with the agency, inclusive of General Mokhateb Rafii in Washington, and Ahmad Mirfendereski in Paris, should be kept out of any further dealings with them.

⁵³¹As Bakhtiar had discovered during his earlier visit to Saudi Arabia, the lack of a specific plan, was not only depriving him of an opportunity to make specific requests, but it was also depriving him of the much needed 'Confidence building' measures, essential for keeping the attention of the Saudis focused on what he had to say.

⁵³²Between June 1984 and February 1986, Operation White Star, was altered and amended on two further occasions.

American business man⁵³³, in which a number of senior American White House officials (eg. Dr. G. Kemp, and Dr. Norman Bailey⁵³⁴), as well as Donald Gregg⁵³⁵, the National Security Adviser to the Vice President, were invited. Following that luncheon, it was agreed that the Head of the London Liaison Office would continue to brief all these officials regarding the progress of the Bakhtiar movement, during his forthcoming visits to the United States. In one of those visits, sometime in the Spring of 1984, Donald Gregg stated that in a conversation which he had held with former CIA Director and ambassador to Iran, Richard Helms⁵³⁶, he had been told that it was essential for any Iranian opposition movement to demonstrate what it was that they could "do on the ground". Such a statement, made at a time when other groups such as the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI), were being credited with abilities to inflict damage and destruction on the regime inside Iran, was indicative of the skepticism that existed vis-a-vis the abilities of moderate and democratic groups in being capable of conducting similar operations - ie. the prevailing notion being that while radical groups such as the Mojahedin "acted", groups such as NAMIR only "talked", and were thus, by inference, incapable of doing anything more.

Once this conversation was reported back to Bakhtiar, he decided that the time had come for NAMIR-MW to embark on a series of operations aimed at casting this

⁵³³Raymond K. Mason, the Chairman of the now defunct Florida based, "Charter Oil Company".

⁵³⁴At the time, Dr. Bailey was the Research Director at the NSC.

⁵³⁵It was in a meeting with President Carter's National Security Adviser, Z. Brezhinski, that the idea of meeting with Gregg, was first suggested and later acted upon.

⁵³⁶Who had also served as Ambassador to Teheran in the mid 1970's.

image aside, and attaining the credibility, which the movement was being denied due to its democratic and liberal nature. Thus, from August 1984 to May 1985, a total of twenty operations, primarily against targets in Teheran and a number of towns in Azerbaijan⁵³⁷, as well as the hijacking of an "Iran Air" domestic flight (see Appendix A- for complete details), were carried out in order to demonstrate NAMIR's wide ranging capabilities. However, given the loss of life involved in some of these operations were felt to be unpopular (e.g.. the explosion attack at 'Yousefabad Police Station in Teheran on 01/10/84 in which two Revolutionary Guards lost their lives), it was decided in May 1985, to suspend all further such operations, given that its initial purpose - i.e., silencing critics in the US administration had been more than adequately satisfied.

OPERATION WHITE STAR

Prepared by NAMIR-MW, 'Operation White Star' was a comprehensive plan of action involving the participation of selected anti-regime, tribal elements from five separate regions, as a catalyst to trigger the intervention of the Iranian armed forces in Teheran against units supportive of the Islamic regime (see Appendix 5).

While the preparation of this plan demonstrated the level of penetration which NAMIR had been able to make within segments of Iranian society inside the country, it was clear that Bakhtiar would require both funds and other 'technical' assistance, in order to "tie all the loose ends" and successfully implement the operation. Hence,

⁵³⁷Because of its proximity to the Turkish border.

with this plan in hand, the specific requirements of Bakhtiar's lobbying campaign (in both Washington and Riyadh), became clearly apparent.

In his first meeting with an American official in Paris⁵³⁸, when he first raised the issue that his subordinates were in the process of preparing a comprehensive plan of action, so that he could then speak in specific terms about his requirements, he was immediately informed that "In Washington, there was a whole filing cabinet full of 'plans', which had been submitted by numerous Iranians with fertile imaginations"! This remark, was a frank reflection of how Bakhtiar, himself, had been perceived by the CIA, who were at that very time, heavily involved in the process of "running" a separate (but more or less similar) program with Dr. Ali Amini. Furthermore, it signalled the fact that nothing short of a comprehensive and verifiable plan, capable of demonstrating NAMIR's organizational efforts⁵³⁹, would stand the remotest chance of altering the hard positions that were at the time being adopted against Bakhtiar, by unsympathetic elements in the CIA who were the main sponsors of Dr. Amini at the time⁵⁴⁰.

At this juncture, the role of the Commander of NAMIR-MW, and the amount of effective work which he had put into his organization, was able to make the difference. And, while his contribution formed the corps of what was being proposed, the project, as a whole, was presented in such a manner that had the benefit of

⁵³⁸The CIA case Officer in Paris.

⁵³⁹Particularly in the field of intelligence.

⁵⁴⁰Here, it is important to point out that the only way Bakhtiar could secure the cooperation of the CIA, rested with him being able to convince their political bosses to instruct them "from above". This is the strategy that was pursued, and it was only in this way that he was able to go as far as he did.

incorporating the full support of NAMIR's various other assets, particularly in the area of "Civilian Affairs", in the context of a proposed "Civilian Plan of Action", that was drawn up to complement the main military plan.

Although, the first draft of "Operation White Star"⁵⁴¹, was prepared in June 1984, and its contents were immediately discussed with U.S. officials in the White House, it was not until the "top Level"meeting scheduled for the White House Situation Room in June 1985, when backed by supporting intelligence, regarding every aspect of suggestions made in the plan, that it was eventually taken seriously by the American government and acted upon.

In summary, the final comprehensive plan submitted on behalf of Bakhtiar in June 1985 consisted of the following⁵⁴²:

- 1. Operation White Star (A Military Plan of Operation-see Appendix 5)
- 2. Political Aspects Affecting White Star.
- 3. NAMIR-MW Commander's Estimate of the Situation
- 4. NAMIR's Civilian Plan of Action (see Appendix 6)

Developing "White Star"

Immediately following the meeting in which Bakhtiar's comprehensive plan for the overthrow of the Islamic regime in Iran, had received a full hearing by Senior U.S.

⁵⁴¹A name that was chosen by the Commander of NAMIR-MW.

⁵⁴² In addition to the segments listed below, the plan was accompanied with a number of detailed maps, as well as other specific details, specifically listed in the Index (contained in Appendix 2).

Administration officials., on the explicit instructions of CIA Director, William Casey, there was a marked change of attitude in the agency's approach towards Bakhtiar and his colleagues. Simultaneously, explicit support was also given by the National Security Council for a quick assessment by the CIA of the plan, with a view of meeting its requirements, once its final conclusions were assessed to be positive⁵⁴³.

The news of the successful presentation of the plan, was a source of extreme relief to Bakhtiar, and following the extensive briefing that he was given in Paris, he gave immediate instructions for every effort to be made in order to speed up the course of the investigation that was going to be made of "the plan" by the Americans⁵⁴⁴. Thus, less than a month after the White House meeting, both the Commander of NAMIR-MW and the Head of the London Liaison Office were sent together to Washington in order to meet with American officials, and work out an exact schedule for the speedy advancement of the Plan.

In the meetings that ensued with representatives of the CIA, it was decided that the best way to proceed for securing the "confidence building measures" that were needed, was for the agency to meet some of NAMIR's key military and tribal (and later, civilian) contacts in Paris. This, from an American administrative perspective, meant that each key members of the Bakhtiar staff associated with the Plan, would

⁵⁴³This was confirmed during the course of a discussion in 1992 between the writer and Howard R. Teicher, a Senior National Security Officer, who by 1985 had replaced Geoffrey Kemp.

⁵⁴⁴Though, he was warned by some advisers, particularly Mirfendereski (due mainly to his cynicism), that he should not take the Americans at face value, Bakhtiar was adamant to be as cooperative as possible.

all have to be subjected to a "Polygraph" examination⁵⁴⁵, as administered by the CIA, in order to ensure the security of the operating network.

From August to December 1985, significant progress was made on all fronts⁵⁴⁶, and by the end of this period, the "Civilian Wing" of NAMIR, had also come fully on board, by producing its own independent plan of action (See Appendix 6), aimed at mobilizing all its resources for purposes of creating a positive milieu for the implementation of Operation White Star⁵⁴⁷.

Mounting Financial Pressures On Bakhtiar

Throughout this entire, period beginning in 1982 when the lobbying campaign in Washington had started, Bakhtiar was relying primarily on funds obtained earlier for the advancement of his various efforts⁵⁴⁸. However, he was, at the same time, all too aware that his resources were becoming rapidly depleted, and in order to avoid a cash flow crisis in NAMIR's world wide operations⁵⁴⁹, he was anxious for "White Star" to be assessed as quickly as possible - ie. reach the stage in Washington,

⁵⁴⁵A "truth" exam, conducted regularly by the CIA, even on its own agents, in order to ensure that they are not working for the opposition. While, its results are not always perfect, it is still considered to be the best yardstick, that the agency uses for evaluating "genuineness".

⁵⁴⁶i.e. All key military, tribal and Civilian aides were positively "Polygraphed", and discussions had advanced on ways of obtaining American technical assistance for waging a major propaganda campaign inside the country, in advance of White Star.

⁵⁴⁷The "Civilian Plan of Action", was written following the setting up of a special committee by Bakhtiar, consisting of Hamid Zolnour, Mahmoud Hejazi, and Mehrdad Khonsari.

⁵⁴⁸Mostly from Iraq.

⁵⁴⁹A facade that was most important to Bakhtiar, and which was to become a subject of major inter-NAMIR bickering later on.

when the National Security Council could, with the CIA's positive appraisal of the Plan's content, go to the President and seek authorization, for the U.S. government to fully assist with its implementation.

In this regard, it is important to mention that Bakhtiar was hopeful that, once White Star, had received the "bill of approval" as a viable plan, that either he or his American friends at the NSC would then go to the Saudi connections he had cultivated, with the hope of obtaining the necessary funds required to both sustain NAMIR in exile, and implement the operation inside the country. Indeed, the alternative route - ie. for the Americans to fund the project themselves, was thought to be too risky and generally "un-do-able", given that releasing the funds needed would require congressional approval, and as such, the project could have become fully exposed (because of "leaks"), thereby, jeopardizing the security of all who were involved with it⁵⁵⁰.

Furthermore, in order to avoid any conflict of interest, Bakhtiar also hoped that as a consequence of all his lobbying efforts in the United Kingdom, the British government would also look at his position positively, thereby, at worst, keeping neutral in any developments that might take place on his behalf in Iran. Bakhtiar's perception, in the pre-Salman Rushdie period, was that the British government had great incentive to want to establish some form of a relationship with the Islamic regime, placing it in a unique position amongst Western powers to exert influence. Indeed, even the

⁵⁵⁰Also, another factor was that the U.S. Government (USG) could not afford to become associated with anything that might fail. Thus, by sticking to the route that was suggested to Bakhtiar by his advisers, he was in a position to receive crucial American assistance, without subjecting the USG to any "down sides", in case the plan turned out to be a failure.

trade figures with Iran in early the 1980s had been so encouraging, that many 'pundits' had seriously questioned any course of action that might "rock the boat", particularly, in favor of those generally termed as "pie in the sky". Based on this perception, no mention of the Plan was ever made in any British circle.

Thus, by the time when Bakhtiar was received at the White House in late February of 1986, the preliminary aspects related to the implementation of the Plan were all in hand, and beginning in March 1986, some financial contribution to assist the investigative process in both the military and civilian sectors, were made available to him⁵⁵¹. However, it is extremely important, and highly delicate to point out, that while funds going to other Iranian resistance groups or personalities had been requested by the CIA, and were part and parcel of a program aimed at keeping in touch with Iranian dissidents for purposes of acquiring intelligence, the assistance given to Bakhtiar was not a CIA initiative, and was one that had come from above by policy makers, as a stepping stone for implementing "White Star"⁵⁵².

Bakhtiar's Trip to Saudi Arabia

Since his previous trip to Saudi Arabia in February 1984, Bakhtiar had remained in close contact with his Saudi Connections⁵⁵³, and without divulging anything concrete

⁵⁵¹A sum to the tune of US\$100,000/month (Similar to the amount that was being forwarded to Dr. Ali Amini's "Front for the Liberation of Iran".

⁵⁵²Although, the CIA was the appropriate channel to make these funds available to Bakhtiar, it is both wrong and inaccurate, if this important distinction is not made between NAMIR and FLI. This distinction became even more significant, when by the end of 1986, Dr. Ali Amini was effectively "retired" by the CIA, and his entire operation was handed to Dr. Maouchehr Ganji, a little known and insignificant political figure, whose only distinction in the past had been to serve as Minister of Education, in one of the cabinets prior to the Islamic Revolution.

⁵⁵³The point of contact was an Arab writer and journalist by the name of Ahmad Al-Sheibani, who was (at the time) part of the entourage of Prince Abodollah, the Saudi

about the nature of his plans, he had made his intention understood that his main objective was to launch an operation involving military units of the Iranian armed forces. However, in August 1984, he had sent the Head of the London Liaison Office, armed with certain obtained documents from Iran, on a special mission to alert the Saudi Arabian authorities about plans by the Islamic regime to create unrest in the holy cities during the forthcoming pilgrimage. The top secret document entitled, "The Creation of An Independent Brigade For Carrying Out Irregular Warfare In Enemy Territory", was subsequently translated into English by the London Liaison Office, and published in the front page of the Times, on 6 January 1985⁵⁵⁴. This report, which was immediately translated into Arabic and presented to the Crown Prince, was taken very seriously by the Saudi Arabian authorities, who later expressed their sincere appreciation to Bakhtiar.

Nonetheless, the Saudis, themselves, were playing a very cautious game. In line with their usual policy of "betting on all horses", while maintaining their relations with Bakhtiar through an intermediary with the London Liaison Office, they were watching closely, to observe the degree of seriousness with which Bakhtiar was being treated in Washington. During this period, ie. the period between Bakhtiar's last visit to the Kingdom and the time when he was received at the White House by Admiral John Poindexter, they had refrained from extending any further invitations to him, and despite the fact that they were periodically informed of the progress that was being made, they were unwilling to take any further steps regarding funding for Bakhtiar,

Arabian Crown Prince.

⁵⁵⁴A full account of this report, along with all the excerpts of published articles about it, was also published in Issue 16 of Voice of Iran, dated January/February 1985, which was totally devoted to this topic.

until "the Americans had directly spoken of the subject to them"⁵⁵⁵.

This matter was further complicated by the fact that the decision which had been made was at the National Security Council, and that the course of action which had been decided upon, was one in which confidentiality was of paramount importance. Thus, it was, for example, difficult for an instruction to be issued to the US Ambassador in Riyadh, so that he could then convey that message to the Saudis, given that such action would have entailed certain implications which the NSC decision, was not able to address at that time. While, the CIA station chief in Riyadh, could potentially have made some mention of the Washington meeting, again, this revelation would only have been made to his opposite number, and not to levels in which any decision regarding Bakhtiar would have had to be made⁵⁵⁶.

Here, it is also important to underline another very important component of this whole equation. While Bakhtiar had been previously received by the Saudi Arabian Crown Prince, who had also provided him with a measure of financial assistance, this relationship was well compartmentalized within the Crown Prince's household - ie. the funds that went to Bakhtiar came from the Crown Prince, and not the official Saudi government budget. This meant, that the Saudis could always deny having made any payments, or alternatively deny that "the country" had any wish to topple the Khomeini regime, by stating that whatever financial assistance they had made was for purposes of assisting "a former prime minister to cope with the difficulties of life in exile".

⁵⁵⁵This is a matter that was underlined in numerous conversations between the writer and the designated intermediary, Ahmad Al-Sheibani.

⁵⁵⁶The CIA case officer in Paris did suggest such a route. However, neither he nor any of his supervisors in Washington, seemed enthusiastic about the proposition.

In the end, a much earlier planned visit by Vice President Bush to a number of Middle Eastern Countries, came to the rescue and essentially solved the existing impasse. Following a hastily arranged meeting between the Head of the London Liaison Office, and Donald Gregg, the Vice President's national Security Adviser, who was accompanying Vice President George Bush on the trip, Gregg (who had himself briefly attended the June 1985 meeting at the White House Situation Room) agreed to meet with the Crown Prince and to verbally seek his assistance for the Bakhtiar cause. According to Gregg, no assistance was forwarded in Riyadh for facilitating this affair, as every step required to be taken was ultimately left for Gregg⁵⁵⁷.

Shortly after Gregg's return to the United States, an official invitation was finally extended to Bakhtiar⁵⁵⁸, and in April 1986, Bakhtiar arrived in Riyadh for a third time, accompanied entirely, by a civilian team⁵⁵⁹. At the end of this unspectacular visit, in which nothing about the Plan was either asked or discussed, some funding, as an initial instalment, was made available, which in turn allowed Bakhtiar a measure of comfort and peace of mind to proceed with his plans.

Returning from Saudi Arabia was the zenith of "Bakhtiar's last hurrah", for having come up with a credible and comprehensive plan of action, he had been able to

⁵⁵⁷Sheibani refused to contact Gregg himself, and it was only through the provision of Sheibani's telephone number to Gregg by the writer, that he was able to contact Sheibani, and through him, to arrange having a meeting with the Saudi Crown Prince.

⁵⁵⁸Only after Bakhtiar forced the issue, by writing to the Crown Prince on 18 April 1986, and informing him of the Gregg meeting, and requesting that a meeting between them should be arranged.

⁵⁵⁹i.e., Without the Commander of NAMIR-MW, who was left out because of the internal strife that was brewing inside NAMIR between him and Dr. Boroomand (with Bakhtiar siding initially with Boroomand).

receive both moral and material assistance from two powerful and important sources with a critical interest in Iran. All that was left, was to proceed according to plan, with the knowledge and assurance that the next installment of funds would be readily available.

However, no sooner had he returned to Paris, that Bakhtiar was to become inundated with a whole host of inter-NAMIR squabbles and wrangling, which would eventually destroy his last real chance of ever regaining the mantle of political power in Iran.

The Collapse of White Star And the Beginning of the End for Bakhtiar

No single factor more than inter-organizational tension due to Bakhtiar's lack of management abilities, contributed to the collapse of "White Star", and with it, the last real chance Bakhtiar would have for mounting a serious challenge to the regime. In this respect, Bakhtiar was further burdened with the fact that NAMIR, far from being a uniform organization of like minded people, was instead a motley assembly of mostly egotistic individuals with different political perspectives, who had for various reasons⁵⁶⁰, come to accept Bakhtiar as their "leader"⁵⁶¹. Indeed, apart from mostly old friends from the "National Front" days, all existing bonds between most of these un-orchestrated elements who had come to form NAMIR, were at best

⁵⁶⁰Mostly financial - ie. they were receiving a salary from Bakhtiar.

⁵⁶¹A pertinent comment that was often made by Mirfendereski to describe this situation and underline this problem was that "you could only pull a cart with a heavy load that was travelling on a rocky road, with the force and the support of set of similarly sized horses or mules. But, if you tied the same cart to a pack, consisting of a horse, a mule, a sheep, and a fox, you could never hope to complete the journey".

tenuous. It is also a fact that, throughout all the years, Bakhtiar never made any serious effort to improve this situation, satisfied with the notion that so long as his position as undisputed leader remained unchallenged, then he had nothing to worry about.

While, experience proved this notion to be misguided, its effects were not always of equal significance - ie. it was one thing when members of the NAMIR committee in Gothenburg or New Delhi quarrelled amongst themselves, and it was quite something else when the Chairman of NAMIR's Executive Committee quarrelled with the Commander of NAMIR-MW. Thus, while quarrelling members in Sweden could harmlessly argue about topics such as "the degree to which the late Shah was a nationalist as opposed to Mossadegh, or truly independent and not subservient to foreigners etc.",⁵⁶² it was a different matter when those at the top echelons of NAMIR, could not stand to cooperate with one another.

Unfortunately, from the very beginning, disagreements emanating from petty squabbles and personal jealousies, with increasing tensions amongst the "elite", had become a common feature in NAMIR. And, what is more, while Bakhtiar was fully knowledgeable of the existence of these tensions, his reluctance in wanting to settle them, even at the cost of sacking some of the uncompromising colleagues, had been conspicuously apparent⁵⁶³. While, the pursuit of such a policy on the part

⁵⁶²Some of the fiercest arguments in NAMIR, centered around rivalries between supporters of the late Shah, and followers of the "Line of Mossadegh". These arguments were a major sources of tension and suspicion amongst members in all branches.

⁵⁶³There were times, when it seemed as though Bakhtiar was deliberately not addressing the very obvious. In response to this very matter being raised by the writer on one occasion, he responded by saying that "these problems are much worse in other organizations".

of Bakhtiar, did not prevent the departure of certain key people during NAMIR's critical years, it did, however, increase the levels of organizational chaos and internal divisions⁵⁶⁴.

Main Sources of Internal Tension

From the very start of his campaign in exile, Bakhtiar was beset by a very difficult problem that confronts all "rising politician", namely having to configure his essential staff in such a way that both "loyalty" and "competence", were equally rewarded. During his many years of opposition to the late Shah, Bakhtiar was never really burdened with this problem, given that most of his activities until the fall of 1978, were never really taken seriously. In those circumstances, and at a time when almost all competent Iranians were somehow engaged, one way or another, with the Pahlavi regime, Bakhtiar had the luxury of surrounding himself with loyal friends and supporters. However, once in exile, and "constantly under pressure to produce", he had no alternative but to turn to people with specialized talents. The net result of this was that his immediate circle had to be enlarged in order to make room for these essentially needed "new comers", which in turn alienated many of his "Old friends" who had stuck by him in all the previous years. This basic dilemma and his inability to cope with it, coupled with Bakhtiar's own personal lack of administrative capabilities⁵⁶⁵, compounded matters and indirectly created an explosive situation

⁵⁶⁴It should be pointed out that Bakhtiar, never once ventured to visit any of his numerous offices in Paris, just to see what everyone was doing, or making his presence felt to the membership.

⁵⁶⁵It is essential to remember that since the downfall of Mossadegh, Bakhtiar had not served in any official capacity, and the only managerial skill he had acquired, was by being on the board of certain major commercial concerns, where no real management skill was ever expected of him.

which eventually blew up.

Previously in Chart 1 (Chapter 4), reference has been made to the main bodies of the overall political organization that were developed by Bakhtiar for the aim of promoting his objectives.

Of those bodies mentioned before (ie. NAMIR, the Council of Advisers, NAMIR Military Wing, and the London Liaison Office), NAMIR was not only the largest body, but it was the one structure that was there for everyone to see. This made NAMIR's various actions subject to membership questioning and general approval. However, when it came to matters such as "planning" or "intelligence gathering"⁵⁶⁶, it was obvious that these functions could not be fulfilled correctly, without a large measure of confidentiality and secrecy.

The other three bodies were thus designed to fulfill those particular needs - eg. in terms of general policy, the 'Council of Advisers' was a useful forum for Bakhtiar to discuss, in private, various policy options, while NAMIR-MW and the London Liaison Office, essentially fulfilled their own particular and specialized functions, as elaborated in earlier paragraphs. Also, while all these bodies ultimately reported their findings and recommendations to Bakhtiar, even at best of times, the level of cooperation and coordination amongst them was never encouraging.

During Bakhtiar's early years, the role played by old Bakhtiar loyalists such as Abdol Rahman Boroomand and Rahim Sharifi were of primary significance. Indeed, it was

⁵⁶⁶This involved meeting and interviewing a whole host of different people, who were anxious to meet in secret and keep their identities known to only a limited few.

through Boroomand, that most of the early key players, not only in Paris, but also in other major cities, were recruited⁵⁶⁷. In Paris, as explained earlier, individuals such as Hossein Malek and Moloud Khanlary (both very friendly to Boroomand) were setting the initial agenda, and it was not until such time that Bakhtiar was in need of a more sophisticated political machinery, involving more than mere political ideological rhetoric, that the balance began to change.

The first major setup, away from NAMIR and the particular influence of Abdol Rahman Boroomand⁵⁶⁸, was the Council of Advisers, which consisted essentially of ex-Bakhtiar cabinet ministers, as well as a number of senior diplomats and politicians. While, those involved in the higher echelons of NAMIR had participated in the earlier stages of the revolution against the late Shah, the more influential members amongst the advisers, such as former Foreign Minister Ahmad Mirfendereski and Senator Kazem Jafroudi, were not at all of the same persuasion, and were instead of the view that the new Bakhtiar organization should not allow itself to be involved in any action that would alienate the monarchist constituency, which according to them, was Bakhtiar's only real popular base in Iran.

These differences became even more evident, first with the formation of NAMIR-MW and later, with that of the London Liaison Office. Although Abdol Rahman Boroomand was instrumental in the recruitment of both the Commander of NAMIR-

⁵⁶⁷They came to be known as the "Isfahani Mafia", given that in most places NAMIR representatives, were all Boroomand nominees, and usually from his home city of Isfahan.

⁵⁶⁸Who had come up with the initial financing for the organization, and considered himself as Bakhtiar's de facto deputy.

MW⁵⁶⁹, and the Head of the London Office, it was only a matter of time before, any meaningful cooperation amongst them would cease. This was, on the one hand due to Boroomand's lack of any bureaucratic experience and poor human relations, while on the other, it reflected Bakhtiar's weakness as an administrator,ⁱⁿ capable of keeping his subordinates productively in line⁵⁷⁰.

Rivalry And Competition Amongst the NAMIR Elite

Rivalry and competition amongst the "elite" of any political organization, even those which are banned and exiled⁵⁷¹, is nothing unusual, and varying samples of it are witnessed on a daily basis in the international press. However, when the leadership is unable to impose order and keep the bickering parties in line, that is the time when chaos, with all its damaging consequences, sets in.

