

Bazargan submits plan as fresh violence flares

Kurdish proposals put to Khomeini

From Liz Thurgood
in Teheran

The Iranian Prime Minister, Mr Bazargan, yesterday travelled to the holy city of Qom, to present to Ayatollah Khomeini proposals aimed at ending the heavy fighting in Kurdistan.

The proposals, believed to have been submitted last week by the Kurds, were discussed at a special session of the Cabinet on Saturday but no details were available.

A key issue is believed to be the granting of amnesties for the Kurdish leaders, Sheikh Ezzedin Hosseini and Dr Abdor Rahman Ghassemlou, who were declared traitors and driven into hiding in August when Ayatollah Khomeini mobilised the Armed Forces against the Kurdish rebels.

Other issues, are probably the withdrawal of paramilitary forces loyal to the Ayatollah, and the setting up of semi-autonomous town councils. The proposals were delivered by the State Minister, Darioush Farouhar, who has returned to Teheran from a series of meetings with leaders in Kurdistan.

The Prime Minister left Tehran amid reports of new violence in the Kurdish town of Bukan, and conflicting news from Mahabad where Kurdish rebels gained control after fierce fighting on Saturday night.

A report submitted by Ayatollah Khomeini's special envoy to Kurdistan said 74 had died in the Mahabad fighting, but the figure was later challenged by the Government.

that Iraq has been helping the Kurdish rebels.

Heavy shooting broke out in one sector of Mahabad, which was under seige yesterday, but rebel sources said several hundred Kurdish guerrillas were still holding most of the town. Mobile patrols of guerrillas were reportedly trying to flush out pockets of revolutionary guards in the town and Government forces were firing from inside their barracks.

Rebel reports that the Government was using helicopter gunships could not be confirmed. They said rockets had been fired from the revolutionary guard barracks.

Meanwhile, a group of Iranians has accused the Government of gaoling and torturing dissidents for their political beliefs.

According to the Association of Political Prisoners, the number of Iranians currently in prison for crimes ranging from distributing party literature to involvement in the ethnic minorities struggle, is more than 1,500. At least 130 Iranians have been executed for their political beliefs since Ayatollah Khomeini came to power last February.

The APP also accused the regime of holding secret trials in which defendants had no right of access to lawyers, or advance information of their charges. In many cases, reported the Association, the only participants in court were the clerical judge and the accused. Trials frequently lasted less than fifteen minutes and, in one case, "evidence was found in the home of the accused after he had been executed," the APP said.

The APP, which was founded during the last months of the Shah's regime, defined a political prisoner as "a militant child of Iran, against imperialism, dictatorship, and reaction." Not included, said the APP action committee, were "the criminals, torturers, and plunderers" associated with the Shah.

According to the Government news agency, Khomeini's special envoy yesterday flew to Khaneghain on the border, for talks with Iraqi officials. The talks follow claims by the Iranian Government and clergy

In a report released at the weekend, the APP said: "The conditions of political prisoners is no different from what it was under the cruel regime of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi." Among the methods used by today's regime to extract confessions, said the Association, were kicking, punching, and cablewhipping.

The APP report was the latest attempt by political activists to highlight the plight of political prisoners and those gaoled by the Shah, who now find themselves treated as "trouble-makers" by the new leaders.

Among the examples of alleged injustice cited by the APP were the cases of a 13-year-old student, Ali Amir Shekari, who was recently executed in the city of Kerman after being "found in possession of leaflets", and Ali Ahsan Nahid who, with a broken leg and arm, was sent before an Islamic firing squad on a stretcher.

The APP also touched on the cases of the 12 Socialist Workers Party members, Reza Saadati, and eight journalists, who have become test cases of justice under the new Islamic leadership. Despite lengthy periods in gaol, only two have been charged and sentenced.

● UPI adds from Cuernavaca, Mexico: The Shah has completed the memoirs of his years on the throne and they will be published in French "within a couple of months," the Shah's spokesman said at the weekend.