

Left delivers open challenge to Khomeini's vision

From Liz Thurgood in Tehran

Iran's militant Left yesterday issued a strong challenge to the Ayatollah Khomeini, and his hand-picked Prime Minister, demanding that the revolution be speeded up and the country radically transformed into a workers' state.

The challenge, delivered at a rally organised by the Marxist guerrillas of the Fedayeen-e-Khalq, was read to a largely middle-class audience who, despite a steady drizzle and a blistering denunciation from the Ayatollah, had turned up for what many fear might prove to be the start of a head-on confrontation between the Left and the Mosque.

The rally, attended by some 70,000 people at Tehran University, was a substitute for a march planned for Thursday across town to the Khomeini headquarters in East Tehran.

The Fedayeen had hoped to present their demand in a private audience with the Ayatollah, but on the eve of the

IRAN'S new Government has told Switzerland it has nationalised all the property of the exiled Shah and his family, and asked that all their assets there be frozen, the Foreign Ministry said yesterday. It is believed steps will be taken by Iran to repatriate the assets.

When the Ayatollah branded the Fedayeen as "non-Muslims at war with Islam" and ordered his followers to "ignore deceptive slogans of liberation and brotherhood," he added: "I will not permit these opportunists to come to my house."

The Fedayeen, in addition to calling for a general speeding up of the revolution, also issued a nine-point declaration, demanding the return of all land to the farmers with free electricity and water and interest-free loans, an end to censorship and the replacement of the Shah's armed forces with a people's army "responsible to the revolution."

"cream" decision-making body of his regime.

Others openly attacked his secret Islamic courts, which have already sent eight generals to their death, and demanded the creation of "open" people's courts. (As the Fedayeen rally was taking place, reports reached the capital that Captain Monir Taheri had been executed in the village of Rud-Sar, near the Caspian Sea, where an Islamic court had found him guilty of master-minding the cinema blaze that killed some 400 people in the southern city of Abadan last summer).

Just what these people's cells represent is far from clear, but the Fedayeen again repeated its call for all classes and sections who took part in the revolution to have a say in running the country's affairs. "Such participation," the declaration continues, "is not possible without the setting up of workers' cells in factories, barracks and offices."

Several such cells have already been set up in Government Ministries and the Fedayeen claim that others have taken over the management in some factories. The Fedayeen is apparently not pushing for a seat on Mr Mehdi Bazargan's Cabinet and as far as it is known the Prime Minister, who is coming under increasing criticism for his reformist policies, has not approached the radical Left.

Except for a small scuffle outside the main university gates, fears of a clash between the Left and Khomeini's followers did not materialise. Meanwhile, in the troubled province of Kurdistan, the armed forces have warned the people against attacking military bases and holding anti-Government demonstrations. In an official communique issued yesterday, the army called on the Kurds to ignore "counter-revolutionary pamphlets asking the people to march on local barracks" because "the troops have orders to fire."

The Fedayeen have verbally supported the Ayatollah as a man who commands the people's respect and as a fighter of imperialism, but for the first time since his triumphant return three weeks ago, Khomeini's role as the country's strongman was openly criticised. Messages challenged him to reveal the names of his revolutionary Islamic Council, the inner circle of seven men that was emerged as the

This latest warning follows official denials of any separatist movement in the province adjoining the border with Iraq. Abdul-Rahman Qasemloo, leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party, earlier this week declared his full support for Ayatollah Khomeini, saying: "our demands are such that no revolutionary Government can reject them."

In Rabat, King Hassan of Morocco has informed the Shah he can stay in exile in Morocco but only as a private citizen.