⁵⁶⁹Brigadier General Amir Hossein Shahrदार, the Commander of NAMIR-MW, was introduced to Boroomand by Rahim Sharifi (to whom he was related), and Boroomand was initially very supportive of the new Commander, until his interferences in his domain of activities became such that they could no longer tolerate one another. Over time, the degree of animosity amongst these men reached such a point that Boroomand (who was assassinated in April 1990) had told many of his close friends, as far back as 1986, that he suspected the General of wanting to kill him. Though, this was a very provocative statement by Boroomand (which he had also revealed to the writer), there is no question that it had no substance, and was made at the time to only arouse opposition against the General.

⁵⁷⁰Without wanting to delve too much into the psychology of Dr. Bakhtiar, it is appropriate only to mention that Bakhtiar was an individual who was tremendously affected by sycophancy. As such, he did have the tendency to develop greater sympathy for those who were more able to sooth his enormous ego. Also, like most vain politicians, he had the potential to wonder off with illusions of grandeur. For example, he often liked to compare himself with General De Gaulle, and one occasion when the writer, in discussing the mounting tensions within NAMIR that had affected Bakhtiar's own personal relationship with the General, he responded by comparing his stand with the one taken by President Harry S. Truman, against General Douglas McArthur.

⁵⁷¹Such as the PLO.

In the case of NAMIR, shortly after the establishment of NAMIR-MW in Paris in 1983, an incident took place which was the first major sign of rift between Abdol Rahman Boroomand and General A.H. Shahrदार. The incident, the exact details of which never became fully known (not even to Bakhtiar himself), involved the purchase and shipment of arms from Bakhtiar to the Qashqai tribal leader, Khosrow Qashqai, who was eventually defeated and executed by the regime in the Fars Province in 1983⁵⁷². The dispute centered around facts concerning the exact fate of the arms which were allegedly bought for a very large sum⁵⁷³. The only established matter was that a great deal of money had been earmarked and subsequently released by Bakhtiar, though nothing ever reached a final destination, wherever that eventual destination was supposed to have been⁵⁷⁴. What did, however, transpire as a consequence of this experience, was a great deal of "finger pointing" by all parties, and most particularly by Boroomand against the General and some of his colleagues in NAMIR-MW. Although, this episode itself faded away shortly afterwards, nonetheless, the degree of "mud slinging" and acrimony had been so intense that it was impossible to undo the damage.

572Interview with A.H. Amir Parviz (5 October 1994).

573Estimated to be in the region of almost half a million American dollars.

574The uncorroborated account mostly expressed on this subject, is that a sizable amount of arms and ammunition was purchased through an intermediary in Paris. Delivery of the arms was subsequently made in Dubai, where a number of NAMIR-MW officers were tasked to accompany the shipment aboard one of the local vessels generally used for inter-port shipments in the Persian Gulf. It is alleged, that on nearing the Iranian coast, a situation arose where the ship was overshadowed by an Iranian Coast Guard vessel. It is said that the accompanying officers then threw the entire shipment overboard, so that they would not be arrested on charges of smuggling arms. However, many close Bakhtiar advisers, such as his cousin and cabinet colleague, Abbas Gholi Bakhtiar, is of the view that there was no arms in the first place, and the whole story was simply a device aimed at usurping the funds which Bakhtiar had released for this purpose.

Because of this incident, A. R. Boroomand then took it upon himself to keep a much closer eye on the activities of NAMIR-MW. This entailed trying to have a thorough grip on the exact nature of its day to day activities. While, Boroomand may have indeed cleared this with Bakhtiar⁵⁷⁵, the General considered this to be a provocative act of infringement in his areas of responsibility, which only undermined the security and the efficiency of his operations.

Prior to Bakhtiar's trip to Saudi Arabia in February 1984, and the start of a drive that would eventually produce "White Star", Boroomand, undoubtedly, had an edge on all matters⁵⁷⁶. However, following Bakhtiar's return from Riyadh and his immediate commissioning of a major "Plan of Action", requiring the expertise of the General, in whose personality he had invested by taking him along to Saudi Arabia and showing him off as his Military Commander, a situation had evolved whereby Boroomand was no longer able to exercise the same degree of control as he had in the initial years. Nonetheless, Boroomand was sufficiently powerful to force a situation whereby General Shahrदार submitted his resignation as NAMIR-MW Commander in December 1984, and was immediately replaced by a Boroomand nominee, Colonel Hadi Aziz-Moradi, who was later assassinated in Turkey.

⁵⁷⁵There is no question that Bakhtiar knew and trusted Boroomand more than any other member of his staff. Also, both men, given their previous background, had a great tendency to become easily suspicious. It would thus have been quite possible for Boroomand to have convinced Bakhtiar that he should personally look at NAMIR-MW, with much greater scrutiny.

⁵⁷⁶This was not related to existing disputes between Boroomand and NAMIR, but also included disputes between Boroomand and Abbas Gholi Bakhtiar, regarding budgetary matters, in which Boroomand's decisions had been fully backed by Bakhtiar, to the disgust and frustration of Abbas Gholi Bakhtiar (This particular matter was reiterated in many conversations between the writer and a close Boroomand confidante, Azizollah Esna-Ashari during the mid 1980's).

The episode leading to General Shahrदार's resignation was the arrest of a number of his officers in Tabriz, which he blamed on lack of proper security which he claimed was being constantly breached by Boroomand, through his unceasing interferences in the affairs of NAMIR-MW. He told Bakhtiar that Boroomand was contacting individual members of his staff directly and without his knowledge, and as such, was jeopardizing the security of his operations, as well as the structure of discipline within his network. He asked for Bakhtiar's firm and immediate intervention to prevent any further breaches of discipline or interference by Boroomand. When such an intervention did not follow, it was clear to the General that Boroomand's actions had had the support of Bakhtiar, and, therefore, there was no longer any other option available to him but to resign.

The effect of the General's resignation was a source of total astonishment for the London Liaison Office, that was then intensely engaged with the General in preparing "White Star". The feeling was that the General's resignation, would have a tremendous negative effect at a most crucial time in both Riyadh and Washington. Above all, the failure of Bakhtiar, himself, to have appreciated the significance of this matter, was perhaps the most revealing and disturbing side of the picture⁵⁷⁷.

⁵⁷⁷By that time, following a number of meetings with the CIA case officer in Paris, and the writer's reporting from Washington, Bakhtiar was fully aware of the significance of the General in his organization. So to think that he could easily replace him, while proceeding as before, was most naive. This matter was thus immediately raised with him by the writer, and the suggestion was even made that if the intention is to "fire" the General, he should do it in such a way that does not cast doubt on his leadership or decision making abilities. It was in response to this point that Bakhtiar came up with Truman-McArthur analogy, and for the first time, the writer was struck by the fact that Bakhtiar by taking sides in this matter, in what was nothing more than a petty squabble, had displayed a dangerous potential of jeopardizing the outcome of the entire Cause, and the future success of all who were devoting their efforts to ensure ultimate victory for NAMIR.

However, what had been started back in February 1984, had gained such momentum that Bakhtiar once again needed the knowledge and the experience of the General to complete "White Star", and pave the way for the advancement of his plans. So, by March 1985, the General was once again back in the picture, this time as Bakhtiar's "Military Adviser", and once "White Star" was presented in Washington, Bakhtiar was told that what had "swung the day" and convinced the Americans, was the "Commander's Estimate of the Situation, which had accompanied and complemented the "White Star" Plan. Thus, by June 1985, the General was back at his position as Commander of NAMIR-MW, armed this time with a written specification of his duties signed by Bakhtiar, which clearly banned any outside interference in the affairs of NAMIR-MW, and in particular from any civilian source in NAMIR, apart from Bakhtiar himself.

While, a meeting was arranged between Boroomand and the General at that time, in order to cultivate the much needed cooperation that was vital for the promotion of "White Star", and to bring previous bad feelings to an end, the degree of distrust and resentment had become so great, that the truce that was worked out was not of the enduring type⁵⁷⁸.

Shortly afterwards, Boroomand, whose hands had been effectively cut off from NAMIR-MW, began to react by trying to "push his weight" in other areas outside his general scope of responsibility, and by Fall 1985 had managed to provoke a situation, that resulted in him becoming entangled with the Head of the London

⁵⁷⁸Meeting arranged by the writer, is an interesting indication of a situation amongst exiles, when all disputing parties are fully aware that their intransigence can only benefit their enemies, yet they are unable to alter their behavior.

Liaison Office as well⁵⁷⁹.

As a result, the level of internal tension became such that by February 1986 when Bakhtiar made his "grand" visit to Washington, he was accompanied only by the Commander of NAMIR-MW and the Head of the London Liaison Office⁵⁸⁰.

Unfortunately, the success of the Washington trip served only to intensify the sense of resentment felt by Boroomand, and by the time that Bakhtiar was planning to embark on his third and most important journey to Saudi Arabia, in support of "White Star", a situation was once again provoked by Boroomand within the military office that required Bakhtiar's immediate intervention. When that required intervention did not take place, the General resigned for the second time, and did not accompany Bakhtiar, as he rightly should have, on the very important journey to Saudi Arabia⁵⁸¹.

Once Washington became aware of the General's departure, the entire Operation White Star, which had been received with great enthusiasm, was immediately placed "on ice", pending the outcome of the General's position, given that its main architect had been cut off from the plan. During this time, Boroomand had managed

⁵⁷⁹Boroomand then started making indirect interferences in the workings of the London Liaison Office, by undermining its work and reducing the funds it was operating with, as well as bringing in others to carry out some of the same tasks being carried out by the office.

⁵⁸⁰Working relations between these men was always excellent, and the two men had tremendous respect for one another.

⁵⁸¹The crucial importance of the General with regards to "White Star", and the whole question of Bakhtiar's abilities as a leader capable of controlling internal rivalries was once again raised by the writer on the journey to Saudi Arabia. But, Bakhtiar, failed to make any sort of a positive response. However, during the course of heated debates that ensued over this issue, extreme insistence by the writer over this matter, served only to provoke Bakhtiar in a very negative way that was to affect their relationship in the future.

to suggest two other candidates, both subservient to himself, as suitable replacements for General Shahrddar. However, vigorous opposition to the sacking of the General from the London Liaison Office, and the eventual comprehension by Bakhtiar, that without the General, he could no longer proceed as before, forced a situation in which Bakhtiar eventually swallowed his pride and re-installed the General.

But, to cure his damaged ego, he sent a letter critical of the Head of the Liaison Office⁵⁸² (because he had failed to tow his line with regards to the General) , to one of his American friends who had lobbied effectively on his behalf in the United States, and was his main contact with the NSC. It was the sharpness and the frankness of the response that was given, which greatly shocked Bakhtiar, for it bluntly underlined his bad judgement, by stating that he should look elsewhere for showing recrimination⁵⁸³.

Although, matters were subsequently patched up, an air of suspicion had crept in the relationship amongst those whose cooperation and coordination was indispensable, if "White Star" was to have had any chance whatsoever⁵⁸⁴.

582The letter dated 20 May 1986, and addressed to Rear Admiral Max.K. Morris, was drafted by Abbas Gholi Bakhtiar.

583Letter from Rear Admiral Morris, dated 30 May 1986 and addressed to Bakhtiar. On receiving this letter, Bakhtiar telephoned the writer and complained about the fact that in the views of "the Americans" all his other colleagues apart from the General and the writer were "AHMAGHS" (meaning idiots).

584Not content to allow things to rest where they were, Boroomand had privately proceeded to engage an American lawyer to help him lobby in the United States. In meeting at the NSC in September 1986, Howard R. Teicher informed the writer that a Washington based attorney had attempted to make an appointment to see him on behalf of Dr. Bakhtiar. He could not understand what the lawyer wanted, and he had in any event refused to see him. Nonetheless, he had brought the matter, in order to

During the Summer of 1986, despite all the previous tensions, matters continued to proceed according to the time tables earlier agreed. Plans for some propaganda operations to be carried out inside Iran were advanced⁵⁸⁵, but when the scandal regarding the "Iran-Contra" affair forced the resignation of Admiral Poindexter and his team of associates from the White House, as well as the impending departure of William Casey from the CIA, nearly all the main sponsors of "White Star" had been effectively removed from their positions of influence. Whether "White Star" could have survived, under the best of circumstances within NAMIR, in view of the damage that was inflicted on the White House by "Irangate", is a matter of speculation.

Bakhtiar and the "Irangate" Scandal

In November 1986, it was disclosed that the US had, in August 1985, and subsequently, participated in secret dealings with the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran involving the sale of military equipment. There appeared a linkage between these dealings and the efforts to obtain the release of US citizens held hostage in Lebanon by terrorists believed to be closely associated with the Iranian regime. After the initial story broke, the US Attorney General announced that proceeds from the arms transfers may have been diverted to assist US backed rebel forces in Nicaragua, known as the contras. This possibility enlarged the controversy and added questions not only of policy and propriety but also of violation of law.

These disclosures became the focus of substantial public attention. The secret arms

have Dr. Bakhtiar clear it as soon as possible. When the matter was brought to Bakhtiar's attention, he denied any knowledge about the matter, and it soon became clear as to how this ridiculous, and highly embarrassing initiative had been started.

⁵⁸⁵and eventually executed in January 1987.

transfers appeared to run directly counter to declared US policies. The US had announced a policy of neutrality in the Iran-Iraq War and had proclaimed an embargo on arms sales to Iran. It had worked actively to isolate Iran and other regimes known to give aid and comfort to terrorists. It had declared that it would pay no ransom to hostage takers⁵⁸⁶.

As far as NAMIR was concerned, the arms for hostages deal had not seemed to run contrary to the spirit of the discussions that had taken place with regards to Operation White Star. The fact that any reference to this matter should have been made by a NSC official⁵⁸⁷, as far back as April 1986, and NAMIR's assistance requested to help in this effort to free the American hostages, had in fact been quite reassuring. It was obvious that if the US was no longer burdened with the constraints imposed by the hostages, then they would have much greater maneuverability in providing NAMIR with the types of assistance required to implement White Star successfully. In reporting this matter to Bakhtiar in mid-April 1986, the argument had also been made that if the US was interested in anything more than just the freeing of its captive citizens, then there would have been absolutely no reason to divulge any information regarding this whole operation to representatives of an opposition group committed to the regime's downfall. While, different interpretations have been given to US motives in beginning the process of negotiation with Iran over this matter, in his book entitled, *Special Trust*, Robert McFarlane, the former National Security Adviser to President Reagan, who (accompanied by NSC staff members, Colonel Oliver North and Howard Teicher) led

⁵⁸⁶New York Times, *The Tower Commission Report*, Bantam Books, New York, 1987, p. 1.

⁵⁸⁷Vincent Cannistraro.

a US delegation to Teheran in May 1986, has acceded that the so-called Iran initiative, was (contrary to his own preference) nothing more a simple swap of weapons for hostages⁵⁸⁸.

In Paris, however, under increasing pressure during the previous months over the mounting levels of internal squabbles that had greatly damaged his organization, Bakhtiar's attitude in receiving the astonishing disclosures that were being made in Washington, was one of great betrayal. Tired and confused, his immediate impulse with regards to "Irangate" was to try and exploit this event, by lashing out against the Reagan administration.

However, what he neglected to take into account, was that as far back as April 1986, he had himself been informed by way of a message from a Senior White House official, that the Americans were considering trading arms for the release of hostages⁵⁸⁹. In fact, they had asked if Bakhtiar was in a position to assist in this affair, and, moreover, with Bakhtiar's blessing and expense, a meeting had been arranged in July 1986 by NAMIR in Geneva between an Iranian cleric, and an American official to discuss possible new initiatives for assisting the settlement of this very issue⁵⁹⁰.

Nonetheless, Instead of adopting a position that would provide him with a "come

⁵⁸⁸McFarlane, R.C. (with Zofia Smardz), *Special Trust*, Cadell & Davies, New York, 1994.

⁵⁸⁹This matter was mentioned by Vincent Cannistraro during the course of a luncheon at Washington's Metropole Club with the writer in April 1986. NAMIR's incentive for assisting this process, as presented to Bakhtiar, was to help remove the obstacles that were a constraining factor in an all out American commitment for "White Star".

⁵⁹⁰The writer participated in that meeting.

back" possibility into the new White House⁵⁹¹, Bakhtiar over played his hand, and as a consequence played straight into the hands of those who were always looking for an opportunity of terminating any US government working relations with him⁵⁹².

⁵⁹¹All those closely associated with White Star in the NSC had been forced to resign in the aftermath of the scandal. Thus, in their absence, there was no longer any political support for its promotion. This was in turn a serious blow and another major explanation for the eventual failure of the plan.

⁵⁹²The writer advised Bakhtiar (November 1986) , that contrary to criticizing Reagan publicly, it was more advantageous to try and assist him in ways possible - e.g., by exerting more pressure and concentrating greater propaganda efforts at exposing the Iranian side of the Irangate negotiations - so that he would have the incentive to look at Bakhtiar positively. Yet, Bakhtiar seemed to have developed a sudden case of amnesia, forgetting totally his own knowledge and involvement, in the events that he had himself been made aware of in April 1986. He clearly felt that he could obtain greater mileage from this whole episode, by pursuing a hostile policy towards an administration which had given him both support and encouragement.

Chapter 6: The Final Period (1987-1991)

As mentioned in the previous chapter, by the end of 1986, the revelations that were made regarding the "Irangate" incident had led to the removal of two of the key figures connected with Bakhtiar's plan for the overthrow of the Islamic Republic⁵⁹³.

But, despite the fact that the majority of its most important supporters in the US administration were no longer in their key positions, this, by itself, did not automatically signal an end for "Operation White Star". Nonetheless, the removal of key supporters in Washington, coupled with organizational disintegration at the managerial level, within NAMIR, had created a situation which had made any resuscitation of the plan almost impossible.

In October 1986, following a thorough evaluation of NAMIR's overall structure, a restructuring plan for NAMIR⁵⁹⁴, aimed at increasing organizational efficiency (by significantly reducing the size of unnecessary external structures and expenditures, while at the same time increasing internal presence), and reducing internal bickering (by re-shuffling key portfolios within NAMIR) was presented to Bakhtiar by the Head of the London Liaison Office. In this plan, that was submitted on 8 October 1986, particular emphasis was also made at enhancing NAMIR's

⁵⁹³These were Admiral John Poindexter, President Ronald Reagan's National Security Adviser, and William Casey the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. By mid-1987, Howard Teicher and Vince Cannistrero, two other key White House officials involved with "White Star" were also forced out of office because of their involvement in the "Irangate" scandal (Teicher was forced to leave government, and Cannistrero was reassigned to other duties). Only, the National Security Adviser to the Vice President, Donald Gregg, who was to become the American Ambassador to Seoul in the forthcoming Bush Administration, was to remain in his position. Gregg had been briefed about "White Star" from the very beginning.

⁵⁹⁴Which was prepared in consultation with the Commander of NAMIR-MW.

propaganda capabilities⁵⁹⁵, while also improving NAMIR's relations with other moderate exile organizations, and in particular Bakhtiar's relations with Reza Pahlavi⁵⁹⁶. However, the acceptance of this plan meant that Bakhtiar would have to move decisively to remove a number of close friends such as A.R. Boroomand from key positions, while having to close down most NAMIR offices, and "lay off" a significant number of NAMIR salary receiving staff across the board⁵⁹⁷.

Bakhtiar's failure to act on these recommendations, subsequently led to the resignation of the Head of the London Liaison Office, in December 1986 (although his informal contacts with Bakhtiar continued to remain more or less intact for almost another 12 months⁵⁹⁸). Ironically, the first of several pre-planned propaganda operations in Iran, scheduled earlier for the promotion of "White Star", was actually carried out in January 1987⁵⁹⁹. Nonetheless, by February 1987, all American

⁵⁹⁵Taking into account, a report on this subject that had been prepared by NAMIR-MW (see Annex 2).

⁵⁹⁶This plan was prepared in circumstances that had become critical, even prior to the break out of the "Irangate" scandal. It was felt by key advisers, such as the writer and the Commander of NAMIR-MW, that in order to put an end to organizational chaos, reduce costs and improve efficiency, nothing short of a major re-structuring of NAMIR, would be adequate to restore confidence and moral, both amongst Iranians as well as key international quarters.

⁵⁹⁷The idea was not that local NAMIR offices should be closed, but that they should be funded through local fund raising efforts, as opposed to continued central funding.

⁵⁹⁸This was also tantamount to the dismantlement of the London Liaison Office.

⁵⁹⁹This operation consisted of launching several helium filled balloons with propaganda leaflets (containing photographs of Bakhtiar, and a number of NAMIR slogans), from outside Teheran. These special balloons, supplied by the CIA and attached to a timer, were configured to carry the leaflets until such time that they were set for release at unspecified points over the city of Teheran. Once, the operation had been carried out by the specially trained personnel, maximum propaganda use of it was made, on behalf of Bakhtiar, by the Head of the London Liaison Office, though he was no longer officially connected with NAMIR. Subsequently NAMIR published an account of this successful operations in Qyame Iran (Issue No. 188 dated 29 January 1987). Apart from NAMIR affiliated media (i.e., NAMIR newspapers, radio broadcasts, and TV

financial assistance earmarked for "White Star", came to a halt, and, with it, came the indication that "White Star" had, effectively been shelved. As a result, it was not long before Bakhtiar's cash flow problems were once again to reach a critical point. Only this time, there was no immediate remedy in sight.

The Break Down of Entente With Other Moderate Leaders

A harmonious relationship between Bakhtiar, Reza Pahlavi, and Dr. Ali Amini, was always considered to be one of the main pre-requisites for the successful implementation of "White Star". By February 1986, when Bakhtiar had made his final trip to Washington, this goal had been successfully achieved. However, as "White Star" had begun to unravel due to inter-NAMIR petty squabbles and rivalries, there was also a failure on the part of NAMIR to allocate the time and effort necessary for keeping intact the fragile entente that had been built over time with other moderate leaders, and by September 1986, signs of irreparable damage were becoming apparent.

To begin with, by Fall 1986, fundamental changes were beginning to appear in the CIA run operation, "Front For the Liberation of Iran" (FLI), that was led by Dr. Ali Amini. This was essentially due to a decision that had been taken in Washington to "gently remove"⁶⁰⁰ Amini and a number of his close advisers⁶⁰¹, from the FLI⁶⁰².

programs [particularly in California] and Israel Radio, this episode did not receive any other coverage.

⁶⁰⁰With hindsight, it can now be seen that what the CIA wanted to establish at the time, was an independent link with the monarchist/constitutionalist constituency, minus any involvement with either the Shah or any other substantial political figure. The fact that the FLI had been endowed with a radio station from the start of operations in the early 1980s, also meant that the CIA was able to feed potential listeners with the type of propaganda/information which they deemed appropriate for the promotion of

However, since early March 1986, when Bakhtiar had met with the Shah in Washington, relations between them had continued to improve. During the Summer of 1986, the Shah, along with Dr. Amini had made a visit to Bakhtiar's home, where they had been introduced to a number of his colleagues. In that meeting, some great forward strides were made, in that it had seemed that they had all been able to put aside the grievances of the past. More importantly, in that meeting, Bakhtiar had projected himself as a "conduit of reconciliation" between old critics of the late Shah, and the Young Reza Pahlavi⁶⁰³. Shortly after that visit, the Shah's Office in

their own interests. Given that what the CIA may have considered appropriate for shaping the views of constitutional monarchists in Iran, may not have been similar to views held by notable characters representing this constituency, an incentive had emerged to rid the FLI of the more independent figures, most likely to query some of their actions, and to replace them with subservient elements.

⁶⁰¹The most prominent adviser at the time being, Mr. Islam Kazemieh, an Iranian journalist with an anti-Shah background, generally credited with a famous lyric which had said, "Ta Shah Kafan Nashavad, In Vatan, Vatan Nashavad" (loosely translated, it meant that until such time that the Shah was dead, this country would never become a real country). By late 1986, the CIA was totally disenchanted with Kazemieh, and had come to the conclusion that both he and Dr. Amini would have to go. The man handpicked to replace them was Dr. Manouchehr Ganji, who was first brought in as a member of the Front's Executive Committee, though right from the beginning, he was put in charge of the "purse". It was a matter of time before matters were to erupt, and eventually, when Amini, on the advice of his close advisers decided to sack Ganji, the way was made clear for Ganji to break away from the FLI and rename the entire American operation as "Derafsh Kaviani" or Flag of Freedom. As a result, the FLI's clandestine radio station operating from Cairo was also renamed (becoming Radio "Derafsh Kaviani"), as CIA agents in Paris took immediate steps to disengage themselves, once and for all, from Dr. Amini and the remains of the FLI.

⁶⁰²The writer was broadly told of this in a private meeting in Washington in February 1986. During that meeting, the writer had queried the need to have a new management team replacing Amini, suggesting instead that efforts could all become centralized in NAMIR. However, this suggestion was not well received.

⁶⁰³In that he had made it possible for a process of reconciliation and understanding to take place between the old critics of the late Shah, in the National Front and the "Student Confederation", and his son, in an atmosphere of full agreement, as to what had been wrong in the past, and what was needed in order to avert the same mistakes in the future.

Washington had issued a statement saying that after careful consultations⁶⁰⁴, it had been agreed that a new "Council of Advisers" would be formed, whose only members for the present were Bakhtiar and Dr. Ali Amini.

At first, this statement had seemed harmless enough, in that it was essentially a formal acknowledgement of a working relationship that had been in place for some time. However, Bakhtiar's reaction to this statement, which was the result of the internal turmoil being experienced by NAMIR at the time⁶⁰⁵, was the "final straw" that was to "break the back of the camel of good faith and cooperation" with the Young Shah. In an interview with a relatively unknown and insignificant Iranian television station in California in September 1986, Bakhtiar (at the behest of Boroomand and some of his close advisers) denigrated the statement that had been released by the Shah's office, and said that he was willing to serve as an "Adviser not only to the Young Prince⁶⁰⁶, but to any Iranian, including also the TV interviewer himself!⁶⁰⁷". Once this program had been broadcast, all cooperative relations between the Shah's office and Bakhtiar were irreversibly suspended. Despite later attempts by both Bakhtiar himself⁶⁰⁸, and a special NAMIR delegation⁶⁰⁹ to revive these

⁶⁰⁴Which had entailed long discussions between the Shah's Chief representative, Mahmoud Foroughi and Bakhtiar (and Dr. Ali Amini).

