

# Iranian Army regains garrison from Kurds

Saqez, Iran (AP)—A column of 200 government troops smashed through Kurdish rebel lines to relieve a besieged garrison here yesterday, but the fight for the town raged on.

A Kurdish leader promised "all-out war" to make the Kurds' autonomy-minded province "the graveyard" of Iran's Islamic regime.

Helicopter gunships, supersonic jets, tanks, rockets and heavy artillery have figured in the battle, which has continued since Thursday. Yesterday, parts of Saqez were in rubble, and its one hospital was filled with the wounded and dying.

There was no estimate of casualties, but they were believed high on both sides. Most of the civilians who could get out had fled.

The state radio issued an urgent appeal for doctors and nurses to volunteer to be flown to the area, located in a valley in western Iran. It said the garrison and the town were in dire need of medical help.

Abdol Rahman Qassemli, secretary-general of the banned leftist-oriented Kurdish Democratic party Central Committee, said in an interview in Mahabad that "there are 100,000 armed Kurdish men who are willing to die for their ideals."

"We will make Kurdistan the graveyard of the reactionary regime," Mr. Qassemli vowed. "We know the central gov-

ernment is not as strong as it pretends to be. Wait till we start an all out war and then the Tehran government will realize what revolutionary potential the Kurdish people have."

He said there will be new battles throughout Kurdistan, and that the Kurds have already begun executing revolutionary guardsmen in retaliation for the executions of Kurds.

The 4 million Kurds in Iran, with 8 million brethren in Iraq and Turkey, have long dreamed of an independent state. In Iran, Kurdish leaders had hoped for autonomy after the revolution led by religious leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini toppled Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi last winter.

But open fighting has broken out between Kurds and the new regime, and Ayatollah Khomeini has mobilized the armed forces to crush the rebellion.

Yesterday, in a speech at Qom broadcast over state radio, the ayatollah denounced "democrats and intellectuals" and accused them of responsibility for the problems in Kurdistan. He said they "want to give away the country under the guise of democracy."

By early yesterday, the Saqez garrison had been surrounded by Kurd forces for two days.

The relief column—regular troops and



Kurdish women and children of Saqez, Iran, are evacuated by Army helicopter to safer areas as fighting continues.

revolutionary guards in trucks, armored personnel carriers and tanks—barreled through the Kurdish lines at top speed, braving heavy fire. The Kurds destroyed one tank in the fight, then tightened their defenses and kept control of the roads and rugged terrain nearby.

All the while, both sides poured fire at each other. As dawn broke yesterday the

Kurds intensified their counter-attack with rifle-propelled grenades, mortars and cannon.

Most of the buildings near the compound had been destroyed already.

The few civilians remaining in Saqez could see the fight from a vantage point overlooking the fringe of the garrison. The relief column was believed to have

reached the area under cover of darkness aboard helicopters capable of carrying heavy equipment and armor. With their help, the defenders were thought to number about 700.

Mr. Qassemli, in the interview, said the Kurds are prepared for a "long drawn-out war. We will not let the war be limited to Saqez."

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