

Doc Number: KP0000280

Clashes Put Pressure On Khomeini

Moslem Leader Says Leftists Pose Danger to Iran

By William Branigin

Washington Post Foreign Service

TEHRAN, April 21 — Serious clashes in northwestern Iran between rival ethnic, religious and political groups put new strains today on Iran's harried provisional government as Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini warned of a national "danger" from leftist "devils."

The fighting in the Azerbaijan prov-

Ethnic, Political Clashes Put New Strain on Iranian Rulers

IRAN, From A1

originally based in neighboring Iraq joined the fight against their leftist rivals.

The Iranian party tonight blamed the fighting in Naqadeh on "feudalists," a term the group has used to describe the clannish Iraqi branch of the party.

A statement by the Iranian party also accused its attackers of being "in league with the shah's supporters."

In Abadan, the headquarters of the Marxist Cherikhaye Fedaye, Khalq guerrilla organization came under attack by a mob of club-wielding Moslem militants following a demonstration in the city to protest unemployment.

The attackers accused the guerrillas of trying to take advantage of the unemployment problem to promote their goal of a communist society in Iran.

Fedaye members and sympathizers in Tehran complained that when militiamen from Abadan's revolutionary committees came to restore order, they began arresting the leftist guerrillas.

Fedaye supporters in Abadan were reportedly staging a sit-in outside the offices of Khomeini's committee to demand the release of their comrades, and guerrilla leaders in Tehran were busy meeting on what to do about the situation.

It was the arrest in Tehran of Ayatollah Taleghani's two sons and a daughter-in-law — members or sympathizers of leftist guerrilla groups — which sparked demonstrations earlier

this week against the growing power Khomeini's committees.

Taleghani went into hiding in protest before meeting Ayatollah Khomeini in the holy city of Qom Thursday to sort out the problem. In an apparent compromise, Khomeini announced that the committees would be "purged" and new rules would abolish their powers of arbitrary arrests and searches, while Taleghani went on national television and reaffirmed Khomeini's primacy as the "leader of the Iranian revolution."

Today, however, Khomeini and Taleghani appeared to differ anew in separate speeches in Qom.

Calling Iranian leftists "children of Satan" and "agents of America," Khomeini told an audience of tribal leaders, military commanders and police chiefs that his Islamic republic faced "plots" to ruin the country's economy, army and agriculture.

"You should not let groups of atheists infiltrate your ranks," Khomeini said. "Don't let these people weaken the committees and the Islamic Army."

"I am warning the entire nation that there is a danger. These devils are creating disturbances every day. You must throttle these disturbances."

Taleghani, meanwhile, preached in a Qom speech that Communists should be allowed to compete politically.

"The old regime was afraid of them, but we shouldn't fear them," he said. "Communists represent nothing here, but they will emerge from nothing if



By Dave Cook—The Washington Post

we oppress them. And we will have given proof of weakness and lack of confidence in Islam."