⁶⁰⁵The crux of this turmoil has been best explained by Bagher Moin (interview, London, 3 May 1995), who in his broadcast following Bakhtiar's assassination in 1991 (BBC Persian Service, 08/08/91) said that Bakhtiar "Vacillated between republican and monarchist sentiment, thus keeping both sides disillusioned".

⁶⁰⁶Referring to Reza Pahlavi as "Prince Reza Pahlavi" and not as "Reza Shah II", was another important bone of contention with Bakhtiar, in his dealings with the Shah's advisers. Over the years, a great deal of time and semantics were invested in dealing with this matter, which from the point of view of many of their supporters had been a non issue from the start.

⁶⁰⁷Ali Limonadi of the "Iranian TV" in California.

relations, the perceived degree of injury by the Shah, emanating from Bakhtiar's statement had been so great, that he was never inclined to either trust or work with Bakhtiar again⁶¹⁰. The fact that the timing of this episode coincided with Bakhtiar's period of decline as an exile leader, also meant that the Shah was no longer compelled by circumstances to make any further concessions towards Bakhtiar as well.

In summary, through a single display of gratuitous insensitivity, Bakhtiar had, in a stroke, severely damaged himself by destroying a most important, but extremely fragile, alliance which he had himself cultivated for a number of years. Another important side effect of this failure in the relationship between Bakhtiar and the Shah, was the fact that the fate of Dr. Ali Amini was also irrevocably sealed, in that with the breakup of the proposed concept of the "Royal Council of Advisers", there was no longer any serious role that could be assigned to a personality of his calibre and standing. Thus, with his main backers (i.e., the CIA), already in search of a more purpose-built and functional replacement for the prestigious and independent minded Amini, the need to cling to him because of his position in the "Shah-Bakhtiar-Amini Triangle" was no longer there, and indeed very shortly thereafter - to

⁶⁰⁸In a meeting with the Shah on 14 April 1989 (Source: Qyame Iran, Issue 248 dated 27 April 1989).

⁶⁰⁹A special delegation, headed by Ahmad Mirfendereski and the then Chairman of NAMIR's Executive Committee, Mohammad Moshiri were sent to Washington in June 1989 to meet with the Shah's new team headed by Dr. Ahmad Ghoreishi, who had by this time replaced the Shah's two former "Chiefs of Cabinet", Mahmoud Foroughi and Halaku Rambod, both of whom had always been very skeptical of Bakhtiar's intention. While, Ghoreishi, himself had been in favor of some form of reconciliation during the course of discussions that took place from 6-9 June 1989 (Source: Qyame Iran, Issue 253 dated 6 July 1989), the memory of the Shah's own disappointment at Bakhtiar for his "breach of faith" in September 1986, was never cast aside, and as a result, nothing serious was to ever come of these discussions.

⁶¹⁰Discussions between the writer and the Shah in February 1987.

Bakhtiar's detriment⁶¹¹ - he was forcefully removed and retired. Needless, to say that the main loser in these chain of events, was none other than Bakhtiar, for he had not only managed to destroy the highly desirable and potentially popular "Shah-Bakhtiar Political Ticket", but also as a consequence of his blunder, he had managed to seal the fate of the only other important political figure in the Constitutionalist camp, with whom he could have had a serious working relationship⁶¹².

Changing Objectives: NAMIR's Quest For Survival

By mid-1987, Bakhtiar's dilemma, in the face of serious financial difficulties had reached a critical stage. With American and Saudi funding having dried up as a consequence of the failure of "Operation White Star" to take off, Bakhtiar had once again become highly dependent on the hand outs he was receiving from Saddam Hussein. However, contrary to their earlier perceptions, the Iraqis no longer looked at Bakhtiar in the same light that they had in earlier years, and while the continuing war with the Islamic Republic impelled them to continue their relations with him, it was obvious that they had come to consider the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI), whose leader Massoud Rajavi had taken up residence in Iraq, as a more useful opposition organization to the Islamic regime⁶¹³. According to Senator

⁶¹¹Because unlike Amini, the team that was to emerge in the FLI (later Derafsh Kaviani) did not have any desire to work along with Bakhtiar, and were in much greater competition with him.

⁶¹² While, Bakhtiar may have had great debates and disagreements with Dr. Amini over a number of issues, it was always a fact that Amini was a man of his own generation, with whom he had a great deal in common. Once, Amini had gone, Bakhtiar was forced to come into contact with men of a later generation (and generations), with whom he had much greater difficulty having any form of consensus or cultural 'entente'.

⁶¹³Here, it is important to point out, that the Mojahedin were much more inclined than Bakhtiar ever was, to do as the Iraqis wanted. Thus, the Iraqi relationship with the Mojahedin, was a much more complicated one than the one they had with Bakhtiar, and

Kazem Jafroudi, a close Bakhtiar confidante, and a Member of NAMIR's Supreme Council, one serious implication of this development was that Iraq's financial contributions to NAMIR, had gradually fallen from a high of approximately US\$600,000 per month to about US\$50,000 per month by the start of the Persian Gulf War, after which all funding to NAMIR was completely cut off⁶¹⁴.

On one occasion in early 1986, when the whole question of organizational funding was under review, Dr. Abdol Rahman Boroomand, had roughly calculated the monthly external expenditures of NAMIR - not inclusive of anything that was being spent inside the country - to have been somewhere in the region of US\$650,000 - 700,000⁶¹⁵. It was partly due to wanting to seriously reduce these outgoings that the "Restructuring Plan for NAMIR" had been submitted to Bakhtiar in October 1986. However, his failure to take account of those recommendations, at a time when alternative sources of funding (ie. apart from sole reliance on Iraq) was still available, meant that by mid-1987, NAMIR had no choice but to initiate an abrupt process of seriously reducing its various commitments (which meant closing offices and reducing staff, etc.)⁶¹⁶. The overall effect of these cutbacks was to have a serious impact on morale within NAMIR, and on one occasion, in a matter that was to reverberate within the Iranian exile community, a group of redundant employees

included aspects such as provision of intelligence or the sabotaging of the Iranian war effort, which was considered anathema to people in NAMIR.

⁶¹⁴Interview with the writer on 23/11/1994. According to Jafroudi, the monthly Iraqi allotments had first been reduced to \$300,000, and then to \$150,000, prior to steadying at \$50,000. A point needs to be made that while Iraqi financial ties with NAMIR were suspended following the defeat of Iraq in the "Persian Gulf War", their assistance to the PMOI were not suspended, and continued thereafter.

⁶¹⁵Discussion with the writer.

⁶¹⁶According to Dr. M. Razmara, this meant that In Paris alone, expenses had to be reduced from FF 500,000 per month to FF 100,000 per month.

gathered outside Bakhtiar's house on the outskirts of Paris, in protest against their "Unfair" dismissals.

Re-Defining NAMIR's Mission: Organizational Changes

The most obvious consequence of adjusting to new circumstances for NAMIR, entailed a re-definition of its mission. As a result, from the period 1987 up to the time when Bakhtiar was savagely murdered in his villa outside Paris, NAMIR was no longer in a position to actively organize the operational overthrow of the Islamic regime, along the lines that it had planned during the "Nojeh Project" and later in "Operation White Star". Instead, it had little choice but to concentrate all its remaining assets into carrying out effective political action, capable of maintaining its credibility and general image in the eyes of the Iranian public.

While, this new re-definition of mission may have seemed like a significant climb down in comparison to the image that Bakhtiar himself had over-zealously promoted in the previous years, it was nevertheless, a significant mission, for which, apart from the Mojahedin, NAMIR's position was generally unchallenged. Even the full fledged entrance of Reza Pahlavi into the political ring following the establishment of the cease-fire in the Iran-Iraq War, in August 1988, was by itself not enough serious to dislodge NAMIR, or force it into political oblivion. The reason for this was that from 1987-1991, NAMIR still continued to have access to two clandestine radio stations broadcasting to Iran, that were operating on a daily basis⁶¹⁷, and a regular

⁶¹⁷A one hour broadcast from Baghdad, and a separate 55 minute broadcast from Cairo (each program was broadcast twice during the course of each day). Both these radio stations continued to operate well into 1991. By the time of Saddam Hussein's defeat, NAMIR's radio (as well as the "Voice of Free Iran", which had originally belonged to General Gholam Ali Oveissi in the early 1980's, but had been run

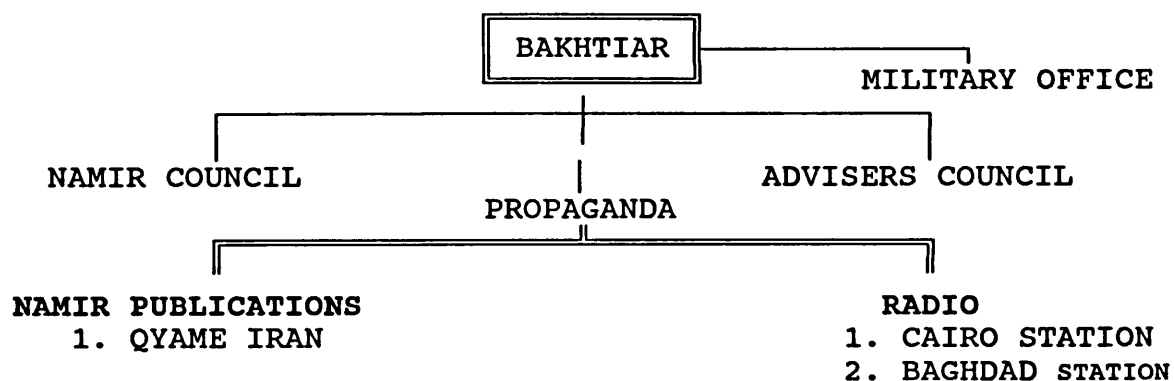
newsletter (Qyame Iran) that was being published in Paris and widely distributed in the Iranian exile community⁶¹⁸. While these major assets, along with Bakhtiar's own personal reputation and charisma, were not enough to implement the overthrow of the Islamic regime, they were, nonetheless, more than adequate to keep Bakhtiar's name in the ring and to keep the "pot boiling". Thus, even during his final years, Bakhtiar was able to salvage the skeletons of his original organization, albeit with a much reduced capacity.

While, NAMIR's overall organizational chart did not seem to differ overtly from the charts previously presented in Chapter 4 (ie. Charts 1, 2, & 3), however, a great deal of difference, representing the significant changes that had taken place within NAMIR, since the abandonment of "White Star" were reflected in the composition and the ideological tendencies of the various remaining units.

directly by the Iraqis, with the cooperation of its able director, Touraj Farazmand, ever since) were closed, leaving the People' Mojahedin Organization of Iran, as the only Iranian opposition group with radio broadcasts to Iran (a situation that persists to this day). The Cairo station, headed by a very talented young journalist, Jamshid Charlangi, was able to struggle on almost single handedly, despite the fact that all NAMIR funding was essentially cut off at the end of 1990. Even prior to that, all broadcasts from Cairo, were essentially compiled and presented by Charlangi himself, with increasingly less output or assistance from those in Paris. While, the existence of these stations had presented Bakhtiar with an important outlet, capable of addressing audiences inside Iran, their overall impact was always pursuing a down ward curve during Bakhtiar's final years. Eventually, the Cairo station was taken over by Reza Pahlavi, prior to its officially going off the air.

⁶¹⁸However, due to financial constraints, Qyame Iran, which was distributed on a weekly basis, and distributed free of charge to NAMIR supporters (and others in a well accumulated mailing list), began appearing on a bi-weekly basis (as announced in Issue No.190, dated 12/2/87), and by late 1988, only on a subscription basis (as announced in Issue No. 237, dated 24/11/88). From December 1990, up to the time of Bakhtiar's death, again mainly due to increasing financial constraints, there were interruptions (as never before) in the publication of Qyame Iran. Finally, the production of the newsletter was transferred from Paris to Germany, so that its operations could be managed on a volunteer basis.

CHART 4: CHANGING NATURE OF THE BAKHTIAR ORGANIZATION **1987-1990**



1. The NAMIR Council: During this period, fundamental changes were to take place in this Council. From 1987-1991, the Head of the Executive Committee was replaced by Bakhtiar on three separate occasions, following the removal of A.R. Boroomand in 1987⁶¹⁹, and prior to his eventual return in 1991. In the immediate period following the collapse of "White Star", and at a time when Bakhtiar was still hopeful of resuming constructive dialogues with the Americans, he replaced Boroomand with Mohammad Moshiri (1987-1989), a close loyalist who did not harbor overt hostilities towards the previous regime and those who were by implication associated with it - ie. Reza Pahlavi. It was during Moshiri's time as Chairman of NAMIR's Executive Committee, that most of the pains taking decisions involved with the whole process of adjusting to new financial circumstances had to be taken. In this respect, Moshiri did fulfill the role of Bakhtiar's "fall guy", in that it was he who was mainly blamed for having to do what Bakhtiar, himself, should have done a long time before - ie. reduce the size of NAMIR's overgrown bureaucracy (which the visiting Head of the Voice of America's Persian Section had aptly

⁶¹⁹A position which he had maintained from the beginning.

described as "Bakhtiar's New Deal" program of giving everyone a job in Paris!)⁶²⁰.

However, only a bureaucrat himself, Moshiri was unable to make use of NAMIR's remaining assets, in terms of adding any new life to the organization. Consequently, apart from a brief period, when certain genuine attempts were made in order to resurrect Bakhtiar's souring relationship with the Young Shah, his period of stewardship was one of ignominious decline, during which time NAMIR was to lose nearly all its profile as a major movement capable of confronting the Islamic regime.

Moshiri's replacement as the new Chairman of NAMIR's Executive Committee from 1989-1991, was Sadeq Sadrieh, an ex-senior diplomat who had previously served as Iranian Ambassador to Romania, Iraq and Germany⁶²¹. During his tenure, the composition of the Council underwent a significant change, in that all the "Old

⁶²⁰The point that was made to Bakhtiar on many occasions, by a number of his advisers, that what had inadvertently taken place over the years, was the fact that a growing bureaucracy had taken the place of a resistance organization. On one occasion, during the bickering months in 1986, the writer had confronted Bakhtiar with the topic of the salary that he was paying to many of his senior advisers. He was told that so long as people were going to receive salaries and bonuses (eg. medical health plans etc.) paid by NAMIR, which was in excess of the salaries that they would be receiving as a potential cabinet ministers in a potential government (with the currency exchange rates concerning the Rial, being taken into account), then there was absolutely no incentive for them to want to go back to Iran (especially given the fact that they would have to confront all sorts of trouble and danger etc., for a lot less pay).

⁶²¹During his brief tenure as Iranian Ambassador to Germany, Sadrieh had in the closing days of the Imperial regime, been one of the first amongst serving Ambassadors to have abandoned the Shah, by signing on with the revolutionaries. Thrown out of office very shortly after the establishment of Mehdi Bazargan's Provisional Government of the Islamic Republic, Sadrieh had been able to use his contacts in Germany to obtain an advisory position with the Mercedes-Benz Organization in Germany. He was introduced to Bakhtiar by Ahmad Mirfendereski, and given his previous background in Iraq, he soon became the main contact-man with Baghdad. Extremely ambitious, and always distrusted by the monarchists, Sadrieh upon entering NAMIR began a process of cultivating ties with the anti-monarchist lobby within NAMIR, and at a time when Boroomand, was being deliberately kept in the background by Bakhtiar, he was able to assume the Chairmanship of NAMIR's Executive Committee.

Guard" elements (ie. people with previous connections to the Pahlavi regime) were removed, and replaced by mainly National Front/Student Confederation supporters⁶²².

Under Sadrieh, partially successful attempts were made to revive Bakhtiar's sagging relations with Iraq, in order to revive NAMIR's financial fortunes; but despite all the various new diplomatic initiatives that were taken, lack of support and coordination from other sectors of the organization, and most notably the continuing ineffectiveness of the Propaganda wing, as well as the eventual defeat of Saddam Hussein in the Persian Gulf War, effectively sealed any chance of success which Sadrieh may have had, leading to a situation that a bankrupt organization had no choice but to restore Boroomand to his former position, on the promise that he would personally undertake to finance the cost of running NAMIR. In the short period, prior to his assassination in April 1991, Boroomand had not only brought in his own associates at every level within what was left of a disintegrating NAMIR, but he had, as the controller of the purse strings, also effectively reduced Bakhtiar to a position of titular leadership within the organization. Following Boroomand's assassination, and his family's reluctance to underwrite any of his previous organizational commitments, NAMIR was once again confronted with another severe financial crisis that had only become more aggravated by the time when Bakhtiar, himself, was assassinated in August 1991.

⁶²²The Confederation of Iranian Students, was a relic of the early 1960's, when many Iranian students studying abroad had formed a body to express dissatisfaction against "the autocratic and corrupt rule of the Shah" and the abuses of his secret police, the SAVAK. By the mid-1980's, the bulk of its non-communist members had been invited by both Bakhtiar and Boroomand to join NAMIR.

However what distinguished this period as a whole, was NAMIR's changing political attitude, and Bakhtiar's personal utterances, reflective of his increasing frustrations, in a direction away from his previously stated positions vis-a-vis the Constitutional Monarchists under Reza Pahlavi, and towards committed anti-monarchists⁶²³.

Whereas in the previous years, the NAMIR Council and its meetings were nothing more than an elaborate show piece to demonstrate nothing more than the appearance of "a democratic organization, endowed with a collective decision making process", despite the fact that no matter of great importance was ever discussed in its proceedings (eg. Operation White Star"), NAMIR's declining fortunes, during this period, was able to help make the NAMIR Council, a much more serious forum, where actual matters of policy were openly discussed. Indeed, a most pertinent example that highlights this point, is the statement made by Bakhtiar on 2 May 1987, in which, for the first time, he revealed his feelings of frustration and disappointment with the United States⁶²⁴. On another occasion, in responding to Reza Pahlavi, who had made a somewhat clumsy and provocative speech in Paris⁶²⁵, Bakhtiar brought the matter before the Council, and asked that a response written previously by his Propaganda Chief, Iradj Pezeshkzad, in response

⁶²³This attitude on the part of Bakhtiar, was only beginning to emerge when he was assassinated, and as such, it was able to fully display itself.

⁶²⁴Qyame Iran, Issue No.197, dated 14 May 1987. In an unprecedented speech before the NAMIR Council, Bakhtiar spoke of his "diplomatic frustrations", without any reference to "White Star" and said that, "Once they realize that we do not take orders, then they are bound to change their ways...". While, this statement may not have been indicative of anything precise, it was nevertheless a signal that all was not well with the state of Bakhtiar's relations with the West.

⁶²⁵Where he had made certain comments addressed to wealthy Iranians who were not supporting "the Cause", by saying that he would personally "retaliate against them", as well as having condemned the Nojeh Project as "uncalculated and dangerous" etc...

to the Shah⁶²⁶, be adopted as NAMIR's official response to the views expressed by him⁶²⁷.

2. The Council of Advisers: The most important consequence of the internal bickering within NAMIR in the preceding years, was the growing importance of the role of this forum in shaping Bakhtiar's policies during the period of 1987-89, when Mohammad Moshiri, one of Bakhtiar's closest and most trusted advisers, also become the Chairman of NAMIR's Executive Committee.

Indeed, it was within the Council of Advisers, that the first discussions on having to come to terms with the new fiscal realities confronting NAMIR were discussed. Entailed in any such discussion was the ultimate laying of all blames at the feet of A.R. Boroomand⁶²⁸, who simply found the hostile atmosphere too intimidating, and as a result , came to the 'voluntary' conclusion that he would no longer participate in any further meetings.

However, by the time that Moshiri had resigned from the Chairmanship of NAMIR's Executive Council, a serious rift had emerged between those in the Council of Advisers and the NAMIR Council, on many important issues. Personal animosities aside, perhaps, one of the most important items over which differences of attitude were becoming more apparent, was NAMIR's attitude and approach towards the

⁶²⁶Qyame Iran, Issue No. 210, dated 12 November 1987.

⁶²⁷Qyame Iran, Issue No. 211, dated 26 November 1987.

⁶²⁸This was perhaps unfair, in that Bakhtiar was equally to blame for everything that had gone wrong, and had been adequately warned in advance of Boroomand's irregular mode of behavior. However, while the majority of the Council of Advisers, shared a feeling of dislike towards Boroomand, they were all too considerate of their own positions to confront and criticize Bakhtiar directly.

whole issue of ties with Reza Pahlavi and the constitutional monarchists. Contrary to views generally expressed by Boroomand supporters in the NAMIR Council, the Advisers were all outspokenly opposed to any orchestrated acts of provocation, on the part of NAMIR, against the Shah, based on a solid conviction that only through a resolution of differences and the expansion of relations with Reza Pahlavi, could Bakhtiar (and the Shah) have any realistic chance of political success in the future.

In retrospect, there is no doubt that with the passage of time during the course of this period, and most particularly as Bakhtiar's role as a major political figure became more marginalized⁶²⁹, there was a simultaneous decline in the role hitherto played by the Council of Advisers, whose counsel, even at the best of times, had served a limited purpose⁶³⁰.

3. The Military Wing: The section which suffered the most as a consequence of NAMIR's worsening financial circumstances, was the Military Wing, headed by Brigadier General Amir Hossein Shahrदार. While, past activities conducted by NAMIR-MW, through its internal and external branches⁶³¹, coupled with the operation plans conceived and drawn up by General Shahrदार, were the main reasons behind the interest shown by both the US and Saudi Arabia, it was obvious that any reduction in the budget or activities of this section would also have a direct

⁶²⁹Because of his increasing isolation and worsening financial disposition.

⁶³⁰In real terms, the Council of Advisers was nothing more than a weekly social gathering. It was an expensive luxury, which for over a period of ten years discussed nothing more than soft ideas, and never made any significant contribution to Bakhtiar's mode of action or correct decision making. Although, the Council continued, out of loyalty, to convene its "Wednesday afternoon meetings", even when Bakhtiar was no longer able to meet its salary obligations, its role and contribution was no more than what it had been in all the previous years.

⁶³¹External branches in Turkey, Pakistan and the UAE (Dubai).

effect on the general marketability of Bakhtiar himself - ie. deprived of the assets and intelligence associated with NAMIR-MW, Bakhtiar would no longer be able to command the type of attention that had in the past distinguished him from a whole host of other political opposition figures.

However, with the effective shelving of "White Star", and the 'drying up' of Bakhtiar's financial resources, the fate of this section was essentially sealed, as early as the opening months of 1987.

It is important to note that in the preparatory years, 1983-1986, NAMIR's foreign policy was being coordinated in a way that could only benefit the various links that NAMIR-MW was trying to establish inside the country⁶³². But, during the period, 1987-1990, the need to raise funds had forced NAMIR to court parties in the international community, such as Iraq and the PLO, which were strongly despised by the entire Iranian Military establishment. Hence, there was no longer any form of policy coordination between the expression of NAMIR's political objectives and the constraints faced by NAMIR-MW, in the conduct of its affairs⁶³³.

What eventually transpired was the continuation of a much reduced section, devoid of a useful mission⁶³⁴, and in communication with elements whose most basic needs,

⁶³²ie. The American connection, which was deemed essential by all in order to win the support of the Iranian Military establishment.

⁶³³i.e., Pursuing fraternal relations with Iraq and the PLO ran in complete contradiction with fostering support from within the Iranian armed forces.

⁶³⁴Its sole mission being one of simply maintaining links with established assets and acquiring general intelligence.

the organization as a whole, was no longer able to address⁶³⁵.

4. The Propaganda Wing: The one section which may have been able to turn matters around for Bakhtiar during this final period, and transform his sagging fortunes was NAMIR's propaganda wing, which was the one organ whose assets had remained more or less intact, and in full operation (see Chart 4).

However, the lack of a well thought out propaganda strategy and an alert of team of propaganda specialists, meant that Bakhtiar was unable to make the necessary usage of the tools still available to him⁶³⁶, which in the least, could have been employed to enhance his standing in the outside world and assist his much needed fund raising campaigns⁶³⁷.

While , NAMIR's propaganda section was not short of talent, in that some of Iran's best known writers and broadcasters such as Iradj Pezeshkzad⁶³⁸ and Mehdi Ghassemi⁶³⁹, were responsible for the day to day management of its apparatus, it was, however, blatantly clear that both these men and others who were employed under them lacked an overall view of the type of strategy that would be required to

⁶³⁵This section was eventually wound up in December 1990 (Source: interview with General Shahrदार - Paris, 26/11/94)

⁶³⁶It has to mentioned that to this day, no other Iranian exile group, with the exception of the Mojahedin, have been able to have access to the kind of propaganda machinery that was made available to Bakhtiar.

⁶³⁷By demonstrating to world leaders that he was a well known Iranian leader, with the means and the ability to have a daily input into Iran, etc...

⁶³⁸An ex-diplomat and the renowned author of *Daii-Jan Napoleon* (meaning My Uncle Napoleon), which is perhaps the best selling Iranian book in contemporary times.

⁶³⁹A talented broadcaster and ex-Tudeh Party member, turned democrat.

enhance the promotion and the maintenance of Bakhtiar's image both amongst Iranians (at home and in exile), as well as the international community. This lack of mission meant that only limited use was made of what had become NAMIR's flagship.

The propaganda strategy that was developed and enacted by Bakhtiar, was one in which the future of the Islamic regime - and by inference that of NAMIR, was made contingent in a "total" way on the outcome of two separate factors:

- a. The ending of the Iran-Iraq War
- b. The death of Ayatollah Khomeini

a. The Call for Ending the War

Bakhtiar's greatest moments of achievement in exile - 5th August 1983 and 17th May 1985, were both directly related to his views regarding the continuing futile war with Iraq, that was responsible for severe casualties, and a ruinous effect on the Iranian economy. On the advice of Ahmad Mirfendereski, Bakhtiar had also begun to employ Lenin's famous slogan of "Land, Peace and Bread", in the early 1980s, and this strategy had paid significant dividends, the most notable of which were the peaceful demonstrations which took place, at Bakhtiar's behest, in May 1985.

