Khomeini orchestrates attack by clergy

Iran oil chief replaced after 'treason' charges

From UPI in Tehran

The Prime Minister, Mr Bazargan, yesterday sacked Iran's controversial oil executive, Mr Hassan Nazih, and named a new Oil Minister to take charge of all oil, gas and petrochemical industries.

Mr Nazih has been under attack from the clerical leadership for refusing to purge the oil industry of 40,000 oil workers—but he was not said directly to be dismissed in a state radio broadcast by Mr Bazargan.

Instead, Mr Bazargan announced that the new Minister, Mr Ali Akbar Mo'infar, will concurrently with his Cabinet responsibility for oil, take over as chairman and managing director of the oil, gas and petrochemical companies merged into the new Ministry.

Mr Nazih became chairman and managing director of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) before it resumed production and export of crude oil last March, after the winter strike that led to the Shah's downfall. Earlier yesterday Mr Nazih, a French-educated lawyer, was ordered by the prosecutor-general, Mr Qoddousi, to appear in court to answer charges stemming from complaints by the oil workers.

Ayatollah Khomein in a subsequent decree ordered his Prime Minister to ensure that Mr Nazih appeared in court this morning. The Ayatollah also warned that he would be tried if sufficient evidence was available against him. It was not clear what specific charges were made by Mr Nazih's critics among the "numerous complaints" said to have been filed with the Prosecutor-General's office.

Liz Thurgood adds: Four Iranians were executed yesterday following some of the worst violence since the armed forces recaptured the last remaining rebel stronghold three weeks ago in the western province of Kurdistan. It was not known if the four executed men were Kurds.

The executions took place before daybreak in Mahabad, after summary trials supervised by Sheikh Khalkhal, the Islamic judge who has condemned nearly 80 Kurds to death. Three of the executed men were found guilty of "contacts with counterrevolutionaries" and the fourth of "moral offences."

The Sheikh flew into Mahabad after brokering a truce with the Kurdish rebels. Sheikh Khalkhal issued a communique banning all demonstrations supporting the outlawed Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) and warned that, once again, counterrevolutionaries were stirring up trouble to "colour Kurdistan with the blood of our country's children."

Senior Kurdish sources do not rule out the possibility of new negotiations with the Government. Earlier attempts were broken off near four weeks ago, when the armed forces entered Mahabad.

But, say the Kurds, the opening of any new negotiations would depend on a prior commitment from the Government to meet a three-point list of Kurdish demands. In addition to the withdrawal of all non-Kurdish Islamic guardsmen from the area, the Kurds want the Government to declare a ceasefire and lift the ban on their leaders.

..
Islamic groups within the oil company have demanded that Mr Nazih be tried as a counterrevolutionary. The charge...