

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 chief 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's 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 Moinfar, will, concurrently with his Cabinet responsibility for oil, take over as chairman and managing director of the oil, gas and petrochemical companies merged in to 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 company workers.

Ayatollah Khomeini 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.

carries the maximum sentence of death by firing squad.

Liz Thurgood adds: Four Iranians were executed yesterday following some of the worst violence since the armed forces recaptured the last remaining rebel strongholds 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 Khalkhali, 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 more unrest was reported in Kurdistan. Before embarking on his Islamic mission, Sheikh Khalkhali 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.'

originally centred on demands for autonomy. But, following last month's battles with the armed forces, they have since been reduced to angry demands that the ban on the Kurdish leaders be lifted and that Islamic guardsmen loyal to Ayatollah Khomeini be pulled out of the province.

Senior Kurdish sources do not rule out the possibility of new negotiations with the Government. Earlier attempt, were broken off nearly 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 counter-revolutionary. The charge

According to Kurdish sources in Tehran, three died and 20 were wounded when a hand grenade was tossed into a 10,000-strong protest march in Mahabad on Wednesday morning. The attacker, believed to be a member of the Islamic guardsmen, was stabbed to death by enraged Kurds and several guardsmen were also taken hostage.

The Kurdish version of the incident differs substantially from the government's. According to the evening paper, Kayhan, the grenade was thrown into a vehicle carrying Islamic guardsmen and flung back at the marchers before exploding. About 50 KDP members were later reported to have been arrested.

The troubles in Kurdistan

The Kurds denied Government claims repeated in Thursday's press by the governor-general of Kermanshah, that Iraq was interfering in Iran's internal affairs by sending large numbers of trained guerrillas into Kurdistan to 'undertake large-scale sabotage.' The Kurds were receiving no aid from foreign governments said a spokesman but the Kurdish people of both Iraq and Turkey were supplying the Iranian Kurds with food and medicine.

Mahabad itself was reported to be quiet over the Iranian weekend. But most stores in the bazaar remained closed, despite warnings televised locally that shopkeepers who refused to open their stalls would be considered *Mofsedfel'arz* (corrupt on earth).

In a strongly-worded editorial, *The Iranian*, a weekly magazine, has accused the central authorities of trying "to sweep the minorities under the prayer rug."