However, in calling for peace, something which all Iranians wanted, there was a failure on the part of Bakhtiar and his advisers in the propaganda section to safeguard against a variety of unforeseen developments, by having a number of well thought out contingency plans (incase of certain outcomes, such as the establishment a cease fire and an end to all hostilities, etc.). The most important development that was to take place in the international community with regards to

the Iran-Iraq War, was the passage by the United Nations Security Council of Resolution 598 in July 1987, which was to create a great deal of controversy within the Iranian exile community, and seriously damage Bakhtiar's position as a 'nationalist' figure.

Bakhtiar And The Controversy Around UNSCR 598

United Nations Security Council 598 of 20th July 1987, had come on the back of two earlier efforts by the United Nations to call for a cease fire in the Iran-Iraq War. The first, had come some eight days after the start of the War⁶⁴⁰, in the form of UNSCR 479 of 28 September 1980, calling for a cease-fire, without linking it to a withdrawal forces to the previously accepted international boundaries⁶⁴¹. Whether or not such a call for a withdrawal would have been heeded, from the view point of the Iranian government, "the members of the Security Council had a clear duty to uphold the principles of the U.N. Charter". Thus by appearing to condone Iraq's invasion of Iran, the Security Council had confirmed the Islamic regime's worst suspicions. Here, it is essential to point out that while Bakhtiar had not condemned the international body for its failure to respond responsibly in face of Iraq's blatant aggression⁶⁴², a position taken by him on the advice of Ahmad Mirfendereski (i.e., that the hostilities should cease and both sides should withdraw to border positions that had been

⁶⁴⁰Leaving the Iranian side to feel that the international community was willing to give the Iraqis ample time to solidify their positions inside Iranian territory, before calling for a cease-fire.

⁶⁴¹From an Iranian point of view, this omission had seriously compromised the position of the Security Council, and an immediate parallel was drawn between this decision and the Security Council's failure in 1967 to call for a withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Arab territories which it had seized.

⁶⁴²Some thing which was eventually corrected by Javier Perez de Cuellar, in the dying days of his tenure as Secretary General of the United Nations.

established on the basis of the 1975 Algiers Treaty), was announced and subsequently held consistently throughout the war years, which made any future Iranian relations with Iraq, contingent on adherence to the previously agreed provisions of the 1975 Algiers Treaty⁶⁴³. However, it is essential to point out, that Mirfendereski, having escaped from Iran in mid-1980, had not arrived in Paris until 28 October 1980 - more than a month after Iraq's invasion of Iran, and the statement of Policy drafted by Mirfendereski (with the assistance of the Iranian writer Amir Taheri -subsequently published also in the 1st edition of Voice of Iran - did not come out till 14 November 1980. The fact that no statement of substance was made by Bakhtiar during this gap in time - i.e., 22 September to 14 November, has been a matter of controversy which has prompted certain negative speculations by Bakhtiar's enemies on the subject of his collusion with Iraq⁶⁴⁴.

Subsequent to the passage of UNSCR 479, for some 22 months the Security Council had essentially ignored the conflict, given that the fruitless stalemate which had set in only weeks after the war had begun, was unlikely to harm the interests of any third parties⁶⁴⁵. Indeed, it was only when Iranian forces had expelled the Iraqis and were poised to enter Iraq that the Security Council was hastily reconvened to discuss the war. Meanwhile, numerous peace initiatives- eg. those taken by President Zia ul-Haq of Pakistan on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Conference, and Olaf Palme, the Special representative of the Secretary General -

⁶⁴³Interview with Ahmad Mirfendereski, Paris, 7 March 1994.

⁶⁴⁴Ibid.

⁶⁴⁵This complacency was also shared by the Arab states in the Persian Gulf, who felt that a mutual weakening of Iraq and Iran, was a positive factor.

had been undertaken, in an attempt to negotiate or mediate a settlement between Iran and Iraq, in the hope of ending hostilities. Also, an initiative taken by the government of Algeria⁶⁴⁶, had come to an abrupt end when the Algerian Foreign Minister and the institutional capacity which he had created to address this issue were all killed in a plane crash in May 1982⁶⁴⁷.

Finally, in 1984, the Secretary General succeeded in getting both parties to agree to a moratorium on attacks against civilian targets. This arrangement which did last for some 9 months⁶⁴⁸, was the last major initiative prior to the passage of UNSCR 598, which was adopted at a time of increasing threat to regional peace and security. However, UNSCR 598, fell far short of Iranian expectations, in that it was perceived by many Iranians to have been more advantageous to Iraq, for while not having named Iraq as the party which had started the war⁶⁴⁹, it called for a cease fire with both sides withdrawing their forces to their pre-war borders. This was contrary to the provisions of an earlier Security Council which had not insisted on any force withdrawals at the outset of war when the Iraqis had held large chunks of Iranian territory.

The Controversy Over UNSCR 598

⁶⁴⁶With whom Iran enjoyed good relations, and which was responsive to the need that Iran's sense of grievance should be addressed by the international community.

⁶⁴⁷This point - as well as speculation that the Algerian Foreign Minister's plane had been shot down by the Islamic regime - was highlighted in an article entitled, "Soghoot Havapeymaye Ben Yahya" (The Crash of Bin Yahya's Plane"), printed in NEHZAT, Issue No. 15, dated 6 May 1982

⁶⁴⁸Until Iraq broke the agreement by launching air attacks against Iranian cities in March 1985.

⁶⁴⁹Something that was not dealt with till the closing days of Perez de Cuellar's dying days in office as Secretary General of the United Nations.

In the inevitable debate that was to follow the passage of UNSCR 598 (See Annex 3), from the period following its passage in July 1987, up to the time when the Iranian government decided to accept its provisions in a desperate attempt to avert a full-scale military collapse in July 1988 (paving the way for the establishment of a cease fire in August 1988), basic objections on the part of a number of Iranian exile groups (inclusive of the Islamic regime) to UNSCR 598, mainly centered around the following arguments:

* UNSCR 598 seemed to favor Iraq in that it called on Iran to accept a cease-fire, and return to international borders set in 1975, prior to any kind of a settlement (inclusive of war reparations), despite the fact that it was Iraq which had unilaterally violated those borders in 1980. Thus, by withdrawing, the Iranians stood to lose any leverage which they might have had in negotiating a just and honourable settlement.

* Article 6 of the UNSCR 598, asked the Secretary General to "explore" the question of forming an impartial body to inquire into the responsibility for the conflict. Thus, UNSCR 598 did not even guarantee the formation of such a body, whose task it would have been to name the culprit responsible for starting the war.⁶⁵⁰

The first public statement, highlighting the above points, was made by a newly formed organization, "Friends of Iran (FOI) - Campaign for Democracy and Human Rights", which had come to replace the former London Liaison Office of Shapour

⁶⁵⁰ "Objecting to Injustice for the Sake of Long Term Peace", Voice of Iran, Issue No.22, Winter 1987, p.12.

Bakhtiar. In the first statement of its kind, printed in Kayhan (London print)⁶⁵¹ of 22 October 1987, the FOI citing the reasons mentioned above, stated that it considered the provisions of UNSCR 598, as they stood, to be "contrary to the interests of the Iranian nation..⁶⁵². Subsequently, this entire issue was also taken up by the Kayhan establishment itself, which in an editorial dated 19 November 1987, having stated that it was "the duty of all nationalist leaders to alert the United Nations as well as the big powers of the inadequacies of this resolution⁶⁵³", asked that the "Iranian Opposition should clarify its position regarding this issue".

Beginning with the FOI⁶⁵⁴, other opposition groups - including NAMIR, had gradually declared their positions, and by January 1988, when Kayhan devoted an entire page to the consideration of UNSCR 598⁶⁵⁵, the debate around this issue had obtained a

⁶⁵¹This was an exile publication, and should not be confused with a publication of a similar name printed in Iran, which also had an international edition.

⁶⁵²The publication of this statement, was the "final straw that broke the back of all relations" between Bakhtiar and the writer, and essentially brought to an end any chance of a possible political reconciliation between them.

⁶⁵³This was, particularly, due to the fact that it had been suggested that an arms embargo should be placed on Iran, as a punitive measure for not having announced its acceptance of the resolution. The common position, first advocated by the 'Friends of Iran', was that "every international pressure should be applied equally to both countries for the sake of obtaining a just and lasting peace" (Source: Voice of Iran, Issue No.22, Winter 1987 and FOI Press Release, dated 22 January 1988) - a position that was also supported by the Kayhan editorial.

⁶⁵⁴Kayhan (London Print), 26 November 1987.

⁶⁵⁵The entire back page (size A3 x 2) of the 7 January 1988 edition of Kayhan (London Print) was devoted to this matter. In an editorial entitled "Why Everyone is for the Implementation of UNSCR 598?", Kayhan blamed the Western Powers, who having seen their interests being threatened in the Persian Gulf, were behind trying to implement this unjust resolution. The same editorial also condemned the Islamic regime, because of its lack of diplomatic skill, for having landed Iran in the current situation, and blamed some Iranian opposition leaders for "simply repeating all that has been approved by the U.N., as well as spinelessly taking refuge behind this organization in the hope of not alienating anybody!" (Amongst other issues carried in the same page. were another editorial entitled "Iran should not withdraw", along with

position of paramount importance within the Iranian political community in exile. Indeed, comments regarding general dissatisfaction with this issue was not confined to Iranian publications, and thus, as apart of a well orchestrated campaign, spear headed by FOI, many comments and complaints regarding this issue had also been able to reach the "Letters to Editor" pages of many important international newspapers, such as The Guardian⁶⁵⁶, The Times⁶⁵⁷, The Financial Times⁶⁵⁸, The International Herald Tribune⁶⁵⁹, and The Frankfurter Allegmane⁶⁶⁰.

Furthermore, in March 1988, a petition campaign was launched by the 'Friends of Iran', with the assistance of the Kayhan Publications Ltd. (printers of the London Kayhan⁶⁶¹) in London, in which Iranian readers of the Kayhan were urged to support the following text that was drafted for the purpose of petitioning the U.N. Secretary General:

a Farsi translation of the UNSCR 598, and the full text of a letter dated 24 December 1987, addressed to the U.N. Secretary General by the Chairman of the 'Friends of Iran', which was also widely distributed amongst Security Council Members, as well as the members of the London Diplomatic Corps - urging them to brief their respective governments about the existing inadequacies in UNSCR 598).

⁶⁵⁶12 March 1988.

⁶⁵⁷17 March 1988.

⁶⁵⁸18 July 1988.

⁶⁵⁹13 July 1988 and 30 June 1988.

⁶⁶⁰12 April 1988.

⁶⁶¹Kayhan, printed in London (Not to be confused with the newspaper of the same name printed in Iran) was founded in 1983 by Dr. Mostafa Mesbahzadeh, the founder of the Kayhan Publication Empire in Iran, with the financial support of Princess Ashraf Pahlavi. Dubbed by the Islamic regime as the "Monarchist Kayhan", it has, without question, become the most widely read Iranian weekly publication in exile (with sales of around 10,000 copies per week, and a readership of around as much as five times the actual subscription figures).

"We the undersigned Iranians living abroad, bearing in mind the fact that the government of Iraq has once again, with the bombing of Teheran on 27 February, resumed its campaign of "War against the cities", which has resulted in the needless inhuman death of many of our innocent and defenseless compatriots (as well as that of many ordinary and innocent citizens of Iraq), respectfully request the members of the Security Council to convene a special session of the Security Council for purposes of amending UNSCR 598, thereby creating the appropriate circumstances which will make it possible to attain the support of the peace-loving people of Iran who want nothing more than a lasting cease fire in the hostilities, leading to an honourable peace and a just end to this futile war".⁶⁶²

By early May 1988, according to Kayhan, a staggering 1082 readers ie. Iranians of all political persuasions - had signed and returned the petition form, supporting the FOI sponsored collective action for amending UNSCR 598⁶⁶³.

Bakhtiar's reaction to this whole matter, was indicative of the failure of his subordinates in NAMIR's Propaganda wing to correctly assess the ongoing situation (inclusive of the mood of ordinary Iranian exiles), as well as their failure to come up with a proper strategy that would allow Bakhtiar to be seen as a "popular nationalist leader, in touch with the simple future aspirations of ordinary Iranians"⁶⁶⁴.

⁶⁶²Kayhan (London Print), 17 March 1988.

⁶⁶³Kayhan (London Print), 5 May 1988.

⁶⁶⁴In June 1988, a Bakhtiar supporter, by the name (or pseudo-name) of 'Arash Parsi' wrote a letter supportive of Bakhtiar and "his plans to overthrow the Ayatollah Khomeini" which was published in the 7 June 1988 edition of the International Herald Tribune. However, in the political situation that had become extremely charged up because of the various posturing related to UNSCR 598, another Iranian by the name of 'Mahmoud Marashi', sharply responded to Mr. Parsi's letter - printed in the International herald Tribune on 7 July 1988, by referring to Bakhtiar, as some one "who

In the final analysis, Bakhtiar refused to display any sensitivity to any of the points that had been raised against the inadequacies of UNSCR 598, and made it a personal crusade to urge all Iranians "to publicize the resolution (in its original form) to the best of their abilities"⁶⁶⁵. Moreover, in another radio message to people in Iran, Bakhtiar also made a venomous attack on all parties who had expressed their reservations⁶⁶⁶, and consequently began a needless series of attacks and counter attacks⁶⁶⁷, which not only failed to serve any useful purpose, but were very instrumental in damaging his own credentials as a nationalist leader⁶⁶⁸.

Perhaps, no other incident, more than this, had hitherto, demonstrated Bakhtiar's lack of adequate political depth and sensitivity⁶⁶⁹. In addition, instead of using this

was politically dead, asserting that the future belonged to a new generation of young leaders...".

⁶⁶⁵Bakhtiar's radio message to the Iranian people in January 1988, the full text of which was printed in Issue No. 214 of Qyame Iran, dated 7 January 1988.

⁶⁶⁶Radio message of 22 April 1988, printed in Issue No. 222 of Qyame Iran, dated 28 April 1988.

⁶⁶⁷In an open letter dated 13 May 1988, which was subsequently published in a number of exiled publications, 'Friends of Iran' strongly responded to Bakhtiar, and in an atmosphere that had become tremendously charged up, was given a great deal "behind the scenes" support, including letters of praise from a broad range of Iranians that also included many die hard opponents of Bakhtiar such as Princess Ashraf Pahlavi (5/07/88).

⁶⁶⁸Bakhtiar had become engaged, and later outflanked, over this sensitive and highly emotional issue - over which there should never have been any disagreements whatsoever, given the fact that the critics of UNSCR 598 (with the exception of the Islamic regime, which, at the time, still needed to continue with the war for reasons of survival), were all supportive of the spirit of the resolution, and only sought certain adjustments to its otherwise acceptable text.

⁶⁶⁹He was to make another serious mistake of equal importance in late 1990, when during the course of an interview with the French daily Le Figaro, he justified Iraq's invasion of Kuwait by saying something to the effect that "Why should Iraq not have a larger coastal line on the Persian Gulf..!" This was to create a serious uproar,

inadequate resolution, as another stick with which to beat the Islamic Republic⁶⁷⁰, he allowed himself to be sidetracked into adopting positions that were to seriously challenge his reputation, by assisting those who had over the years constantly labeled him as an "Iraqi mercenary".

There is no question that both Bakhtiar and his propaganda machine, failed to properly comprehend the nuances that existed between "the people's hatred for war, and their desire for a just peace" - ie. while, most people in Iran wanted to see an end to the then 7 year old Iran-Iraq War, they also wanted to ensure, to the best of their abilities, that every effort was also made to obtain the best possible deal for Iran.

It was precisely over this issue, that Bakhtiar allowed himself to become outflanked. Indeed, while nothing more than the actual provisions of UNSCR 598 may have been realistically attainable, there was absolutely no reason for Bakhtiar, to validate its inadequacies, given that many other nationalist organizations - as well as the Islamic regime - had not failed to speak up about them. In fact, in a survey that was published in an Iranian publication printed in exile, only Bakhtiar, the Mojahedin Khalq, and some pro-Soviet, communist splinter groups, had unreservedly supported the provisions of UNSCR 598, at a time when almost every other political organization and publication, both inside and outside Iran, had expressed serious

and although, he later claimed that he had been misquoted, the damage was already done.

⁶⁷⁰For its failure in diplomacy, to better safeguard the interests of the Iranian people (having boycotted various preliminary sessions of the Security Council prior to the passage of UNSCR 598, as well as their inability to lobby enough countries, for purposes of ensuring a more balanced final draft of the resolution).

reservations about it⁶⁷¹.

Chart 5:
Positions adopted by Iranian Political
Organizations and Publications
on UNSCR 598⁶⁷²

	SUPPORTS/ FAVORS	OPPOSED TO/ HAS RESERVATION
Internal Political Organization	NONE	THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC FREEDOM MOVEMENT SOCIETY FOR THE DEFENSE OF PEOPLE'S SOVEREIGNTY
Exiled Political Organization	PMOI ⁶⁷³ NAMIR SPLINTER COMMUNISTS	FLI ⁶⁷⁴ FRIENDS OF IRAN ⁶⁷⁵ MONARCHISTS MILITARY GROUPS (eg. A.R.A. ⁶⁷⁶)
Internal Publication	NONE	ALL
Exiled Publication	PMOI Publications NAMIR Rouzegar-e Now ⁶⁷⁸	<u>Kayhan</u> (London Print) <u>Voice of Iran</u> ⁶⁷⁷ Nationalist Publications

⁶⁷¹Voice of Iran, Issue No. 22, Winter 1988, p.7

⁶⁷²Source: Voice of Iran (Tribune of the Iranian Resistance - Published by 'Friends of Iran - Campaign for Democracy and Human Rights', Issue No. 22, Winter 1987.

⁶⁷³People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran.

⁶⁷⁴Front for the Liberation of Iran (Dr. Ali Amini).

⁶⁷⁵A London based human rights group, formed by the writer after splitting up with Bakhtiar, and responsible for the first major statement that was printed in the Iranian exiled press against UNSCR 598 (Kayhan (London Print), 22 October 1987).

⁶⁷⁶ "Arteshe Rahaii Bakhsh-e Iran" (Iran Liberation Army), a small military grouping, led by General Javad Mo'inzadeh, that had its own publication, and was closely associated with General Gholam Ali Oveissi, in the initial years after the Revolution.

⁶⁷⁷Previously, Tribune of NAMIR, but having become the "Tribune of the Iranian Resistance", and published in London by the Friends of Iran.

⁶⁷⁸Saudi Arabian backed and financed, supportive of the Arab position.

Another point, missed by NAMIR's Propaganda Wing, was the fact that, as a consequence of the arguments which had evolved, the nationalist sentiments of ordinary Iranians, were being exploited by the Islamic regime in order to prolong the futile war, with public support (not because they wanted to continue the conflict, but because they felt that UNSCR 598 would not eventually settle the dispute justly). Indeed, at no time did the NAMIR Propaganda machine, apart from attacking those opposed to the UNSCR 598, try and exert any pressure on the Islamic regime, by condemning it for its role in not having prevented the Security Council for failing to take Iranian national interest into account when it debated the contents of the resolution⁶⁷⁹. Nor, did it ever accuse or attack the United Nations Security Council (and some of its members!) for its actions, in having failed to act in a neutral manner, over a matter of such enormous importance.

Even after the defeat of the Iranian forces in Fao, and their rapid withdrawal back inside Iranian territory by May 1988, when one of the most important points of contention - namely Iranian withdrawal from occupied positions in Fao and the oil rich Majnoon Islands⁶⁸⁰, was no longer an issue, neither Bakhtiar, nor any one associated with him, ever tried to adopt a new posture, by trying to form some form of a consensus with all other nationalist groups, that were highly distressed about the tremendous setbacks to which the country had been subjected. On the contrary, even when the Islamic regime

⁶⁷⁹It goes without saying that NAMIR had always criticized the Islamic Republic for its various failures to safeguard Iranian interests. However, no special attempt was made to exploit, in exact terms, what the Islamic regime could have done at the U.N., prior to the passage of UNSCR 598 to ensure that Iranian interests would been taken into full consideration by the Security Council.

⁶⁸⁰Which could theoretically have served as a means for Iran to recuperate war reparations from Iraq.

had been forced, to accept a cease fire on the basis of UNSCR 598, NAMIR adopted a more arrogant "I told you so" attitude, oblivious of the obvious shortcomings of UNSCR 598⁶⁸¹, that had eventually been forced upon the Iranian nation, in circumstances which were nothing short of an extreme national humiliation.

Nonetheless, it was not until such time that a cease-fire had actually come into force, that the inadequacies of Bakhtiar's policy of the past 8 years, came into full view. For almost 8 years, the Bakhtiar organization had constantly said that the perpetuation of the regime was directly related to its continued perpetuation of the war. In numerous statements, he had said that once the war was over, the Khomeini regime would not be able to survive the peace⁶⁸². While, the hatred for war and the desire for a just peace, was of paramount importance to ordinary Iranians, as demonstrated by their positive response to Bakhtiar in May 1985, there was a definite failure on the part of Bakhtiar and NAMIR to have various contingency plans for a peace time scenario. As a result, when peace had actually come, they were left with a 'fait accompli', situation⁶⁸³, at a time when they did not even have a worked out strategy of their own to deal with the new circumstances.

So, in conclusion, NAMIR's Propaganda Section, was without a meaningful message at a critical point of transition, and as a result, the Islamic Republic was given a free ticket to begin a new campaign of its own to sway Iranian technocrats and Western

⁶⁸¹It is important at all times to underline the fact that all Iranians were supportive of the spirit of UNSCR 598. The only objections that were expressed had to do with some of its provisions (or lack of it as in the case of omitting to name Iraq as the aggressor).

⁶⁸²In simple terms, this was the message that had been repeatedly given by Bakhtiar since the early 1980's.

⁶⁸³over whose direction they had absolutely no control

than ever before. In short, contrary to views previously stated by NAMIR, ending the war, far from ending the life of the Islamic Republic, appeared to be giving it a brand new lease on life.

b. The Death of Ayatollah Khomeini

Apart from having linked the continuation of the life of the Islamic Republic to the perpetuation of the war against Iraq for a period of more than seven years, Bakhtiar and NAMIR, had continually asserted that the integrity and the survival of the Islamic regime were contingent on Ayatollah Khomeini himself remaining alive⁶⁸⁴. Thus, they had clearly insinuated that without Khomeini, his heirs stood no chance of survival. The fact that Khomeini, himself, had unexpectedly continued to live for a period of more than ten years after the revolution, had also created an atmosphere of paralysis, in which all opposition groups - including NAMIR - were without a strategy to confront that situation, once it had finally arrived.

The fact that Khomeini died at a time when he did - ie. at a time when Bakhtiar and NAMIR were in a period of decline (as opposed to when they had been in a period of ascendance, like in 1985) - was a further disadvantage. However, this did not excuse the fact that the NAMIR Propaganda machine was devoid of any meaningful message that it could present to the Iranian people once this scenario had come about. While, the formation of a useful strategy may have been a difficult proposition to have worked

⁶⁸⁴Statements such as , "Khomeini's divided heirs who are devoid of credibility will not be able to impose themselves on the Iranian nation, once the Ayatollah is no longer alive", and "the death of Ayatollah Khomeini will also mark the death of the Islamic Republic", etc..., had been a common feature of the type of material that had appeared in both Bakhtiar statements, and NAMIR propaganda.

that it could present to the Iranian people once this scenario had come about. While, the formation of a useful strategy may have been a difficult proposition to have worked out, the fact that at the time of Khomeini's death, there was no strategy and no change to some of the views stated as early as a decade before, was hardly reassuring.

Therefore, once Khomeini had actually died⁶⁸⁵, all that Bakhtiar could do was to deliver a vague message to the Iranian people, for which he had no planned contingencies. Apart from what had by then become repetitious rhetoric, Bakhtiar's broadcast that was delivered on 4 June 1989, had contained the following message, "...The Iranian people have become aware of the true nature of the mullahs, and they will show no weakness in the struggle which they have started. But, I ask them to be more vigilant than ever before. I strongly, advise the following to all my brothers and sisters, and particularly the military and security forces: Be calm, and remain neutral in the inevitable power struggle that is going to take place amongst Khomeini's heirs, so that you may conserve all your energies for the moment of action. I shall, at the right time, send you the appropriate messages and instructions, which will be ensure the eventual overthrow of this corrupt regime..."⁶⁸⁶.

Sadly, this message was not followed up with any further messages or instructions, and by the time that the Iranian presidential elections were being held in July of 1989, there is little doubt, that the only hope which the majority of Iranians had come to expect for any sort of meaningful change and improvement to their lives, were mostly placed on

⁶⁸⁵In an article entitled, "Iran's Durable Revolution", written by Elaine Sciolino, and printed in the Spring 1983 issue of Foreign Affairs, in discussing likely developments once Khomeini had died, ex-President Bani-Sadr was humorously quoted as having said, "If he dies!".

⁶⁸⁶Qyame Iran, Issue No. 251, dated 8 June 1989.

the Islamic Presidential candidate, Hashemi Rafsanjani, not on any leader in exile⁶⁸⁷. This situation was further exacerbated, when unlike Khomeini, who had constantly said that "We have not made a revolution for bread and melon", Rafsanjani had taken up many of the slogans used by the exiled opposition, such as appealing to the general population's desire for economic growth and material well being, in projecting himself⁶⁸⁸.

Thus, for the second time in a period of less than two years, NAMIR's Propaganda Wing had failed to utilize the important resources that were at its disposal by latching on to new developments and thus making an impact, following the creation of the "right circumstances" which it had itself advocated on numerous previous occasions (ie. the ending of the war and the death of Khomeini).

