Governor admits massacre of Kurds

From Liz Thurgood in Tehran

A senior Iranian government official has confirmed that 40
Kurdish men, women, and children died in a massacre
last week in the province of West Azerbaijan.

The massacre took place on
Tuesday in the small Kurdish
village of Garna, near
Urmia, where many hundreds of
Iranians were believed to have
died fighting between Kurds
and Turkish-speaking
Iranians.

In an interview with a
local press yesterday, the
governor of West Azerbai-
nan described the massacre as
incredible, and said that some
people who had lost relatives
would be temporarily reimbursed.
Mr Jamshid Moghaddam said that
an investigation had been
ordered, but that preliminary
inquiries showed that the massa-
cre had been committed by
Iranians who lived in the prov-
ince.

The governor's version of the
massacre differs sharply from the
account given by the Kurdish
Democratic Party, who have
blamed the massacre on members of Aya-
nollah Khomeni's Safed
Guardsmen. Several KDP
members recently showed
journalists a list naming the 40
who had died.

The Kurds believed that the
massacre was in retaliation for
the ousting of a Governor
Army jury last Monday at the
Bash Paro, in which 15 Islamic
Guards died in a firefight.

The violence of the Garna
killing, the KDP said,
were four women, and seven
children aged between five and
12. Six men were also
believed to have died.

The massacre reportedly
occurred when the villagers
came out to welcome the Isla-
mic Guardsmen. They were led
by Mullah Mahmoud, who was
giving a copy of the Koran.

The Mullah, among those
beheaded, was the local Imam
Jomeini, or leader of Friday
prayers. The killings were not
apparently the work of Ayatol-
lah Ruhollah Khomeini, whose
summary justice in Kurdistan has
drawn comparisons to the UN
Human Rights Commission in
Geneva.

In a statement released last
week, the commission called on
Iran's human rights situation
immediately. "The report-
ded summary executions
(put at around 80) of num-
erous Kurds in Iran...

Majlis, Ayatollah Kho-
meni has underlined Iran's
growing economic problems
an address to millions of
Iranians who had assembled
throughout the country to
mark those who died a year
earlier in what was known as
the massacre of Islamic
prisoners who died of blood
loss in the labor camps in
the Repub-
lic, not
for
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cheaper melon or

It was not believed
the number of people
who had been killed
to be directed at the country's
dwindling corps of economists
who have been removing the
Islamic regime's control of
the economy.

A senior official said
that the killing of 77 papers
was an act of terrorism
that led to
a protest
filing by suppor-
ters of Ayatollah Khomeni
and the secular Comrdes.

Fifteen foreign correspondents
have also been expelled since
June.