



Jafar Tehrani, head of the Iranian Regency Council, answers reporters' questions on his arrival at Charles de Gaulle airport in Paris. He is believed to be seeking a meeting with exiled religious leader, Ayatollah Khomeini.

More deputies desert struggling Government as troops crack down

Khomeini denies Bakhtiar envoy an audience

From Paul Webster

Ayatollah Khomeini has refused to see a representative of the Iranian Regency Council, Mr. Jafar Tehrani, who arrived in Paris yesterday for talks. It had been announced that the two men would meet today to discuss the ayatollah's opposition to the Shah and the present Government, but a spokesman for the religious leader said that talk of a meeting was Mr Tehrani's "own version."

"We do not know what he is here for so there is no reason to see him and we have not agreed to," he added. "Of course if he has come to submit his resignation, that might be a different matter." Mr Tehrani has, however, denied that he has any intention of resigning his post.

The ayatollah, who has lived in exile near Paris for the past three months, has still not made up his mind whether to return to Iran now that the Shah has left. It is understood that he wants to be assured that he will have complete freedom of movement on his return when he plans to work for the establishment of an Islamic Republic working under his guidance.

Reuter and UPI add: The ayatollah has rejected President Carter's appeal to him to give Dr Shapur Bakhtiar's new Iranian Government a chance to succeed. In a statement the ayatollah said he hoped that President Carter's pledge not to interfere in Iranian affairs would be the basis of future United States policy. The legality of the Bakhtiar Government was for Iranians to decide, he said.

Meanwhile, in Iran, troops yesterday shot dead 18 anti-Government demonstrators in the second successive day of violence, and American civilian and military personnel were evacuated from a provincial city as the situation deteriorated. Oil company workers, in retaliation for the Army killings, threatened to halt even the limited supplies of domestic oil now provided.

Prime Minister Bakhtiar's embattled civilian Government was hit by a new crisis when five more deputies from the Lower House, the Majlis, resigned yesterday, bringing to 20 the number who have given up their posts in the last two days. In a new attempt to win popular support, Dr Bakhtiar

ruled that all remaining political prisoners be released. About 300 prisoners may be affected. At least 2,000 already have been released in recent weeks.

Nine US military personnel and eight American civilians working for the Northrop and Litton companies were evacuated from an Iranian air base near the southern town of Dzfal, where shooting occurred when troops and anti-Government demonstrators clashed, military sources said. The Americans were flown to Tehran and were apparently the last Americans to be evacuated from the area. At least 10 demonstrators were shot dead in Dzfal. Demonstrators had apparently converged on the air base, but tanks were used to disperse them.

In Western Iran, Kurdish insurgents of the Jafar Babani rebel group attacked and encircled a border police base, the supreme military command said. An announcement broadcast by Radio Iran said about 60 attackers entered the base on Wednesday, taking three gendarmes prisoner and wounding two others, one seriously.

Troops again fired on demonstrators celebrating the Shah's departure from Iran in Ahvaz, the oil town where 14 people died and 63 were wounded on Wednesday. Unconfirmed reports said at least eight people were killed and 11 wounded yesterday.

The army withdrew troops from Tehran, however, in an effort to avoid bloodshed and confrontation in the capital. It ordered Tehran's international airport to close today during anti-Government protests expected to attract more than a million demonstrators throughout the country.

From Aswan, Egypt, it is reported that the Shah will fly to Morocco on Sunday or Monday for a visit on his way to the United States. Officials close to Egypt's President Sadat said that the Shah and Empress Farah had received an invitation from King Hassan.

The Shah yesterday met Mr Sadat and the former US President, Gerald Ford, to review the latest developments in the region.

In Beirut, a United Nations spokesman said that the Iranian battalion that has been serving with UN peacekeeping forces in south Lebanon were returning home.