A New Foreign Policy Agenda (1987-1990)

NAMIR's foreign policy agenda, in this period, was dictated by the urgent need on the part of Bakhtiar to keep his organization financially afloat, and to keep his reputation, as the hitherto most acceptable political alternative to the Islamic Republic, intact. But the passage of time, and the durability of the Islamic regime, and the economic prospects which were presented in the aftermath of the ending of the Iran-Iraq War, were all factors that had seriously tarnished his standing, as a major political figure capable of mounting a credible opposition, in many Western capitals. Particularly, in

⁶⁸⁷In interviewing many Iranians during the summer of 1989, the constant message that was received was the fact that the majority of Iranians had no choice but to pin their hopes on Rafsanjani, mainly because, as one Iranian technocrat living in France had said, "the people could not see or feel the presence of any body else beside Rafsanjani".

⁶⁸⁸It was not until a much later time, when the people had come to suspect Rafsanjani as being incapable of delivering the promises which he had made, that some were reportedly willing to listen to exile leaders such as Bakhtiar or Reza Pahlavi.

the United States, which was the only major power with a 'grudge' against the Islamic Republic⁶⁸⁹, the whole previous experience of dealing with an "uninspiring"⁶⁹⁰ Bakhtiar during the planning stages of "Operation White Star", had created a situation where there was no incentive to want to resume working him again⁶⁹¹. And once key supporters of "Operation White Star" had been removed from office in Washington, in the aftermath of the "Irangate" scandal, all the main doors in America had been slammed⁶⁹², leaving him with no "inside" venue to pursue his requirements.

In the United Kingdom, where, in the pre-Salman Rushdie period, the British government had enjoyed reasonably good diplomatic relations with Iran, Bakhtiar was never taken very seriously, even at the best of times. While, always pursuing a "pragmatic policy" of dealing essentially with those in power, as opposed to those in opposition⁶⁹³ - no matter how distasteful a regime might be - the British government,

⁶⁸⁹Because of the continued holding of American citizens as hostages in Lebanon, and the whole host of previous "bad" experiences, such as having been associated with "Irangate", etc.

⁶⁹⁰ This view was confidentially expressed by a number of senior White House officials, including both Howard Teicher and Vincent Cannistraro.

⁶⁹¹According to a senior CIA contact with NAMIR in 1986, who was introduced as "Ken Adams" to Bakhtiar, a point was fast reaching that "the internal quarreling was 'boring everyone' to an extent that they would be ready to drop everything and go home".

⁶⁹²It should be pointed out that following the resignation of Admiral John Poindexter, as National Security Adviser to the President, neither of his successors in the Reagan Administration (Frank Carlucci and Colin Powell, were willing to involve the White House in any Iran related affair, and most particularly in dealing with Iranian exile groups. The CIA, on the other hand, for purposes of acquiring intelligence, had wanted to keep in contact with some of Bakhtiar's key advisers, such as General Shahrddar, on an individual basis, with the clear understanding that such a relationship would have nothing to do with NAMIR or Bakhtiar - something which General Shahrddar had declined.

⁶⁹³This is a point that was stressed to the writer by Richard Ryder, M.P. (the current Conservative Chief Whip) in a meeting at the Carlton Club, on 16 June 1986.

with the passage of time, had become more skeptical of any realistic chance that any exile group might have for regaining power in Iran. As far as Bakhtiar was concerned, this situation was further aggravated, when, on his instructions, NAMIR initiated a policy of courting the Labour and the Liberal Parties, in order to enhance his profile across the whole spectrum of British political life⁶⁹⁴. From 1987 onwards, and particularly following the closure of NAMIR's London office in 1988⁶⁹⁵, Bakhtiar, no longer able to keep up with advancing events - the most important of which was British efforts to jockey for business contracts in the aftermath of the establishment of a cease fire in the Iran-Iraq War - had fast begun the process of fading into political irrelevance⁶⁹⁶.

Bakhtiar's problems - ie. a worsening economic situation, and his inability to continue maintaining a high profile - were compounded by a new resurgence in the image of the Islamic Republic, which had succeeded in relieving itself of the burden of the Iran-Iraq War. To Bakhtiar's extreme detriment, the governments in both Paris and Bonn, were also far more interested in developing business ties with Iran, which meant assisting the projection of the image of the emerging Iranian strongman, Hashemi Rafsanjani, as a "practical and moderate leader, with whom the west could work". This notion was cemented, when in November 1988, the German Foreign Minister, Herr Hans Dietrich

⁶⁹⁴A feat which had harmed Bakhtiar's situation with the Thatcher government, and which was made worse when in February 1987, Qyame Iran (Issue No. 189, dated 5/2/87), carried an article attacking the British Prime Minister, Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, while at the same time, printing a letter of support which Bakhtiar had received from the Leader of the British Liberal Party.

⁶⁹⁵Due to NAMIR's worsening economic situation.

⁶⁹⁶Even after Khomeini's Fatwa against the British writer, Salman Rushdie, had led to a break up of Anglo-Iranian diplomatic ties, Bakhtiar no longer had the means to re-inject any life into his sagging fortunes in the United Kingdom.

Gensher made an official visit to Teheran⁶⁹⁷, leaving no doubts that Europe was hoping to improve its relations with the Islamic Republic⁶⁹⁸.

This was a serious blow to Bakhtiar, and to any plans that he might have had at the time for soliciting French and German support for his plans of liberating Iran.

Increasingly isolated, desperately short of funds, and no longer considered a 'serious player' by nearly all the major Western powers, Bakhtiar had little choice but to turn to the Middle Eastern enemies of Ayatollah Khomeini, in order to raise the adequate funds needed to sustain his campaign, and keep his hopes alive. And in this category, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and later the PLO, were the only real choices available to Bakhtiar, who were endowed with the basic potentials of assisting him to achieve this objective, which had, by then, become first and foremost, for ensuring the survival of NAMIR⁶⁹⁹.

⁶⁹⁷The first of its kind by any major European Foreign Minister, since the Iranian Revolution.

⁶⁹⁸In the hope of improving German ties with the Islamic Republic, Gensher was instrumental in blocking the visit to Germany of Reza Pahlavi in December 1988, in a political rally in which more than 6000 Iranian monarchists participated. However, the official reason given by the German government, was that Reza Pahlavi's name had been on a list of individuals, dating back to 1986, who had been banned from entering Germany. When the writer, in a private meeting with the German Ambassador to the UK, asked on behalf of Reza Pahlavi, as to why his name had been placed on such a list, the Ambassador said that he would ask Bonn for a response. He duly reported back, that "according to Bonn, no reasons were required, as it was the sovereign right of any government to refuse entry to any individual". However, once the situation had died down, and the Germans had become aware of the reality that no major breakthroughs with Iran were likely, the restriction was removed and Reza Pahlavi was allowed to visit Germany (which he did on two separate occasions, in 1990 and 1991).

⁶⁹⁹In an interview, Ahmad Mirfendereski disclosed that he had visited Kuwait in 1986 on a mission for Bakhtiar and NAMIR, where he had held very secret discussions with the Minister of Information, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Prime Minister, as well as the Amir. In that visit, the Kuwaitis, had displayed a great deal of sympathy for NAMIR's cause, but, citing "fear of Iranian reprisal in a situation where they could hear Iraqis guns outside their closed doors", they had declined to offer any financial assistance to NAMIR (Interview with Ahmad Mirfendereski, Paris, 26 November 1994).

1. Relations with Saudi Arabia : The shelving of "Operation White Star", in 1987, coupled with the general inability of NAMIR to finance its routine lobbying efforts (particularly with the media) in key capitals such as Washington, London and Paris, had meant that a serious shift, in the entire profile of Bakhtiar in the West, had taken place. This shift, had the further negative disadvantage of affecting Bakhtiar's profile and relations, with countries such as Saudi Arabia.

As a result, Bakhtiar's relationship with the "Saudi Arabian Palace" officials was no longer aided by the fact that he was having an ongoing relationship with Washington. Here, it is important to emphasize that Bakhtiar's relationship with Saudi Arabia, was always a well compartmentalized matter. In this respect, unlike his situation in Iraq, or in Egypt during the time of Sadat - where all contacts had been held with official policy makers, going through the proper policy channels (ie. the Presidential office and the Intelligence Ministry) - Bakhtiar's ties with the Saudi Arabian government had been conducted through the office of the Saudi Arabian Crown Prince, who had in turn, appointed an intermediary, to keep in touch with Bakhtiar and his activities in NAMIR.

In nearly all discussions that had taken place between the intermediary and Bakhtiar's representatives in Paris, the Saudi intermediary, had constantly emphasized the importance of NAMIR's connections with the Americans, and had always urged for extra US pressure, for the promotion of NAMIR's cause, to be exerted upon his principals in Riyadh⁷⁰⁰. Indeed, the Saudi intermediary had, himself, been in Paris during mid-November 1986, when the Irangate Scandal had become unveiled, and had, during the

⁷⁰⁰This issue has been dealt with in an earlier chapter, and previous reference has been given concerning the discussions held between the writer and Mr. Ahmad Al-Sheibani, an employee of the Saudi Arabian Crown Prince, who had been assigned to keep in touch with Bakhtiar.

course of his stay in Paris, become aware that the US-NAMIR relationship was going through a critical stage - which he had, no doubt, reported back to his principal. This matter, was in fact, confirmed by Bakhtiar himself, who had displayed open signs of anger at "What he had termed as American interference in the internal workings of his organization"⁷⁰¹.

Later, when US-NAMIR cooperation over "White Star" had come to a complete end, Bakhtiar's credibility with the Saudis was immediately affected, in that contrary to before, no further word of support was likely to be spoken in his favor, to either the Saudi Arabian Palace or to their official channels, such as the Foreign Ministry or their intelligence network. Thus, according to Ahmad Mirfendereski, Saudi attitude towards NAMIR in the final years of Bakhtiar's activities (more or less as before), was in particular, a reflection of Saudi-Iranian relations⁷⁰². In this respect, the Iranian government sponsored riots in Mecca of 31 July 1987, which resulted in the death of more than 400 Iranian pilgrims and Saudi security officials, provided Bakhtiar with a new opportunity to solicit Saudi attention⁷⁰³. In order to utilize this opportunity and purposes of keeping previous ties alive, contacts with the designated Saudi intermediary were once again resumed, this time through the efforts of the Director of

⁷⁰¹This was revealed to the writer, in a private conversation by Mr. Al-Sheibani in early November 1986. Bakhtiar, clearly uncomfortable, at the time, about the pressures that were being exerted upon him to restructure NAMIR into a leaner, more purposeful organization, had come to justify in his own mind, that the report submitted by the London Liaison Office in October 1986, urging Bakhtiar to proceed urgently with the restructuring of NAMIR, had been dictated by the "Americans". While, later he had little choice, himself, but to proceed along the same lines, albeit with different personnel, he continued to make acrimonious accusations of this nature, in order to cover his own inadequacies.

⁷⁰²Interview, Paris, 26 November 1994.

⁷⁰³Confidential Briefing Paper (CBP)#1, Prepared by the Friends of Iran - Campaign for Democracy and Human Rights, London, September 1987, p.5.

Bakhtiar's Personal Office, Morteza Ghadimi, a former Iranian diplomat and a Mirfendereski protege. After long deliberations, through, Ghadimi's persistent efforts, based on the continued Saudi need to "harass" the Islamic Republic, one last trip to Saudi Arabia was arranged by the "Palace" in 1989⁷⁰⁴. Although, no discussion of any substance was held during that visit, which once again entailed a pilgrimage to the holy shrines in Mecca and Madinah, a sum of one million dollars, was donated to NAMIR⁷⁰⁵

Having returned from Saudi Arabia, there was little else which NAMIR could do, other than to issue supportive messages from time to time in support of the Saudi government, in order to keep their lines of communication alive⁷⁰⁶. However, once Iraq invaded Kuwait, NAMIR was forced into an unwanted situation of having to choose to give precedence to its only remaining benefactor. While, making such a decision was most difficult and highly unwelcome by Bakhtiar, the fact remained that NAMIR's main benefactor over the years had been none other than the regime of Saddam Hussein⁷⁰⁷. So, most reluctantly, Bakhtiar had no choice but to go along with the regime that had supported it consistently throughout the years, and had allowed it to operate a radio station from its territory. The direct result of this was the burning of all bridges with

⁷⁰⁴Accompanying Bakhtiar on this trip were, Morteza Ghadimi. Abbas Gholi Bakhtiar, Sadeq Sadrieh, and A.R. Boroomand.

⁷⁰⁵Interview with Abbas Gholi Bakhtiar, London, 2 December 1994. In a separate interview conducted in Paris, on 23 November 1994, Senator Kazem Jafroudi, stated that in the final visit to Saudi Arabia in 1989, Bakhtiar was given a personal gift to the sum of \$2 million. He said, that he had asked for some money as security for the future of their joint grandson (Bakhtiar's son was at one time married to Jafroudi's daughter), and that he had immediately received a cheque for \$200,000.

⁷⁰⁶eg. NAMIR statement condemning the explosions that were allegedly carried out by the Islamic Republic in Mecca - Qyame Iran, Issue No. 254, dated 20 July 1989.

⁷⁰⁷According to Ahmad Mirfendereski (Interview 26/11/94), NAMIR had received the bulk of its financial assistance -estimated to have neared a figure of around US\$ 60-70 million from Iraq. The total amount of Saudi contributions, according to Mirfendereski, was never more than US\$ 3 million.

Riyadh, a matter that became irreversible following Bakhtiar's careless and insensitive interview with the French daily, Le Figaro, dated 30 August 1990⁷⁰⁸.

2. Relations with Iraq: Despite the fact that relations between NAMIR and the Iraqi government had become adversely affected, in the aftermath of the transfer of the Mojahedin head quarters from Paris to Baghdad, and the growing importance that the Iraqis were attaching to the effectiveness of the Mojahedin, as a more credible alternative, no significant change had taken place in their ongoing relations. Thus, NAMIR had continued to receive its regular monthly payment, along with the facilities of radio broadcasting that had been made available as early as 1980.

During the mid-1980's, as a consequence of broadening his horizons (ie. through US and Saudi Arabia), Bakhtiar had been able to somewhat reduce his level of dependence on Iraq to an extent that in many public interviews, he could afford to sound critical of the Iraqi regime⁷⁰⁹. However, by the late-1980's, because of NAMIR's worsening financial position, he become more dependent than ever before on the Iraqi government, for the maintenance of his organization.

To promote its objectives, apart from the regular contacts made with Bakhtiar in Paris, NAMIR had felt the need to send a delegation comprising of two of its most senior advisers (Sadeq Sadrieh and Hamid Zolnour) to Baghdad in order to enhance relations, and, more importantly, to prevent the Mojahedin from sabotaging their position with

⁷⁰⁸In which he was perceived to have taken a pro-Iraqi stance, on the question of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

⁷⁰⁹Text of Bakhtiar's interview with Voice of America, printed in Qyame Iran, Issue No. 99, dated 12 October 1984, in which he had said that his relationship with Iraq was good, until they had invaded Iran. He had added in the same interview that "All I have in Iraq is only a radio station and that is all!".

local government officials in Iraq⁷¹⁰.

During the period from early 1987 to the time when allied forces entered Iraqi territory in February 1991, and when Saddam Hussein was no longer in a position to sustain NAMIR (having terminated their relationship with a lump sum final cash payment), Bakhtiar had been able to maintain his ties with Baghdad, and to use that as his only remaining base for obtaining the necessary funds required for keeping the chances of NAMIR alive. This relationship, had one further benefit, in that having been cut off completely from the US, NAMIR had been anxious to try and somehow associate itself with the Soviet Union, a country with which Iraq had maintained close links for the better part of the past two decades. However, there is no evidence to suggest that Baghdad had ever responded to this request and requirement.

3. Relations with the Palestine Liberation Organization(PLO):

Establishing ties with the PLO, for purposes of advancing NAMIR's objectives, was perhaps, the most significant - and the same time extremely controversial - breakthrough that was made Bakhtiar in his final years.

The opening had been made possible, not by any one directly associated with NAMIR, but by a young, pro-Mossadegh, Iranian journalist by the name of Ali-Reza Nouri-

⁷¹⁰According to Hamid Zolnour (interview, Paris, 7 March 1994), in their two visits to Baghdad during the period 1987-1989, the Iraqis had shown a great deal of respect for Bakhtiar as a national leader. He said that, according to people they had come into contact with, the amount of respect which the Iraqis had for Bakhtiar was allegedly incomparable to that which they had for the Mojahedin. He said that Bakhtiar and the Mojahedin leader, Massoud Rajavi, were never seen in the same light by the Iraqis (implying that Bakhtiar was considered as much more "heavy weight" personality than Rajavi).

Zadeh⁷¹¹. Nouri-Zadeh, a London based, Iranian Arabist, had himself been in contact with various Palestinian groups in Lebanon, since the early 1970's, and had met and interviewed Yasser Arafat, on a number of occasions, including his very high profile visit to Iran following the victory of the Islamic Revolution. However, once the Iran-Iraq War had begun, Arafat's, own relations had begun to sour with the Iranian leadership, because of his call for Arab unity and support for Saddam Hussein. The Iranians had retaliated by offering political and financial support to many of Arafat's more hardline competitors within the Palestinian ranks, such as Ahmad Jebril of the People's Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)-General Command, which was based in Syria, and many other Palestinian splinter groups⁷¹².

In a meeting with Arafat in February 1988⁷¹³, Nouri-Zadeh had suggested that the PLO should not confine itself to just the Mojahedin⁷¹⁴, and should instead try and establish more contact with all the popular and democratic forces that were opposed to the way in which the Islamic Republic was conducting policy⁷¹⁵. Contained in the list suggested

⁷¹¹Nouri-Zadeh, as a journalist for the Iraqi funded, Sudanese based Arabic weekly, Ad Dastour, had displayed great pro-NAMIR sentiments, and had interviewed Bakhtiar on a number of occasions. A farsi text of one his most important interviews with Bakhtiar had appeared in Issue No. 84 of Qyame Iran, dated 6 March 1984.

⁷¹²Such as those invited to Teheran, in the immediate aftermath of the 1991 Madrid Middle East Peace Conference. These included representatives from "HAMAS" and its leader Sheikh Ahmad Yasin, Dr. Fathi Ibrahim Shahghaghi of the Islamic Jihad, Namar Saleh of the Salvation Front for Palestine ("Fath-al-Entefazeh"), and the Palestinian Shaikh, Abdol Aziz Odeh (Source: A.R. Nouri-Zadeh, London, 08/01/95).

⁷¹³Who had also begun displaying open hostility to Iran, by holding public meetings with some members of the Iranian opposition groups, such as senior representatives from the Mojahedin,.

⁷¹⁴With whom the PLO had had long previous ties, dating to the years prior to the revolution when, Rajavi, had himself been received training in a PLO camp in Jordan.

⁷¹⁵This suggestion also included people such as Mehdi Bazargan, who were not opposed to the Islamic Republic, but to the provisions emanating from "Velayate Faghih", as incorporated by Khomeini, in Iran's National constitution.

by Nouri-Zadeh⁷¹⁶, was Bakhtiar and NAMIR. Subsequent to this suggestion, a series of "letters of friendship" were drafted and signed by Arafat to a number of Iranian personalities, and given to Nouri-Zadeh, to ensure their safe delivery⁷¹⁷. According to Nouri-Zadeh, prior to returning to London, he met with Bakhtiar in Paris and hand delivered the letter from Arafat. Subsequently, Bakhtiar's response, thanking Arafat for his sentiments, and expressing full support for the "right of self-rule for the Palestinian people", prompted a visit to Paris by Abu-Khaled⁷¹⁸. In his meeting with Bakhtiar, Abu Khaled presented Bakhtiar with an ivory replica of the Holy Moslem Shrine in Jerusalem, and began a relationship that was to prosper in the coming months (albeit against the advice of the majority of his close advisers).

Despite the fact that in the previous years, NAMIR had reacted to excess acts of Israeli aggression against the Palestinians in Lebanon⁷¹⁹, there had, at the same time, been a great deal of hostility against the PLO itself, for its alleged role in having trained Iranian radicals in the years prior to the Islamic Revolution⁷²⁰, as well as its alleged role in having participated against army units in the immediate period before and after Khomeini's victory in Iran. Indeed, the PLO was blamed by many close Bakhtiar advisers for having "first accepted and later masterminded the contract" from the

⁷¹⁶Which included others personalities such as Mehdi Bazargan and some of his colleagues in the "Freedom Movement"(Engineer Sahabi and Dr. Yazidi), as well as leading clerics such as Ayatollahs Montazeri, Golpayeghani and Qomi.

⁷¹⁷Interview with Ali Reza Nouri-Zadeh, London 8 November 1994.

⁷¹⁸A Senior PLO official, who had been Arafat's First Ambassador to Teheran.

⁷¹⁹An article entitled, "Mr. Sharon - It Is Enough", printed in Issue No. 23 of NEHZAT, dated 9 September 1982, followed by NAMIR's official condemnation of Israeli brutality in the Palestinian camps at Sabrah and Shatila, printed in Issue No. 24 of NEHZAT, dated 23 September 1982.

⁷²⁰Such as the Mojahedin and others.

Islamic regime to assassinate Bakhtiar in 1980, a feat which had resulted in the murder of two innocent French subjects. Hence, many of Bakhtiar's key advisers - including Ahmad Mirfendereski and General Shahrदार - had advised against any association with the PLO, which had a further great disadvantage of angering the Israeli government, and turning their wrath against NAMIR⁷²¹.

Nonetheless, Bakhtiar's lack of other options, meant that fraternizing with the PLO, might offer him a way out of the cul-de-sac that he was finding himself in. Following Bakhtiar's telegram of condolence to Arafat, on the occasion of the assassination of Abu Jihad by the Israelis in April 1988⁷²², a major effort was made, by way of a substantial article⁷²³, to justify the policy that was being adopted by NAMIR in "warming up to Arafat and the PLO"⁷²⁴. The themes articulated in this article, which appeared in Qyame Iran⁷²⁵, were later highlighted by comments made in a speech by Bakhtiar, who condemned the Israeli government for its "illegal behavior" in the kidnapping of the Shiite Moslem cleric, Sheikh Abdol-Karim Obeid from the Lebanon in August 1989⁷²⁶

⁷²¹This concern was later justified, when according to Ahmad Mirfendereski (Interview, Paris, dated 26 November 1994), the Farsi Section of the Israeli Radio, widely listened to Iran, began adopting an anti-Bakhtiar line.

⁷²² Full text printed in Qyame Iran, Issue No. 222, dated 22 April 1988.

⁷²³Looking at the pros and cons of existing perceptions regarding the PLO.

⁷²⁴With great stress on the fact that many important evolutions had taken place within the Palestinian Movement, which was far from having been a static movement committed to positions adopted in the previous decades.

⁷²⁵Issue No. 226, dated 23 June 1988.

⁷²⁶Speech by Bakhtiar at a NAMIR rally in Hamburg, on the occasion of the Anniversary of the Iranian Constitution Day (5/8/89), the full text of which was later published in Qyame Iran, Issue No. 256, dated 17 August 1989. In the course of his remarks, which particularly aimed to demonstrate sympathy for the PLO, Bakhtiar said that, "...I am aware that making these comments about the Sheikh, that the American and Israeli governments will continue to remain displeased with us. But, the policy of NAMIR has always been

In the ensuing months following Bakhtiar's meeting with Abu-Khaled, the ground works for a meeting between Bakhtiar and Arafat were laid with the assistance of Ali Reza Nouri-Zadeh, and finally in November 1989, at Arafat's invitation, Bakhtiar accompanied by Sadeq Sadrieh and Hamid Zolnour, made an official visit to the PLO head-quarters in Tunis⁷²⁷. This visit, despite its obvious draw-backs, was nevertheless, considered as a major breakthrough for Bakhtiar, at a time when his star had begun to fade in most other places.

While Arafat's main incentive for inviting Bakhtiar, was due to his personal desire to infuriate the Islamic regime, from whom he had grown apart⁷²⁸, Bakhtiar was hopeful that he could use the Arafat connection to attain the following objectives:

1. For the PLO to speak on his behalf with Arab leaders in the Persian Gulf, so that they may assist his fund-raising efforts. In particular, Bakhtiar was hopeful that Arafat might have great leverage in Iraq, where his position was becoming increasingly more vulnerable.

2. By now, totally ignored by Washington and the West, Bakhtiar was hopeful that Arafat might serve as a conduit between NAMIR and Moscow, thus giving Bakhtiar a much needed opening with the Soviet Union⁷²⁹. He was hopeful of using the Soviet

one of honor and bravery, and until the day that I am alive, I shall pursue this course, for I believe it to be the only road that will facilitate the establishment of a democratic order in Iran".

⁷²⁷Qyame Iran, Issue No. 262, dated 9 November 1994.

⁷²⁸Interview with Ali Reza Nouri-Zadeh, London, 18 November 1994. It must also be borne in mind that Arafat might have used the Bakhtiar visit as a bargaining chip with the Islamic regime, to solicit their support and financial assistance. According to Nouri-Zadeh, Arafat, who was at the time very angry with Iran, was also interested in trying to influence the Islamic Republic in order to curtail its support for "HAMAS" and the "Islamic Jihad".

⁷²⁹Ahmad Mirfendereski, was always skeptical of this move, and considered Arafat as too much of a light-weight in Soviet eyes to successfully carry out such a

Union, as a balancing force to redress some of the main problems he had come to encounter since the shelving of "White Star"⁷³⁰.

3. Bakhtiar felt that the level of financial assistance he sought to keep NAMIR above board, was not beyond the means of the PLO itself, and though he had presented his request for financial assistance in the context of a package coming from the "Persian Gulf Leaders", he was hopeful that Arafat, himself, might tend to this important requirement, if all other attempts were to fail.

According to Nouri-Zadeh, despite all earlier perceptions, at the end of their deliberation in Tunis, Arafat was greatly impressed by Bakhtiar, and having promised to do his best to meet the requirements Bakhtiar had outlined to him, he had also agreed to provide NAMIR with the following additional package:

1. Offering NAMIR, additional broadcast facilities from the PLO radio stations in both Cairo and Baghdad.

2. To give Bakhtiar access to any existing PLO facility inside Iran. This meant allowing Bakhtiar to send written material for destinations in Iran that would go through existing Palestinian channels in Teheran.

3. To offer training to Bakhtiar military personnel in PLO military camps.

While Arafat had genuinely taken certain steps towards helping Bakhtiar with some of his urgent needs, such as talking with the Soviets⁷³¹ and the Iraqis, for purposes of

mission. Indeed, he considered, the whole Arafat connection as a great big "Fiasco", more damaging to Bakhtiar than any good it could have brought him (Interview, 1 January 1995).

⁷³⁰This included both moral and financial support.

⁷³¹According to Mr. "M.S.A." (a person who does not want to be named), a Farsi-Arabic interpreter of Khuzestani origins, who was attached to the PLO's office in Tunis, Arafat had raised the matter of Bakhtiar's request with the Soviet ambassador in

helping Bakhtiar. However, before any of these plans could have come to fruition, Arafat's own position, and that of Saddam Hussein, had become gravely affected as a consequence of the Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait, and, as a result, neither were any longer in a position to offer what Bakhtiar had needed most - namely, an adequate level of funding to keep NAMIR activities alive.

Thus, by late 1990, despite all the efforts that were exerted in trying to implement NAMIR's new foreign policy agenda, it was clear that the net result of Bakhtiar's various endeavors to secure the funding he had required for the upkeep of NAMIR had been very disappointing. This left him with no alternative but to shut down all his activities, with the exception of his Paris bureau that remained open with only a skeleton staff, until such time that it, too, was closed following his own assassination in August 1991.

Epilogue

In the concluding years, and prior to Bakhtiar's untimely death, none of his senior advisers - either in the "NAMIR Council" or the "Council of Advisers" - had thought it likely that NAMIR was any longer capable of overthrowing the Islamic regime⁷³². Their only hope was to benefit - using Bakhtiar's personal credentials and charisma with the Iranian people- in any upheaval that might occur inside Iran, for reasons that they

Tunisia (interview, London 30/12/94). Also, according to Nouri-Zadeh, through the aegis of Arafat, Bakhtiar had spoken on the phone with a senior Gorbachev aide - and the current Russian Foreign Intelligence Service Chief Primakov.

⁷³²This was a feeling that was unanimously shared by everyone, in the Council of Advisers, whom the writer has interviewed during the course of his research. Most, had said that they had lost faith, as early as 1980, when the Nojeh Project had failed. Others had a dim glimmer of hope up to the mid-1980's. But, once the rot had begun to set in as a consequence of NAMIR's fast declining financial situation, there was no hope that NAMIR could ever be anything other than a political contender to contest political status, once the Islamic regime had been overthrown by some other force.

would, in any event, be incapable of influencing directly.

This attitude on the part of Bakhtiar's team, was mainly due to the fact that the majority of those close to Bakhtiar had never ever come to grip with having the "mentality of a resistance fighter". Their behavior, was instead, like those of non-risk taking executives within a large business corporation, whose immediate impulses would be to file for bankruptcy at the first sign of trouble, in order not to incur greater liabilities, should their company continue doing business in a risky climate and environment. Moreover, Bakhtiar's weakness as a manager was, in itself, a major factor in creating the general malaise that had begun to have a disintegrating effect on NAMIR.

However, Bakhtiar's personal pride and dedication of purpose, was such that NAMIR was prevented from disintegrating completely by the end of 1990, when all financial sources eventually dried up⁷³³. By this time, he had also been able to use his various connections with other political groups, and major political personalities - apart from Reza Pahlavi and the Constitutionalists⁷³⁴- in order to call for the creation of 'coalition of all democrats', who would lead a political campaign against the Islamic republic⁷³⁵.

⁷³³During the worst stages of the war against the Allies, representatives of the Iraqi had come to Paris, and informed Bakhtiar that they would no longer be able to support his campaign, departing with a lump sum cash payment, in order not to leave Bakhtiar in a lurch.

⁷³⁴It is essential to point out, that the monarchists were divided between the "Constitutionalists" who sought a symbolic role for Reza Pahlavi, and others ('Absolute Monarchists') who thought that Reza Pahlavi, himself, should act a political leader and lead the charge against the Islamic Republic.

⁷³⁵According to Engineer Ezat Raastgar and Rahim Sharifi (joint interview: Paris, 24 November 1994), by 1991 many other political figures of the left, like Bozorgh Alavi, Keshtgar (of the Fadayan-e Khalq Organization), and Babak Amir Khosravi (ex-Tudeh), as well as other old colleagues like Hassan Nazih and Admiral Ahmad Madani, were calling for the creation of a "National Coalition", in which Bakhtiar would play a leading role. This, according to Engineer Raastgar, was consistent with the NAMIR's earlier cries for being "the host party for national unity".

Having envisioned the worse, Bakhtiar had as early as 1989, taken certain steps, which had opened certain possibilities, that would have allowed for his political survival, even under the worst circumstances⁷³⁶. Beginning with his participation at a Seminar in Munich at the invitation of the Hans Seidel Stiftung in late 1986⁷³⁷, Bakhtiar had discovered the benefits of promoting his profile as well as generating new activity and vitality, by personally taking his NAMIR-led campaign to areas outside Paris. In August 1989, Bakhtiar had taken his message to a NAMIR sponsored meetings in Hamburg⁷³⁸, which were followed by his high profile visits in October and November 1989, to Holland⁷³⁹ and Tunisia⁷⁴⁰. However, it was during the course of his visit to the European Parliament in February 1990⁷⁴¹, that Bakhtiar launched his last major political appeal, calling for the establishment of a "Committee for a Democratic Iran" to be set up by the European Parliament, that would in turn promote the holding of supervised free parliamentary elections in Iran⁷⁴². It was this last call that was to become a slogan around which all the democratic opposition against the Islamic Republic were to make a positive response, though unfortunately, not while Bakhtiar himself was alive. Had Bakhtiar remained alive, and had he overcome the damage resulting from his support for Iraq, his role in the campaign for the promotion of free parliamentary elections in

⁷³⁶It has to be appreciated, that known both nationally and internationally, and armed with a reputation as a democrat, even during his worst days, Bakhtiar was still better off than any other non radical/leftist competitor.

⁷³⁷Qyame Iran, Issue No. 181, dated 11 December 1986.

⁷³⁸Qyame Iran, Issue No. 255, dated 17 August 1989.

⁷³⁹Qyame Iran, Issue No. 260, dated 12 October 1989.

⁷⁴⁰Qyame Iran, Issue No. 262, dated 9 November 1989.

⁷⁴¹Where he was hosted Madam Simone Veil (France), the previous speaker of the European Parliament.

⁷⁴²Qyame Iran, Issue No. 268, dated 1 February 1990.

Iran, could have been of paramount importance, and he would not doubt have been able to give great weight and credibility to this legitimate demand.

In the end, Shapour Bakhtiar died as a hero of the Iranian people, whose call for freedom and democracy he had championed honestly and to the best of his abilities for a period of twelve years in exile. In conversation to many close friends and associates⁷⁴³, he had revealed that part of his miscalculation, in not having properly preserved the financial resources that had initially been made available to him, was because he had thought that the struggle against the Islamic regime would have come to a much sooner ending. As it turned out, his death can be seen as a reflection of his own mismanagement and carelessness, as a concerted effort by the Islamic regime to murder him. Indeed he had been warned by a whole host of friends and associates on a number of occasions regarding the necessary security measures he should have employed to safeguard the security of his conversations and his person⁷⁴⁴.

Although plagued by many problems, both political and personal⁷⁴⁵, at the time of his brutal murder, that had drained him emotionally and financially, Bakhtiar was still the most acknowledged political leader of the center, who was elevated to an even greater position in the history of the struggle of the Iranian nation, by the Islamic regime, as a

⁷⁴³eg. Amir Hossein Amir Parviz (interview, 5 October 1994).

⁷⁴⁴This was done by many close advisers, including the writer, who had suggested great caution about his conversations over the telephone (warning him on more than several occasions about the use of trackable mobile phones), and about the necessity of always having a body guard present in the room, during the course of his meetings - particularly, with strangers who had come from Iran. Indeed, there was even the lack of a single warning device to the Police officers located in the basement of his house. Thus, contrary to public belief, the planned assassination of Bakhtiar by its perpetrators, some of whom were fully familiar with the layout of his house, and the inadequate conditions that prevailed there, was not a very complex affair.

⁷⁴⁵Having remarried and become a father at the age of 76.

consequence of the nefarious plot it sponsored to murder him in France⁷⁴⁶.

⁷⁴⁶The conclusion of the trial in France of nine people accused of complicity in his death, and the final verdict of the Court in December 1994, leave no doubt about the involvement of the Islamic regime in this affair.

CONCLUSION

The thesis presented in the previous chapters, having given detailed account of the circumstances leading to the formation and subsequent activities of the National Movement of the Iranian Resistance (NAMIR), is the culmination of an effort which has also aimed at presenting a more general academic understanding of an increasingly more active set of actors in international politics - namely, banned opposition movements - which have come to play an important role in the current international environment.

In focusing on the case of NAMIR during the years in which it was led by its founding leader, Dr. Shapour Bakhtiar, it can be seen that the circumstances giving rise to the creation and development of the organization, as well as the progress of its struggles in the ensuing years, does provide a certain framework and pattern which a student of international politics may take into account in order to assess and analyze the status and actual potential of any other banned opposition movement operating anywhere else in the globe.

In the case of NAMIR, having observed the pragmatic application of all the underlying theoretical concepts and moral arguments essential to the growth and success of any opposing movement, as outlined in Chapter 1 (e.g., the role of concepts such as ideology and legitimacy, etc.), it was seen how NAMIR was also tasked to confront a series of more empirical issues such as the highly complex and most tedious aspects of setting up a brand new political organization, providing for its funding and appealing to the general public for its mobilization. The preceding chapters have demonstrated that because NAMIR was led by an internationally known and highly respected individual such as Dr. Bakhtiar, who was the only major Iranian political figure not to

have been tainted by the excesses of either the previous imperial regime or the Islamic Republic in Iran, and because of its ideological commitment to pluralism and the Rule of Law, the process of creating a new political organization in opposition to the Khomeini regime, with a dynamic following, was able to proceed at a relatively fast pace - particularly from 1979-1986 - due mainly to the substantial amount of funds that was made available to the organization because of Bakhtiar's unique status.

Unfortunately, NAMIR's overall record from 1979-1991, shows that the organization's leadership was incapable of sustaining the high measure of success attained during the initial years. Nonetheless, it was seen that due to Bakhtiar's charismatic personality, the movement was still able to provide a credible profile so long as he, himself, was alive. However, the impact of Bakhtiar's assassination upon NAMIR was immediate⁷⁴⁷. Indeed, he had no sooner been killed than the organization became fragmented and slipped into ignominious insignificance. This was irrespective of efforts by many of Bakhtiar's subordinates, who have managed to cling on to his name and the potent image which NAMIR was able to project as a major actor on the Iranian political scene for much of the 1980's.

From a more general perspective, the thesis has shown that while political movements dedicated to the overthrow of their governments have existed for centuries, banned opposition movements such as NAMIR⁷⁴⁸, in their contemporary form, have essentially been a feature of the international political scene in the post colonial era - particularly

⁷⁴⁷ An analysis of what has happened to NAMIR in the aftermath of Bakhtiar's assassination has not been provided in the thesis.

⁷⁴⁸ i.e., opposition movements which are ideologically committed to such issues as democracy and human rights etc. (unlike certain anti-democratic, radical and revolutionary organizations which have emerged in certain western countries).

in such countries where democratic norms have been regularly ignored and all forms of opposition to the functioning regimes have been generally repressed. As cited in Chapter 1, this is a point which has received particular attention in the writings of Burton Zweibach (*Civility And Disobedience*, p. 196), where he validates the call for resistance against those regimes which, according to him, lose their legitimacy as a result of their consistent denial of the rights of their citizens.

The study having gone into some detail in order to point out the types of challenges which NAMIR (ostensibly the most successful liberal democratic political Iranian opposition movement in the post-Khomeini period) had faced in order to push ahead with its plans and objectives, serves to provide the student of international politics with an additional framework that strives to distinguish between those "committed individuals and groups", and those of a "less genuine" kind who exploit the trust and patriotic sentiments of their compatriots in order to advance their own individual or self serving agendas. To assist in making such a distinction, the student of international politics is provided with a list of attributes with which any serious opposition movement must be endowed in order to make an impact within its own environment as well as in the international arena - e.g., a credible leadership, a cohesive organization, access to substantial funds, access to international opinion making bodies and individuals, access to means of communications enabling it to remain in contact with its own constituencies, and finally a highly motivated and ideologically convinced membership which is ready to make sacrifices for the promotion of the movement's objectives. Hence, it follows that those banned opposition movements which are devoid of the potential for developing such a configuration are incapable of making the required impact, and as such they are unlikely to pose a serious challenge to any functioning regime.

Furthermore, an examination of this nature allows any vigilant observer to take note of how individuals or groups who are banned from expressing their political beliefs and social preferences actually go about organizing themselves for the attainment of their objectives. Thus, by looking at the scope and complexity of any organization, and by identifying the ideology of the movement and the degree of commitment to it demonstrated by its general membership, and finally by judging the way in which leadership and management is manifested within any organization, they can be in a position to judge not only a movement's potential appeal amongst its own people, but also the degree of success which that movement is likely to achieve irrespective of its geographical location.

Moreover, given the inter-dependent world in which we live, this process is further assisted by the way in which outside actors - i.e., foreign governments and international organizations look at the disposition of the various opposition movements as well as their functioning regimes. It goes without saying that the potential success of any opposition movement in attaining its ultimate objectives is greatly dependent upon the type of support it is able to muster in the international community. Hence the importance of diplomacy and the role of opposition movements as non-state actors in international relations. While opposition movements can exist in their thousands, those capable of performing in a complex arena that is capable of addressing all or most of these criteria, are few and far in between. However, a major drawback confronting all banned opposition movements in this area, is the degree of vulnerability to which such groups are subjected as a consequence of policy developments or changes which are totally beyond their control. An example at point in the thesis, is the reference made to the changes that took place in the American National Security Council following the damaging disclosures that were made of the Irangate scandal. Thus, the removal from

office of a number of key personnel, sympathetic to NAMIR and its objectives, as a result of matters that were purely related to the inner workings of the American political system, meant that years of careful diplomacy and meticulous lobbying on the part of NAMIR were completely wiped out.

According to the analysis made, for most of the 1980's, NAMIR was an organization capable of fulfilling the main criteria required by any credible banned opposition movement anywhere. Thus, during this period, NAMIR was successful in satisfying the proposition that "organizational capabilities make popular mobilizations and continued mastery over the popular movement possible"⁷⁴⁹.

From 1979-1991, according to even the most conservative estimate, the organization was able to have access to an overall budget of well over fifty million (US) dollars⁷⁵⁰. This enabled NAMIR to recruit its own professional staff and to have numerous offices and publications around the world and inside Iran. The fact that it was taken seriously by the international community, meant that it had access to two clandestine radio stations broadcasting into Iran from two different locations, as well as numerous radio stations in foreign capitals aimed at consolidating support amongst the Iranian exile community. Finally, as the movement championing ideologies associated with Iranian constitutionalism, NAMIR - unlike many of its radical competitors - appealed to traditional values, which are shared by an overwhelming majority of the population, and indeed by the mid- 1980's when the lustre of the revolution had begun to fade, there

⁷⁴⁹Farhi, F., *States and Urban-Based Revolutions - Iran And Nicaragua*, University of Illinois Press, Urbana and Chicago, 1990, p.94.

⁷⁵⁰Many of Bakhtiar's close advisers estimated the figure to be much nearer to US\$ 100 million.

were increasing signs that NAMIR's message was beginning to make its impact felt inside the country. The peaceful anti-war demonstrations of 17 May 1985, which took place throughout Iran at Bakhtiar's behest, coupled with the subsequent promotion of "Operation White Star" in Washington in June 1985, were both instrumental in paving the way for Bakhtiar's successful visit to the White House in February 1986. These events marked the zenith of NAMIR's achievements in exile, and they were seen to reinforce the promise for a new era of international collaboration for the establishment of a NAMIR led democratic order in Iran.

Nonetheless, due mainly to severe causes of mismanagement and unchecked inter-organizational wrangling⁷⁵¹, the movement failed to achieve any of its objectives, and from 1987 onwards, its rapid decline was such that by the time of the death of the Ayatollah Khomeini in 1989, the organization, contrary to its own previous assertions, was simply incapable of posing a serious threat to his successors. While, this failure may be attributed to unsuitable international circumstances⁷⁵², or failure of proper management on the part of the organization's leadership, it may also be deduced that NAMIR was itself outflanked by the incoming leadership in the Islamic Republic which promised to adopt some of the movement's espoused goals, such as the need for economic liberalizations and development along with greater political tolerance.

⁷⁵¹One of the main contributing factors leading to this was the inability of Bakhtiar to make hard choices at a time when some of his most loyal supporters were simply too ineffective at discharging the duties to which they had been assigned. This is a dilemma - i.e., "loyalty Vs effectiveness" - to which Charles Tilly in his book *From Mobilization to Revolution* (p.70) has given particular attention.

⁷⁵²Given that there was a general tendency on the part of most western governments to reach some form of an accommodation with Khomeini's most ostensible heir, Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, who assumed the Iranian presidency in July 1989.

Although, it was not long before the inability of the new Islamic administration as far as delivering the types of promises it had made became fully apparent to all, it was a fact that the momentum in NAMIR's activities had essentially run out of steam, well in advance of any real crisis posing a serious threat to the ultimate survival of the Islamic regime. Again, not being outflanked, and not allowing the organization to become vulnerable and susceptible through unnecessary risk taking or over-extension, are part and parcel of the types of responsibilities which the leadership in any banned opposition movement cannot ignore. In the case of NAMIR, Bakhtiar's personal inexperience in management and his somewhat relaxed and hands-off leadership style, contributed greatly to the types of inter-organization indiscipline which was responsible for the internal implosions that damaged NAMIR far more than any threat emanating from outside the organization. The episodes of internal bickering and petty jealousies cited in Chapter 4, which essentially sealed the fate of "Operation White Star", the last pivotal turning point which could have drastically altered the destiny of NAMIR, underlines this very point. The lesson being that even if equipped with all the paraphernalia required of a modern opposition movement, all efforts will come to naught, so long as the bonds of solidarity, based on trust, amongst the membership have not been consolidated through active intervention and proper management on the part of the organization's leadership.

Finally, from a conceptual angle, the thesis having alluded to the long established historical tendency for people to rebel when they have been prohibited or deprived of the means of expressing their discontent⁷⁵³, establishes that banned opposition movements in contemporary international politics are the main vehicles which channel

⁷⁵³Gurr, T.R., *Why Men Rebel*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1970.

discontent - i.e., social grievances and social disorientations - into organized collective action, which may or may not include violence. In the twentieth century, most banned opposition movements have been able to discover their own strategies for the promotion of their objectives "quite independently, based on their own experiences, instincts, and of course, native traditions"⁷⁵⁴. Hence, it is possible to conclude that as a rule, successful opposition movements are those that are able to promote disobedience, thereby challenging the legitimacy⁷⁵⁵ of a functioning regime with a "purposive, mass based movement, coalescing with the aid of ideology, and organization to overthrow the existing government and perhaps the entire social order"⁷⁵⁶.



⁷⁵⁴Laqueur, W., *Guerilla - A Historical and Critical Study*, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, London, 1977, p.384.

⁷⁵⁵According to M.S. Kimmel (*Revolution - A Sociological Interpretation*, Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 1990, p.190) loss of legitimacy, in ensuring the downfall of any particular regime is as important, if not more, than economic difficulties or the disintegration of its military apparatus.

⁷⁵⁶Skocpol, T., *States And Social Revolutions*, Cambridge University Press, 1979, p.14.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX 1

A CHRONOLOGY OF MAJOR EVENTS

In The History of NAMIR

1979-1991

DATE	EVENT
07/79	Bakhtiar launches his campaign in Paris.
08/79	First major pro-Bakhtiar rally held in London.
11/79	U.S. Embassy in Teheran is occupied and American diplomats are taken as hostages.
04/80	U.S. attempt to rescue hostages is forcibly aborted.
05/80	Bakhtiar's clandestine "Radio Iran" begins broadcasting from Baghdad.
07/80	Pro-Bakhtiar coup attempt is foiled and a number of military officers and civilians are arrested.
08/80	Unsuccessful attempt is made on Bakhtiar's life by the Lebanese terrorist, Anis Naccache.
08/80	The establishment of NAMIR is announced.
09/80	Iraq invades Iran, and 8 year long Iran-Iraq War begins. Despite his relations with Iraq, Bakhtiar in three separate statements dated 25 September 1980, 14 November 1980, and 16 February 1981, calls a cessation of hostilities, and the commencement of peace talks on the basis of the 1975 Algiers Treaty.
07/81	Bani Sadr and Rajavi arrive in Paris. Bakhtiar condemns both and rejects any notion of cooperation.
08/81	The Iranian Naval Vessel, "Tabarzin" is hijacked on the high seas by members of the "Azadeghan" Organization, led by General Bahram

Aryana (22 August).

- 08/81 Bakhtiar and Aryana declare in separate statements their decision to work in unity for the liberation of Iran. Bakhtiar asks all his "military supporters" to report to Aryana.
- 09/81 Aryana moves his HQ to Turkey, near the border with Iran.
- 10/81 NEHZAT, the political organ of the National Movement of the Iranian Resistance (NAMIR) begins the publication of its first bi-weekly issue.
- 12/81 GHYAME IRAN, the second Bakhtiar bi-weekly, aimed at a less 'doctrinaire' audience is published.
- 08/82 VOICE OF IRAN, the political Tribune of the National Movement of the Iranian Resistance (NAMIR) in English, begins the publication of its first monthly issue.
- 09/82 LETTRE PERSANE, a pro-Bakhtiar monthly in French is published.
- 12/82 Publication of Admiral Ahmad Madani's statement in NEHZAT.
- 01/83 NEHZAT condemns communiqué issued following the meeting between Iraqi Foreign Minister, Tareq Aziz and Mojahedin Leader, Massoud Rajavi.
- 02/83 Bakhtiar's begins the campaign of urging all Iranians inside the country to participate in "Negative Resistance".
- 03/83 Bakhtiar's open call for support to former colleagues in the "National Front".
- 04/83 NAMIR supporters in Sweden are successful in bringing up the topic of "Trade Boycott" of Iran for the first time.
- 04/83 Bakhtiar's message to the Socialist International - this marks the first concerted effort on the part of NAMIR to promote its cause by contacting various important international bodies.
- 04/83 Bakhtiar's first secret visit to Saudi Arabia.
- 04/83 NAMIR first major assessment of the state of the Iranian Economy is published and distributed in a major conference in London⁷⁵⁷.

⁷⁵⁷The Conference which overtly sought to promote trade with Iran, was organized by NAMIR, as a way of seeking attention, and then humiliating the Islamic regime. This ploy was to a major extent successful, and the British Charge in Teheran (Sir Nicholas Barrington) was brought in, and to his embarrassment, was subjected to a situation well beyond his expectation.

- 04/83 Bakhtiar's first secret visit to Saudi Arabia.
- 05/83 Bakhtiar's first trip to the U.S. and meeting with U.S. officials. In a meeting with Iranian supporters in Los Angeles, he declares his support for a restoration of constitutional monarchy in Iran.
- 05/83 Bakhtiar's first visit to the United States, where he is the first major Iranian figure to address the Council on Foreign Relations.
- 07/83 Bakhtiar and Amini sign their "Agreement of Principles".
- 07/83 Bakhtiar signs a 5-Point Agreement on a "Declaration of Principles" with Dr. Ali Amini.
- 08/83 The Fourth Anniversary of the founding of NAMIR is celebrated in Paris in the presence of Bakhtiar, Amini and General Aryana.
- 08/83 First peaceful demonstration by the masses against the regime on Constitution Day (August 5), as called by NAMIR's clandestine radio broadcasts.
- 08/83 NAMIR begins publication of "Al Madinah" in Farsi during the "Haj" Annual Pilgrimage⁷⁵⁸.
- 09/83 The Foundation for Aid and Services to Iranians in Turkey is set up by NAMIR.
- 11/83 First 'Joint Statement' by Bakhtiar and Amini is issued.
- 01/84 Bakhtiar's Second Visit to the United States in which he addresses the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C.
- 02/84 Bakhtiar is viciously attacked by Rafsanjai during the course of Friday Sermons on the ground that he was responsible for the canceling of Iran's outstanding arms purchase agreements with America.
- 02/84 Bakhtiar's Second Secret Visit to Saudi Arabia⁷⁵⁹.

⁷⁵⁸This was a Farsi supplement of the Saudi Arabian daily, Al Madinah, which was produced for the benefit of the Iranian pilgrims coming for the Haj. However the project leader, as well as the publication's editor and staff, were all members of NAMIR, and the tone of this publication while religious, was anti-Islamic regime. In all six issues of this publication (with a circulation of 50,000) came out before the Saudi authorities halted its production, but not before ensuring that all Iranian planned demonstrations during Haj were called off by the Islamic regime.

⁷⁵⁹On the day he arrives in Jeddah, General Gholam Ali Oveissi is assassinated in Paris.

- 03/84 Bakhtiar's Second Visit to London⁷⁶⁰.
- 04/84 NAMIR condemns Iraqi usage of Chemical weapons.
- 08/84 Bakhtiar's speech on Constitution Day, reaffirms his commitment to Constitutional Monarchy.
- 10/84 In an interview with VOA, Bakhtiar openly discusses his relations with Iraq, and highlights the fact that his only relation with that regime is only the presence of a radio station on Iraqi soil.
- 11/84 NAMIR refers to Bazargan as the "Parrot" of the Islamic regime.
- 01/85 Bakhtiar rejects any notion of compromise with any new regime born out of the ruling Islamic clique, and states that this is part of a "foreign inspired ploy", which should be rejected by all.
- 01/85 In a major broadcast to the Iranian people, Bakhtiar introduces his "campaign of Negative Resistance", underlines the importance of Iran's "New National Armed Forces", and signals his support for Islamic clergy opposed to Khomeini⁷⁶¹.
- 03/85 Bakhtiar's New Year Message to the Iranian people stresses the need to push ahead with the "campaign of Negative Resistance".
- 04/85 NAMIR condemns the "Holy and Revolutionary" nature of Massoud Rajavi with the wife of his deputy.
- 05/85 Mass peaceful demonstrations against the Iran-Iraq War take place in Iran on 17 May, following Bakhtiar's radio broadcast urging the people to go out on to the streets⁷⁶².
- 06/85 Final draft of "Operation White Star" is prepared by NAMIR-MW⁷⁶³.
- 07/85 Bakhtiar's Visits London and hold talks with Leaders of the British Labour and Social Democratic Parties.
- 07/85 White House Meeting, with Bakhtiar's representative is held to discuss the aims and objectives of "Operation White Star".

⁷⁶⁰Bakhtiar's previous visit had been in 1979, only weeks after his escape from Iran.

⁷⁶¹In this respect, Qyame Iran publishes the full text of Grand Ayatollah Tabatabai Qomi's Fatwa against the Iran-Iraq War.

⁷⁶²The high point of Bakhtiar's period in opposition.

⁷⁶³Military Wing.

08/85 Plans to initiate "Operation White Star" begin.

09/85 First NAMIR-MW officer is assassinated in Turkey.

12/85 Commander of NAMIR-MW in Turkey is assassinated.

01/86 VOA⁷⁶⁴ Farsi broadcast on 16 January speaks of the Islamic regime's fear of NAMIR-MW.

02/86 Bakhtiar's Third Visit to the United States and his meeting with the National Security Adviser to the President of the United States⁷⁶⁵.

03/86 Bakhtiar and Reza Pahlavi II hold a joint meeting with their teams of advisers, and come to a secret agreement regarding their complimentary roles.⁷⁶⁶

04/86 Bakhtiar and Amini issue joint statement on the death of Grand Ayatollah Kazem Shariat Madari.

05/86 Bakhtiar's Third Secret Visit to Saudi Arabia.

05/86 Bakhtiar's assistance is sought in trying to liberate the US hostages in Lebanon in an effort that unveils to Bakhtiar the American involvement in what was to become known as the "Irangate" operation.

07/86 Internal bickering within NAMIR result in the sacking of the Commander of NAMIR-MW. Though, he is reinstated after a few weeks, the level of internal bickering pick up and the chances of pushing ahead with "Operation White Star" begin a downward and terminal path.

09/86 A CIA run operation transmits a clandestine 11 minute film of Reza Pahlavi from a mobile TV transmitter in Teheran.

09/86 In a TV program broadcast in the United States, Bakhtiar lashes out at the Shah, and brings to an end the period of "Cordial Entente" which had only come into full effect in March 1986.

11/86 The Irangate Scandal results in the total removal of all Bakhtiar supporters from the NSC in Washington, and the beginning of the end in terms of Bakhtiar's good and cooperative relations with Washington.

02/87 All US assistance towards "Operation White Star" is cut off, and from here

⁷⁶⁴Voice of America.

⁷⁶⁵The agenda for Bakhtiar's meeting was support for "Operation White Star".

⁷⁶⁶While, this agreement was to assist "Operation White Star", the entire operation was compartmented from the Shah and all of his advisers.

the period of Bakhtiar's decline as a credible alternative to the regime begins.

- 03/87 Mohammad Moshiri replaces Boroomand as Chairman of NAMIR's Executive Committee.
- 07/87 Bakhtiar expresses open support for the provisions of UNSCR 598 calling for a cease fire in the Iran-Iraq War.
- 08/87 Start of first major cutbacks as a result of increasing financial pressures
- 10/87 Controversy over UNSCR 598 begins in Iranian Exile Community, spurring anti-Bakhtiar feelings.
- 07/88 NAMIR is forced to shut down London Office.
- 03/89 Bakhtiar's final visit to Saudi Arabia.
- 06/89 Khomeini dies in Iran.
- 07/89 Sadegh Sadireh replaces Mohammad Moshiri as Chairman of NAMIR's Executive Committee.
- 07/89 NAMIR delegation visits Washington and hold talks with Shah Advisers. No positive conclusion is made.
- 08/89 Bakhtiar takes his campaign to Hamburg.
- 10/89 Bakhtiar visits Holland.
- 11/89 Bakhtiar visits Tunis and meets with Yasser Arafat.
- 08/90 Following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, Bakhtiar blunders in an interview with Le Figaro, and winds up alienating many of his previous supporters.
- 03/91 Boroomand is restored as Chairman of NAMIR Executive Committee.
- 04/91 Boroomand is assassinated in Paris.
- 08/91 Bakhtiar is assassinated.

APPENDIX 2

<p>A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF KEY PERSONALITIES INTERVIEWED OR MENTIONED IN THESIS</p>

Ahy, Shahriar: A well educated young Iranian technocrat with close American connections, who first served as a political adviser to General Gholam Ali Oveissi, and later to Dr. Ali Amini's Front For the Liberation of Iran (FLI), before joining the staff of Reza Pahlavi II, the Shah of Iran.

Amini, Ali: Former Iranian Prime Minister and elder statesman, who in 1982 formed the Front For the Liberation of Iran (FLI), with American backing. However, his operation was finally disbanded by the C.I.A. in late 1986.

Amir Parviz, Parviz: An Iranian businessman and an early Bakhtiar backer. However, after the failure of the initial military attempts to oust the Khomeini regime, he gradually backed out of the political arena, returning to private business.

Amir Parviz, Amir Hossein: An senior Iranian civil servant and an early member of the Iran Party, with strong pro-Mossadegh sentiments. Since he was appointed as Minister of Agriculture in the military government of Mr. Jaafar Sharif Emami and later in the government of General Azhari in October 1978, he was unable to serve in the government of Dr. Shapour Bakhtiar, but in exile he joined Bakhtiar, becoming a member of the NAMIR Council. On 18 July 1987, he was the victim of a planted car bomb which he was able to survive, with relatively few injuries.

Amirshahi, Mahshid: An Iranian writer and journalist and elder daughter of Molood Khanlari, who was one Bakhtiar's first colleagues in Paris. While a member of the NAMIR Council, she translated the Farsi edition of Bakhtiar's book, "Ma Fidelite", and was a contributor to many of NAMIR's publications in exile.

Amouzegar, Cyrus: Bakhtiar's Minister of Information, who later served as Editor of the anti regime Farsi newspaper that was printed in Saudi Arabia during the Haj in 1983.

Aryana, General Bahram : Former Joint Chief of Staff, and a leading opponent of the Islamic regime in exile. He founded the "Azadeghan" organization and collaborated closely with Bakhtiar, leading a major expedition which was successful in penetrating into Iran from Turkey in the early in 1980s. His organization is credited with having hijacked the Iran Ship "Tabarzin" from the high seas in 1983.

Aryana, Manouchehr: Bakhtiar's Minister of Labour, who served as NAMIR's first publicity chief in Paris, before being replaced by Bakhtiar's cousin, Abbas Gholi (Bakhtiar).

Bakhtiar, Guive: Bakhtiar's son, who as a French Police Inspector was responsible for his security in Paris.

Bakhtiar, Abbas Gholi: Bakhtiar's cousin, who served in his cabinet as Minister of Commerce. A member of both the Council of Advisers and NAMIR's Council, he was also in charge of Bakhtiar's propaganda section in NAMIR.

Bakhtiar, Shapour: Exiled Prime Minister of Iran and Leader of the National Movement of the Iranian Resistance (NAMIR), until his assassination in Paris in August 1991.

Bani Ameri, (Colonel) Mohammad Bagher : A hard working and shrewd officer, he was in charge of all military activities having to do with the "Nojeh Project" in Iran. In exile, he was the first Commander of NAMIR's Military Office, prior to falling out with Bakhtiar and leaving the organization.

Bazargan, Mehdi: Leader of the Freedom Movement and the first Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Boroomand, Abdol Rahman: A staunch supporter of Mossadegh and leading member of the National Front. He was also the closest friend and confidant of Bakhtiar in NAMIR, and was generally regarded as the second most influential person in the

Bakhtiar organization, up to the time of his assassination in April 1991.

Djam, (General) Fereidoon: Former Joint Chief of Staff, sacked by the Shah in the early 1970s, and dispatched to Spain as Iranian Ambassador. A man of some prestige, he has essentially shied away from any public or political engagements following the establishment of the Islamic regime. Although, appointed as Minister of War by Bakhtiar, Djam had refused to take up the appointment.

Esna-Ashari, Azizollah: A close confidant of A.R. Boroomand, and a longtime follower of Mossadegh and the National Front. Trusted by Bakhtiar, he was given wide ranging responsibilities in conjunction with NAMIR activities in the UK and California.

Fatemi, Shahin: An able Iranian academic, and a leading critic of the late Shah, who served as the effective head of the Front For the Liberation of Iran, under Dr. Ali Amini, prior to his falling out with the C.I.A. in early 1986.

Foroohar, Dariush: Leader of the Iranian Nations Party, and a leading member of the National Front who served as Minister of Labour in the Provisional Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran from February-November 1979.

Gandji, Manouchehr: A former Iranian Minister of Education, who was chosen by the C.I.A. to replace Dr. Ali Amini and his American sponsored operations.

Ghadessi, (Engineer) Parviz: The most important civilian organizer of the "Nojeh Project", who worked closely with Bakhtiar in the early stages of the formation of NAMIR.

Ghadimi, Morteza: A former Iranian diplomat with ambassadorial service in Tunisia and Belgium. He was introduced to Bakhtiar by Ahmad Mirfendereski, and was subsequently invited to join the NAMIR Council. At Mirfendereski's behest, he was promoted to head Bakhtiar's personal office in Paris, which entitled him to a seat in the Council of Advisers as well.

Golpayeghani, (Grand Ayatollah) Mohammad Reza: A major "Source of Imitation"

of the traditionalist school, never favorably disposed towards the Islamic Republic, but never critical of it as well. However, his interpretation of "Velayate Faghih" was believed to be substantially different to that of Khomeini.

Ghorbanifar, Manouchehr: An Iranian entrepreneur, who was a leading member of the collective team in charge of the "Nojeh Project". In later years, having fallen out with Bakhtiar, he was acknowledged as a key mediator in the deal for the 'trading of weapons for hostages', which was to become the "Irangate" Scandal.

Hashemi, (Brigadier General) Manouchehr: A senior intelligence officer in SAVAK, responsible for coordinating military activities between NAMIR, AZADEGHAN and the Shah in the early 1980s.

Hejazi, Mahmoud: A pro-Mossadegh technocrat of substantial intellect and ability, active in the anti-Shah movement, who joined Bakhtiar in the early 1980s and became a member of the NAMIR Council, being promoted at one stage to be in full charge of NAMIR activities in France. He was also a member of the selected team in charge of the "Civilian Plan of Action" associated with Operation White Star.

Jafroodi, Kazem: A former Senator, and a key associate of Bakhtiar in NAMIR. He was also closely related to Bakhtiar by marriage (his daughter was married to Bakhtiar's son).

Kazemieh, Eslam: An Iranian journalist and a close confidant of Dr. Ali Amini. He was a leading figure in the FLI, prior to its disbanding in 1986.

Khadem, Javad: A member of Bakhtiar's cabinet as Minister of Housing, and the first Head of Bakhtiar's personal office in Paris. He also played a leading part in the "Nojeh Project". However, by the early 1980s, he had returned to private business.

Khadem, Abolghassem: (Father of Javad Khadem) A leading member of the Iran Party and close Bakhtiar friend, who was executed by the Islamic regime for his complicity in the Nojeh Project.

Khamenei, (Ayatollah) Seyed Ali: Third President of the Islamic Republic, who was appointed "Leader" of the Islamic Revolution following Khomeini's death in 1989.

Khanlary, Molood: A left wing (Tudeh) Iranian intellectual, and an ardent anti-Shah campaigner in the years prior to the Islamic Revolution. She was a founding member of NAMIR and played a crucial role in its activities up to the middle of 1983. However, as editor of *Lettre Persane* (NAMIR's publication in French), with close friendly ties to Bakhtiar, she continued to remain as an important "behind the scenes" personality in NAMIR, though the degree of her influence had been severely reduced.

Kharazi, Mehdi: A pro-Mossadegh technocrat of substantial ability, active in the anti-Shah movement, who joined Bakhtiar in the early 1980s and became a member of the NAMIR Council.

Khoi, (Grand Ayatollah) Seyed Abolghassem: A major "Source of Imitation" of the traditionalist school, never favorably disposed towards the Islamic Republic, but never critical of it as well. However, his interpretation of "Velayate Faghih" was believed to be substantially different to that of Khomeini.

Khonsari, (Grand Ayatollah) Seyed Ahmad: A major "Source of Imitation" of the traditionalist school, never favorably disposed towards the Islamic Republic. He was vocal critic and his interpretation of "Velayate Faghih" was believed to be substantially different to that of Khomeini.

Khomeini, (Grand Ayatollah) Rouhollah: A major "Source of Imitation", and Founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Madani, Ahmad: First Minister of Defense in the Islamic Republic (And Commander of the Iranian Navy), who later fell out with Khomeini. Following his unsuccessful campaign in Iran's first presidential campaign, he was forced to flee Iran.

Malek, Hossein: A key NAMIR 'ideologue', whose writings was the main source of inspiration for the NAMIR membership during the earlier years of the organization's existence.

Maleki, Khalil: Famous Mossadegh supporter and Leader of the "Third Force" (Nirooye Sevom), and older brother of Hossein Malek.

Marashi Najafi, (Grand Ayatollah) Seyed Shahabedin: A major "Source of Imitation" of the traditionalist school, never favorably disposed towards the Islamic Republic, but never critical of it as well. However, his interpretation of "Velayate Faghih" was believed to be substantially different to that of Khomeini.

Marzban, Reza: A leading member of the Iran Party, and a close Bakhtiar supporter, who was executed by the Islamic regime for his complicity in the "Nojeh Project".

Mehmanesh, Homayoun: A pro-Mossadegh activist in the European based anti-Shah movement, who joined Bakhtiar in the early 1980s and became a member of the NAMIR Council.

Mirfendereski, Ahmad: A senior career diplomat, and Bakhtiar's Minister of Foreign Affairs, who was also a leading founding member of NAMIR.

Mobasser, (Lt. General) Mohsen: Former Commander of the Iranian Police Force, and a close friend of General Djam. Together, they were responsible for giving military briefings to Bakhtiar in the Fall of 1979.

Moghaddam, Ahmad Khalilollah: A leading writer, journalist, and member of the Iran Party, whose writings, along with those of Hossein Malek, were the main source of intellectual nourishment amongst NAMIR's membership in the early 1980s.

Montazeri, (Grand Ayatollah) Hossein Ali: Elevated to the status of a Grand Ayatollah by Khomeini, and designated as his heir. However, his outspoken criticism of the injustices carried out by the Islamic regime, prompted Khomeini to remove from his position as his successor. Later he was denounced by the state and has since been placed under house arrest on several occasions.

Moshiri, Mohammad: A close Bakhtiar friend and confidant who served as Deputy Prime Minister during his administration. He was a member of both the NAMIR Council

and the Council of Advisers. In the late 1980s, he was also Chairman of NAMIR's Executive Committee.

Mossadegh, Mohammad: The great nationalist leader of Iran, whose period in office as Prime Minister was brought to an abrupt end, by the Anglo-American inspired coup of 1953. It was the legacy of Mossadegh to which Bakhtiar and many of his close colleagues in the National Front, and later NAMIR, had been devoted.

Nahavandi, Houshang: A former Minister of Science and Higher Education and Chancellor of Teheran University, he was active in the first few years following the establishment of the Islamic Republic, prior to withdrawing from active politics.

Oveissi, Ahmad: Younger brother of General Gholam Ali Oveissi, and an aide to Reza Pahlavi (appointed to that position by the late Shah from the time that the Crown Prince was born in 1960).

Oveissi, (General) Gholam Ali : Former Commander of the Iranian Ground Forces, and Military Governor of Teheran from September 1978 to January 1979. Following the brutal crushing of a demonstration in Jaleh Square on 5 September 1978, he was termed "the Butcher of Teheran". However, he was both extremely popular and a highly feared military officer, who never relented from opposing the Islamic regime. In February 1984, he and his younger brother were both gunned down in the streets of Paris.

Pahlavi, Reza: The eldest son of the late Shah of Iran, who as heir to the Iranian throne, assumed the title of Reza Shah II on 31 October 1980.

Rafsanjani, (Hojat-ol-Eslam Val Moslemin) Ali Akbar Hashemi: A close Khomeini protege, who served as a powerful speaker of parliament, prior to becoming the Islamic Republic's Fourth President in 1989.

Raastgaar, Ezat: A key NAMIR ideologue and organizer, of leftist (Tudeh) background, responsible for the first published manifesto on behalf of the Bakhtiar organization.

Razmara, Manouchehr: A close Bakhtiar confidant who served as Minister of Health during his administration. He was a member of both the NAMIR Council and the Council of Advisers. He was the younger brother of the late (assassinated) Prime Minister of Iran, General Haji Gholi Razmara.

Sadighi, Gholam Hossein: Mossadegh's Minister of Interior, and leading figure of National Front, to whom the premiership was offered in November 1978 (he was the Shah's first choice, prior to Bakhtiar).

Sadr, Hamid: An Austrian based pro-Mossadegh technocrat, active in the European based anti-Shah movement (Confederation of Iranian Students) , who joined Bakhtiar in the early 1980s and became a member of the NAMIR Council.

Sadrieh, Sadegh: A former Iranian diplomat with ambassadorial service in Romania, Iraq and Germany. An ambitious man of limited capabilities, he joined the anti-Shah movement in the dying days of the Bakhtiar government, pledging his support to the Provisional Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran prior to the actual accession to power of Mehdi Bazargan. He was introduced to Bakhtiar by Ahmad Mirfendereski, and was subsequently invited to join both the Council of Advisers and the NAMIR Council. In the late 1980s, because of his Iraqi connections, he was appointed to succeed Mohammad Moshiri, as Chairman of NAMIR's Executive Committee.

Sanjabi, Karim: Mossadegh's Minister of Education, who as leader of the National Front, signed an infamous pact, committing the National Front to Khomeini. He became the first Foreign Minister in Provisional Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, prior to being forced out.

Shahrdar, (Brigadier General) Amir Hossein: A most dedicated and able officer who was the Commander of NAMIR's Military Wing.

Shakery, Ali: A pro-Mossadegh intellectual, active in the European based anti-Shah movement , who joined Bakhtiar in the early 1980s and became a member of the NAMIR Council, as well as a member of NAMIR's Executive Committee in Charge of 'Doctrination'.

Shariat Madari, (Grand Ayatollah) Kazem: A major "Source of Imitation", and the most prestigious Ayatollah in Qom - next to Ayatollah Khomeini - during the Iranian Revolution. Subsequently, he was accused of anti-regime activities, forced to confess, and humiliated in public. However, up to the time of his death in 1985, he continued to remain an important and popular figure, epitomizing the clerical opposition to Khomeini's brand of Islam.

Sharifi, Rahim: A close Bakhtiar supporter and a member of the Fourth National Front Council. He was also a leading founding member of NAMIR, and has been the editor of the (still ongoing) intellectual journal. Sahand.

Tabatabaïi Ghomi, (Grand Ayatollah) Hassan : A major "Source of Imitation" of the traditionalist school, and an outspoken critic of the Islamic Republic, who was eventually placed under house arrest in his home in Mashhad.

Vaziri, Chahrokh: A Swiss based pro-Mossadegh intellectual, active in the anti-Shah movement , who joined Bakhtiar in the early 1980s and became a member of the NAMIR Council. In 1990, he published a useful book entitled, "Elites et Mirages - acteurs et sequence revolutionnaires en Iran: 1977-1979", on the causes of the Iranian Revolution.

Zolnour, Mostafa (Hamid): A pro-Mossadegh activist, active with the National Front in the anti-Shah movement. He became a member of the National Front Council following the revolution, but later joined Bakhtiar in exile, where at the behest of Boroomand, he was promoted by Bakhtiar to become a member of the NAMIR Council and an important member of NAMIR's operational activities (inside Iran). He was also a member of the selected team in charge of the "Civilian Plan of Action" associated with Operation White Star.

APPENDIX 3

<p>SUMMARY OF A REPORT</p> <p>CONCERNING THE ROLE OF OPPOSITION MOVEMENTS</p> <p>DURING THE COURSE OF</p> <p>THE SECOND WORLD CONFERENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS</p> <p>Vienna, 14- 25 June 1993</p>

Introduction

Forty five years after the approval of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, and 25 years after the 1st World Conference on Human Rights, convened in Teheran at the invitation of the (then) government of Iran, the 2nd World Conference on Human Rights was convened in Vienna from 14-25 June 1993. But after two weeks of constant dispute amongst member governments, it required a great deal of effort and lobbying to persuade nations to support the freedoms already enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Although the final declaration broadly restated support for the universal application of basic human rights, it contained for the first time a reference to "national and regional particularities", which was in no uncertain terms, a concession to repressive Third World countries which have refused to recognize the definition of universal freedoms⁷⁶⁷.

Despite the bickering that went on between Western delegates and representative of repressive states (such as China, Iran, Indonesia, Sudan, Tunisia), a final, somewhat watered down, document was eventually agreed upon, though the appointment of a "U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights" was effectively

⁷⁶⁷This was in line with the views expressed by many Asian and African states in an earlier conference held this year in Bangkok, which attempted to set an agenda for the Vienna Conference that would, primarily, not allow for Western governments to use human rights as a tool for interference in the domestic affairs of other countries.

postponed indefinitely⁷⁶⁸.

The Vienna Conference was nevertheless an extremely high profile event, attended by many distinguished people such as former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, Vice Presidential Candidate (Mrs.) Geraldine Ferrara, and the Dalai Lama of Tibet⁷⁶⁹, and irrespective of positions that are held by member governments of the United Nations, the setting did provide a unique opportunity for numerous 'Non-Governmental Organizations' (NGOs), representing human rights organizations and human rights concerns from all over the world, to present their cases and to create a greater general awareness of the specifics of human rights abuse around the world.

The NGOs in Vienna

During the course of the two week Conference, the NGOs in Vienna - such as Amnesty International, the Survivors Committee, and the New York based Human Rights Watch - had a very strong representation and were able to project a very high profile. Their presence in Vienna, and the platform presented by them was a stark contrast to the actual proceeding that was going on in the Conference halls.

Apart from Amnesty International that was able to set up a large tent on the ground of the UN compound, most NGOs (much smaller in size to Amnesty International), had set up desks in the lower ground floor of 'Austria House', where on the top floors, the official conference was taking place. As a result, there were close contacts between official representatives as well as those anxious to present their particular cases. This presence was also complimented by a large presence of the 'Press Corps' which gave wide coverage to the points of views that were being presented at this historic occasion.

Non-Governmental Iranian Groups in Vienna

⁷⁶⁸This was left for consideration to the U.N. General Assembly, where it is likely to be remain suspended for years.

⁷⁶⁹Many others such as Nelson Mandela were also initially expected to attend.

The Vienna Conference provided a great opportunity for various Iranian political organizations to present their view points. However, Iranian participants were not limited to just the opponents of the regime, but also included a very large delegation of 'pro-regime' elements who had come from Iran to participate in the conference.

a. The Opposition Groups:

The most organized Iranian political opposition groups present in the Vienna conference were the 'People's Mojahedin', the CIA run "Flag of Freedom Organization of Iran"- FFI (recently renamed as the Iranian Organization for the Defense of Basic Freedoms and Human Rights), and the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran. These groups, during the course of the conference, held a number of fringe meetings and had various presentation desks (ie. with photographs and literature etc.) that were given to interested parties.

'Name Organizations' associated with some of the above mentioned groups, were also used to project the image of their sponsoring groups. Most notable amongst these were **"Kazem Rajavi International Association For the Defense of Human Rights"** (associated with the Mojahedin), and the **"League of Iranian Women"** (associated with the Flag of Freedom - whose main speakers were Fereidoon Hoveida, Iran's former Ambassador to the U.N. and the brother of the former, executed Prime Minister of Iran, Amir Abbas Hoveida and Mrs. Mir-Hosseini).

Also extremely active was the 'Kurdish Desk'⁷⁷⁰, which was mainly comprised of Iranian, Turkish and Iraqi Kurds. In discussion with their representatives, it was clear that what they all sought was the establishment of an independent Kurdish state. The Iranian Kurds were extremely vocal and stated that while they would be happy with autonomy in the short-term, nothing but full independence would satisfy their eventual requirements.

During the course of the conference there was evidence of great hostility between these three groups, although the Mojahedin were the least of vocal of all in

⁷⁷⁰They had set up a tent outside the conference and also started a hunger strike which received a lot of publicity.

expressing their dislike for the others. The Mojahedin delegation was a 'very respectable looking one' who had mostly come over from Paris. They were friendly to Iranians whom they perceived not to be associated with any group, but stayed clear of all others. When a camera crew from an Iranian reporter from Los Angeles (representative of "MA Television", Parisa Saed) tried to interview them at their stand, they looked away and said that they would only conduct an interview with their own TV reporters!

Also present but less organized were the supporters of Reza Pahlavi II, the Shah of Iran. They were led by Dr. Ali Yamani, the Chairman of the Iranian Constitutionalist Movement in Germany, Mrs. Sima Shabahang (Pro-Monarchist Iranian Women Organization -Germany) and Dr. Sami and Dr. Ghazanfari (both from Austria). During the course of the conference they had a number of interviews and distributed thousands of leaflets which contained various messages sent to the Conference by the Shah and his aunt, **Princess Ashraf Pahlavi**, who had been the Chairman of the 1st World Conference on Human Rights held in Teheran 25 years ago.

Also present were a number of individuals with no affiliation to any particular group, who were essentially critical of the Iranian regime's record on human rights. Most notable amongst these, was a man by the name of 'Ibrahim Sadeghzadeh Monfared', who had prepared a statement in English which he himself was distributing.

The most notable absentees were representatives of the former Bakhtiar Organization, 'National Movement of the Iranian Resistance' (NAMIR), and most of the republican organizations (supporters of Hassan Nazih and Admiral Madani etc.).

b. The Internal Groups:

The most important non-government Iranian representation participating in the conference was "The Society of Women of the Islamic Revolution", led by 'Azzam Taleghani'⁷⁷¹. Accompanying them (though it was not clear whether they were

⁷⁷¹Daughter of the late Ayatollah Taleghani, one of the most prominent leaders of the Islamic Revolution.

directly associated), was 'The Iranian Women Society, represented by 'Farideh Hakimy'.

Also present was another Iranian NGO, the "Journalist Welfare Syndicate" (Sherkate Tavone Matbooate Iran), represented by Mr. Mohammad Hassan Sazegara and Mr. Nader Kavooosi.

These groups were essentially there to compliment the official delegation that was led by the Deputy Foreign Minister Zarif. They were in essence trying to portray the image that the Islamic regime was not a violator of human rights and that in its own way, it was a major upholder of human rights values etc..

However, their activities were not significant. When Mrs. Taleghani tried to hold a fringe meeting, other Iranian groups led by the Mojahedin and the Kurds broke up their meeting and prevented them from speaking, by alleging that they were part of the official delegation and as such they had no rights to be present with those who were protesting against the regime's human rights record. They were, however, successful in distributing various literature, and essentially presenting the facade that, unlike the times of the late Ayatollah Khomeini, that the regime in Teheran is no longer oblivious to the effects public opinion was having on in its future.

There were also scenes of confrontation between Mrs. Taleghani group and the **"League of Iranian Women"** (associated with the Flag of Freedom), whose main female representation were Mrs. Mir-Hosseini, the Coordinator of the League, Mr. Dancke (A German woman previously married to an Iranian who heads their Hamburg office), Mrs. Pari Sekandary (a journalist who works for FFI's clandestine radio station) and Miss Leila Amir (an Iranian activist working for a media office in Washington, D.C.). The most notable cause of their arguments was related to the question of 'the Right to Dress'. This was portrayed most vividly by the manner in which both parties engaged in the argument, were themselves actually dressed.

There was also another desk that was manned by 'Iranian Bahaiis', who remained friendly, but distant with all the Iranian present. They were busy only in distributing their own propaganda and making sure that their message was heard.

c. Other Middle East Representations:

There was absolutely no sign of a single Jewish Organization within the confines of where the NGOs were active⁷⁷². Another group whose absence was most notable, were opponents of the military regime in Algeria!

The most active of the Middle East organizations, with the best display of photographs and literature were the Iraqi dissidents (ie. both Kurds and Shiites). The best funded⁷⁷³ were the Kuwaitis, who were campaigning for the return of their POWs from Iraq⁷⁷⁴, and the best lobbyists, in terms of being convincing, were the Tunisian opponents of President Ben Ali.

The opposition to the **Saudi regime**, was also present, in the form of the **International Committee for the Defense of Human Rights in the Gulf & Arab Peninsula**, though the literature available to them for distribution was very limited. One of their leaders, **Mr. Adel Ibrahim**, a trade unionist living in Syria, was very active during the course of the conference, and was able to convey a sincere image. During the conference, they were very busy lobbying for international support for the release from prison of the Saudi human rights activists **Dr. Mohammad Al- Masari** and **Abdullah Al-Hamed**, who are members of the Committee for the Defense of Al-Sharia Rights in Saudi Arabia (literature enclosed - also for other countries in the Gulf such as Oman and Bahrain).

Conclusion

The Second World Conference on Human Rights which was convened in Vienna from 14-25 June 1993, was successful in bringing various abuses of human rights carried out by repressive governments into international focus. It was also successful in giving publicity to nearly all of these claims and placing extra

⁷⁷²This was despite the fact that a number of American Jewish NGOs were present in the conference.

⁷⁷³They had the best colored posters, post cards, badges etc..

⁷⁷⁴Prisoners of War.

pressures on various governments to amend their ways.

However, as stated earlier, the Conference did not make any sweeping progressive moves in the field of protecting international human rights. In fact it was seen as attempting to back track, and undermine some of the earlier stances that were agreed some 45 years ago in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

A feature of the conference which is reflective of the current mood in the international political scene, is the determination on the part of some Asian and African states, not to allow others to use 'human rights' as an issue to undermine their governments. However, there were evidence of equal determination by the Western democracies to try and get as much mileage out of this issue as possible, in their quest to promote their national interests⁷⁷⁵.

⁷⁷⁵The image of Jimmy Carter's use of human rights to undermine the governments of the USSR and Iran have always been most vivid.

APPENDIX 4

<p>A LIST OF OPERATIONS CARRIED OUT</p> <p>INSIDE IRAN BY NAMIR-MW</p> <p>AUGUST 1984 - MAY 1985</p>

1. Operation conducted with 35 guerrillas in Ghushchi (48km from Rezaieh) on 25.8.84 against Basij forces for the purpose of making NAMIR's presence felt. This operation did receive coverage in the international press.
2. Hijacking of an Iran Air Boeing 727 destined from Tehran to Bushehr on 3.7.84, in which some of the passengers were released in Dubai and the plane was taken to Cairo. This was aimed to highlight the degree of internal unhappiness with the regime. This two man operation was led by a NAMIR officer (AHARY), and it received wide international coverage.
3. Attack on Khoy sugar factory on 3.9.84 by a team of two guerrillas. This was confirmed by three separate sources.
4. Attack on HQ of "Jond-oll-ah" in Rezaieh on 9.9.84 by a guerilla team of 15 men, resulting in the killing of the Head of Rezaieh's Jondollah (and others). This was acknowledged by different sources and was reported in The Times.
5. Attack and subsequent burning of the "Bank Sepah" in Rezaieh's Shapour Street on 28.9.84 by a team of two guerrillas. Acknowledged by several sources and reported in The London.
6. Attack on "Jihad Sazandeghi" by a group of 15 guerrillas on 30.9.84. Acknowledge by several sources.
7. Explosion at Yousefabad Police station conducted by a team of 3 guerrillas on 1.10.84 in which two (2) Pasdars were killed. This event was reported by TheTimes and The

Washington Times.

8. Cutting off of Electric power in Rezaieh, Shahpour, Khoi, Siah Cheshmeh, Makoo and parts of Tabriz by a team of 2 guerrillas on 20.10 84. Acknowledged by several sources.

9. Attack on "Bahonar Komiteh" in Rezaieh on 26.10.84. Acknowledged by the Red Lion And Sun Hospital in Rezaieh.

10. Cutting off of the main Tehran-Arak electrical power line for five hours by a team of six guerrillas on 29.10.84.

11. Attack and subsequent burning of the "Bank Tejarat" in Tabriz by a team of two guerrillas on 16.11.84. Acknowledged by several sources and reported in The Washington Times.

12. Attack and subsequent burning of Iran Air office building in Rezaieh on 21.11.84 by a team of two guerrillas.

13. Attack and subsequent destruction of Rezaieh's "Hezbollahi Doctors Building " in Khayam Street of Rezaieh, adjacent to the Komiteh and the Revolutionary Court Offices, on 28.11.84 by a team of two guerrillas.

14. Destruction of oil pipeline leading to Khark Island (45km from Gananveh) on 5.1.85, and destruction of oil pipeline leading to Isfahan in the Saman area near "Zayandeh Rud" on 6.1.85 to coincide with the anniversary of Bakhtiar's accession to the premiership.

15. Attack and subsequent burning of Rezaieh sugar factory on 11.2.85.

16. Explosion in "Geesha" Komiteh of Tehran on 20.2.85.

17. Explosion in dormitory of Rezaieh's Islamic Society on 8.3.85.

18. Explosion in Rezaieh's Iran Air Building on 10.3.85.

19. Explosion in Rezaieh's "Bank Bazargani" (Zanghaneh Street) on 10.3..85.
20. Explosion in Chemist Shop belonging to Revolutionary Guards Corps, in Rezaieh's Zanghaneh Street on 10.3.85.
21. Explosion of gas lines at 31 & 34 km junctions of Ganaveh and Bandar Deylam (near a Gendarmerie station) on 21.5.85.

APPENDIX 5

TOP SECRET

OPERATION WHITE STAR

(25.5.85)

1. General

a. Purpose

The principle objective of OWS is the overthrow of the Khomeini regime and its replacement with a moderate, pro-Western coalition consisting essentially of nationalist elements (ie. in the military, bazaar, intellectual, government employees, and amongst Shiite Muslim leaders).

This objective will be carried out by NAMIR, and any external assistance for this operation is limited only to moral, diplomatic and financial support.

b. Scope

(1) Committed Forces

The principal forces in OWS are selected elements amongst Iran's tribes (totalling 7500 men who are already pledged to fight on the side of NAMIR) located in FIVE separate regions, and contacted units amongst the Armed Forces, both at the front and in other areas. In addition to the above, contacted loyal units amongst Police Force and Gendarmarie will also be taking part. Key elements in the Air Force have pledged their support for OWS. The role defined for the Navy in OWS is in areas where it is mainly present in the south. Their mission will be to secure control over port cities such as Busher and Bandar Abbas, as well as securing control over key economic/strategic locations such as Khark Island.

(2) Principal Target

What keeps the Islamic Republic of Iran intact today is the armed support of the

Revolutionary Guards(in their various forms) and units from the 'Basij Mostazefin'. These armed supporters of the Khomeini regime(hereby referred to as RGs), must be neutralised in two key areas, if OWS is to achieve its designated objective. First, the RGs units located at the war front, and finally those units in and around Tehran.

(3) Timing

OWS begins at a politically agreed, appropriate time (A) following the completion of Operational Readiness (D).

2. Mission

The mobilization of NAMIR's military and para-military forces for the purposes of freeing Iran from the domination of the present regime in three separate phases, planned according to priority.

a. First Phase - Preparations:

Creation of organised clandestine operational and intelligence bases in the armed forces, and in the irregular(guerilla) units located in the five tribal areas. Planned timing of these, will ensure operational readiness for the next stage.

b. Second Phase - Irregular/Guerrilla Operations:

Carrying out of armed irregular/guerilla operations (for containment purposes) in sensitive areas for the purpose of paving towards the main operational plan.

c. Third Phase - Main Operations:

Carrying out of final operations with the support of the main units of the armed forces for the purposes of capturing and controlling key areas of the country and declaring the creation of a constitutional government.

3. Execution

a. Concept of Operation:

(1) Phase 1:

Execution of combined sabotage and guerilla operations in Western Azarbaijan, inclusive of Rezaieh, Tabriz, Jolfa, and Mianeh (sabotage will be aimed at selected sensitive targets, and guerilla operations will be carried out against revolutionary institutions. The NAMIR lead force for these operations will be 2000 men). Length of operations in this phase will be seven days.

Thus, length of OWS by the end of Phase 1 will be $D + (A + 7)$.

(2) Phase 2:

Sabotage and guerilla operations, as part of a 'Deceptive Plan' will be carried out in areas of Baluchistan inclusive of Zahedan, Khash, Saravaan, Iranshahr and Chah Bahar. Sabotage operations will be aimed at selected sensitive regional targets, while guerilla operations will aim to strike revolutionary institutions and help take control of the main military garrisons of the 88th armd div, as well as the regional HQs of Gendarmarie and Police Forces. The NAMIR lead forces in this pahse will include 2500 men, and the length of operations will be six days.

Thus, length of OWS by the end of Phase 2 will be $D + (A + 13)$.

(3) Phase 3:

Implementation of the 'Main Plan' in the Tehran area and the declaration of a new constitutional government with the support of the armed forces, inclusive of the following: Supreme Command Staff, Ground Forces HQ, Air Force HQ, Navy HQ, Gendarmarie HQ, Police Force HQ, 1st inf div HQ, 2nd inf div HQ, Special Force bde HQ, First Tactical Fighter Wing HQ, Gendarmarie Regiment HQ, and the Police Guards HQ. Length of operations in this phase will be three days.

Thus, length of OWS by the end of Phase 3 will be $D + (A + 16)$.

b. Coordination

Increasingly unacceptable losses of human lives and deteriorating social conditions of the continuing war with Iraq, especially in the aftermath of the recent escalation in Iraq's relentless aerial bombings of civilian targets (particularly in Tehran), in addition to the general economic hardships imposed as a consequence of a faltering economy(eg. high inflation and unemployment), as well as other social restrictions imposed by the fundamentalists, have aided the creation of a general situation where promise of relief by any act or of moderate persuasion, who can deliver, is most likely to be welcomed by the increasingly suffering public, particularly in urban areas throughout Iran. This was clearly proven by the peaceful demonstrations of 17th May, 1985 that was organised by NAMIR. However, large scale passive public sentiments of support, such as was shown on May 17, by itself, is unlikely to threaten the survival of the Islamic regime, so long as force is in the monopoly of the state abd the public is not protected by some 'counter-force', which will defend it against indiscriminate brutal reprisals, such as the state has willingly shown itself capable of (most recent example was in the aftermath of the May 17 demonstrations).

Thus, the alieviation of this problem and the start of meaningful operations against the regime rests on the involvement of already contacted, sympathetic units of the armed forces.

Apart from a supportive international atmosphere necessary for such action, the 'spark' required to ease the army's entrance in to the plan will come from loyal tribal elements, who will be involved in sabotage and guerilla operations. These actions will then be followed quickly by religious 'FATWAS' of leading 'MARJAS' in the holy cities of Qom, Mashad and possibly NAJAF(in Iraq). Contacts with key army commanders at the front and throughout the country have been made, and according to our most conservative estimates, the great majority of officers and men will participate provided certain agreed 'signals' are worked out- eg. the delivery arms to tribal units will serve to indicate general 'international' support for OWS (A seperate report on the state of the Iranian Armed Forces will be supplied seperately).

4. Administrative and Logistics

a. Logistics

(1) Military Equipment

Military equipment required in OWS is to arm 7500 tribesmen located in five major areas to fulfill their desiganted roles. These are the following:

- 7500 individual weapons (7.62 NATO caliber G-3s, FNs, or M-14s).
- 7500 Grenades.
- 100 GP Machine Guns (M-60 or MAG).
- 30 AA Machine Guns (cal.50).
- Communications Equipment(PRC-77s, 50 sets).
- 80 RPG Sets.

The equipment (some of which have already reached final points of delivery) will be deployed in FIVE major areas:

A R E A	R e c i p i e n t	N U M B E R S
1. Baluchistan	Baluchis	N S L U P A
2. Fars(Province)	Qashqais	M E T B C E
3. Bakhtiary Region	Bakhtiary Lurs	E I R R- F
4. Khoramabad Region	Khoramabady Lurs	S I E
5. Rezaiyeh	Kurds	D
		-----Total 7500

(2) Delivery Options

Options for delivery are varied. The safest option, under existing circumstances, is to Airdrop in South Eastern Iran (Baluchistan), where receiving parties will be present to receive, conceal and deliver equipment to final destinations. Areas for the drops have already been selected and a "Drop Zone Plan" is currently available. Air drops for other regions not considered safe at this time, and delivery by land from Baluchistan to all other regions is now the only feasible option. NAMIR can provide one full C-130 crew for Logistical Air Operations(LOGAOPS).

(3) Logistics For Tribes

To prepare for D-day, two separate groups will require logistical support which NAMIR must provide. They are primarily the tribal elements involved in the operation, and certain other elements linked with the Armed Forces (The Armed Forces, itself, is capable of providing its own logistics. Thus, NAMIR's role in this regard is essentially limited to such action as the provision of funds for stepping up intelligence activities).

NAMIR has to make the following materials available to every tribesman involved in OWS:

1. Food
2. Clothing and shelter
3. Fuel
4. Engineering material (for sabotage action)
5. Arms
6. Communication Equipment

In addition to covering the costs of supplying the above to each tribesman, NAMIR must in addition make provisions to cover the costs of the tribesman family(ie. every tribesman who is involved in OWS) as well.

Items 1,2 and 3 are covered by NAMIR through monthly payments of a fixed salary. The total costing for this is provided below. Items 4,5 and 6 are not costed in this report and will have to be provided separately.

(4) Cost Of Logistics For Tribes

On reaching D-day, some 7500 selected tribesmen will in all be ready to participate in OWS, though their actual recruitment and involvement into the operation has been planned for in three separate stages. Stage 1, begins with 2500 men, with additions of

a further 2500 men at the begining of stages 2 and 3. Each stage is seperated by a 90 day period. The cost of providing for the logistical needs of every man has been worked out at 300 US Dollars per month (1USD is valued at around 620-650 Rials).

Stage1	Stage2	Stage3	Nos. of men	Cost (USD)
<hr/>				
D-270				
to D-180			2500	2,250,000
	D-180			
	to D-90		5000	4,500,000
		D-90		
		to D	7500	6,750,000
<hr/>				
				Total: 13,500,000

So far some of the above costs have already been provided by NAMIR. Roughly, USD 9,200,000 will be required to reach D.

Other Costs (USD)		
<hr/>		
1. Transportation	5% (of remaining budget)	460,000
2. Training	3%	276,000
3. Housing	5%	460,000
4. Intelligence	10%	920.000
5. Others(bribes etc.)	5%	460,000
		<hr/>
		Total 2,576,000

Total amount required to prepare and support 7500 tribesmen for action in OWS will be 11,776,000 USD. Since, the initial presentation of this plan in April 1984, 1,200,000 USD(approximately 100,000 USD/month) has been provided by NAMIR. Thus, the final

amount needed at this time is 10, 576,000 USD.

(5) Armed Forces Unification Expenditures (AFUE)

This is broken into five stages covering five months:

First Month:

400,000 USD to cover internal expenditures-setting up of intelligence basis in Tehran and the provinces, direct payment to active and forcefully retired military personnel etc.

Second Month:

480,000 USD (20% expansion of first month budget)

Third Month:

640,000 USD (40% expansion of second month budget)

Fourth Month:

880,000 USD (40% expansion of third month budget)

Fifth Month:

1,280,000 USD

The total cost of Armed Forces Unification Expenditures thus amount to 3,680,000 USD.

In addition to these quoted figures, services approximating 2,600,000 USD for intelligence purposes has been provided by NAMIR.

(6) Preparatory Costs For Action Plans

A contingency budget allowance is made for the following:

1. Main Plan	10% of AFUE	USD	368,000
2. Alternate Plan	10% of AFUE		368,000
3. Deception Plan	20% of AFUE		736,000
			<hr/>
			Total: 1,472,000

(7) Total Costs For OWS

1. Cost of Logistics for Tribes	11,776,000
2. Armed Forces Unification Expenditures (AFUE)	3,668,000
3. Preparatory Costs for Action Plans	1,472,000
<hr/>	
	TOTAL: 16,928,000(USD)

b. Personnel

(To Be Provided Later)

5. Command And Signal

(To Be Provided Later)

Acknowledged NAMIR

Distribution:

1. National Security Council,

The White House, Washington , DC

APPENDIX 6

<p>CIVIL PLAN OF ACTION</p> <p>FOR</p> <p>OPERATION WHITE STAR</p>

1. OBJECTIVE

To prepare the Iranian people to welcome a change of government/or system of government in favor of a democratic alternative along the lines presented by NAMIR.

2. SITUATION OF THE REGIME

Intelligence indicates the following at this time:

The present regime has at its disposal all elements required to run a country like Iran (political, social, economic, and military).

There is increasing unhappiness amongst the masses, in all classes of society, and even amongst the revolutionary organizations and more important the clergy(from a social aspect), the near state of bankruptcy of the economy, the low state of morale amongst the military due to the inconclusiveness of the war and lack of spares, all point to a potential state of chaos.

The main factor assisting the continuation of the regime rule seems to be the continuing war, which has kept the military away from rural centers and provides the justification of the regime's inability to fulfil the expectations of the people by blaming it all on the war.

Nonetheless the regime is quite prepared to meet any confrontation, and has in the past proved its serious attitude and resolve by brutally

crushing any resistance against its rule, irrespective of the price.

3. NAMIR'S SITUATION

Obvious disadvantages flow from the fact that the leadership of NAMIR is in exile, but it has powerful assets which can be used to achieve the objective. Its principal assets are:

1. A prestigious and popular leader whose integrity is acknowledged.
2. Widespread public dissatisfaction with and international opposition to the regime.
3. Support from the Iranian tribes.
4. Support from the Bazaar.
5. Support of the armed forces.
6. Support from key elements of the clergy.
7. Effective liaison with all non-leftist/communist opposition groups.
8. Support from powerful states within and outside the region.
9. Own Radio stations.
10. Substantial fund raising capacity.
11. Lack of any other credible alternative.

4. ACTION

A. It is critical that the propositions set out in part B be demonstrated to the following:

1. The Clergy/the Mosques
2. The Bazaar(+supply services)
3. Government Employees
4. Mob Control Centers of Tehran entailing the assistance of the following groups:
 - a. "Meidan Dars"/ Food distribution Centers
 - b. Truck drivers
 - c. Coffee shop owners ("Ghahve Khaneh")
 - d. Ceremonial athletes

5. 'Vahed' Bus Service/ Tehran Taxis
6. Printing Houses/Newspaper shops/Book shops
7. Labor Unions/ Intellectuals(students, teachers, etc.)/Hospital Staff (doctors, nurses, etc.)
8. Oil Industry/Steel Company/Tobacco Industry workers/Central Organization for Rural Cooperatives/Cereal Organization/Sugar Organization/ Iran National Gas & Electric Workers/ Textile Industry & others

REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZATIONS

1. Pasdaran/Basij
2. Islamic Committees
3. Various Islamic Foundations
4. Islamic Societies

B. To create the atmosphere required for the objective, it is critical that the following be demonstrated:

1. Regime is vulnerable-not all powerful
evidence:
 - a. Iraqi bombings
 - b. sabotage
 - c. civil disobedience
 - d. breakdown of administration
2. Regime departs from true faith- as the testimony of leading clerics directly and indirectly connected with NAMIR inside Iran bears out.
3. Regime is incompetent-subvert public sectors and providers of goods and services in:
 - a. Health
 - b. Transport
 - c. Education
 - d. Agriculture
 - e. Food distribution
 - f. General public administration

4. Life will be better for all important groups(ie. groups mentioned in 3A)

5. Life will become worse for all important groups under existing regime because:

- a. Continuing war
- b. Deteriorating Economy
- c. More repression
- d. Unlikely remedy under Ayatollah Montazeri

6. World opinion is with NAMIR-means of communicating this with the Iranian public include:

- a. NAMIR Radios
- b. Voice of America-Persian Service
- c. BBC-Persian Service
- d. Radio Israel-Persian Service
- e. National Parliaments/Euro-Parliament/UN
- f. Pamphlets distributed inside the country
- g. Slogans-graffiti
- h. Posters-photographs
- i. Telephones & Telexes-see appendix 5
- j. Word of mouth
- k. Mosques, Coffee shops(Ghaveh Khanehs), market places, public transport, taxis etc.

7. Major opinion-formers in Iran are with NAMIR

- a. Armed Forces
- b. Tribes
- c. Baazar
- d. Clergy
- e. Intellectuals

8. NAMIR is well organized, and has powerful support- this to be demonstrated by means of propaganda and the use of NAMIR contacts inside the country.

KEY REQUIREMENTS

- 1. Intelligence
 - 2. Broad ideological agreement with outside opinion formers
 - 3. Target identification and their organization
 - 4. Competent personnel determined to succeed
 - 5. High moral
 - 6. Funds
-
-
-

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- 3. All Confidential NAMIR Documents related to "Operation White Star"**
- 4. Letters & Papers of Admiral M. K. Morris dealing with NAMIR related matters in the USA, 1981-1987.**



<p>PLACE AND DATE OF KEY PERSONALITIES INTERVIEWED FOR THE THESIS</p>
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Amir Parviz, Amir Hossein: London, January 1994 - April 1995 (numerous meetings and telephone discussions).

Amouzegar, Cyrus: Paris, 7 March & 10 August 1994.

Bakhtiar, Guive: Phone discussion in Paris in March 1994.

Bakhtiar, Abbas Gholi: London, 2 December 1994.

Bani Ameri, (Colonel) Mohammad Bagher : London, 3 December 1994.

Esna-Ashari, Azizollah: London, January 1994 - April 1995 (numerous meetings and telephone discussions).

Ghadimi, Morteza: Paris, 8 March & 26 November 1994.

Gharabaghi, (General) Abbas: Paris, 11 August 1994 and by phone on 22 February 1995.

Hashemi, (Brigadier General) Manouchehr: London, 28 March & 28 April 1995.

Jafrودي, Kazem: Paris, 23 November 1994.

Mirfendereski, Ahmad: Paris, 7 March & 26 November 1994.

Mobasser, (Lt. General) Mohsen: London, January 1994 - April 1995 (numerous meetings and telephone discussions).

Moin, Bagher: London, 4 May 1995.

Moshiri, Mohammad: Paris, 24 November 1994.

Nourizadeh, Ali Reza: London, 7 October 1994 (plus numerous other telephone conversations)

Oveissi, Ahmad: Telephone interview (USA), 31 August 1994.

Raastgaar, Ezat: Paris, 24 November 1994.

Razmara, Manouchehr: Paris, 23 November 1994.

Shahrdar, (Brigadier General) Amir Hossein: Paris, 9 March & 26 November 1994.

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