

The Washington Post

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

TUESDAY, 23, DECEMBER 1980

\$24 Billion Ransom

SO IRAN NOW demands that the United States put up \$24 billion in the equivalent of ransom against the return of the hostages. The proposal is not simply disappointing. It is grotesque and offensive. The Iranians, who committed the grossly illegal act that triggered the crisis, now knowingly suggest that the United States set aside its own laws, as it would have to do to meet the new terms. They, who have been condemned throughout the world for their violation of practice and obligation in this matter, propose a solution resting on a premise of American bad faith. The administration has been ready to roll back the clock to the day the hostages were seized and to forgo demanding of Iran, as Americans have every right to demand, that it pay for its assault on the liberty of 50-odd Americans. Procedures to put this offer into effect could never have been easy to work out. But Iran's proposals are a sick-joke. It would make more sense for the Iranians to put up \$24 billion than the other way around.

This "final" Iranian response comes as a bitter culmination of American efforts to undo a grievous and, for the administration, politically costly humiliation. The result is also the logical culmination of the administration's post-raid decision to try to negotiate. With a regime ready if not determined to make a fair

deal, a negotiation might have succeeded. But with the Islamic revolutionary regime in Tehran, neither readiness nor determination has been evident. Its performance has revealed priorities, arising from its internal dynamics, quite different from completing a negotiation and reclaiming the benefits of normal relations with the rest of the world. This is not to say Jimmy Carter was wrong to see if Iran could be dealt with as a state motivated by conventional considerations of national interest, and to try to enter a real negotiation. He did what he had to do at the time. Certainly he negotiated—as the world can now see, thanks to Iran's broadcasting of the details—in good faith. The fact remains that the negotiation has washed out.

Patriotism and self-interest alike had made Ronald Reagan cheer Jimmy Carter on, but now the burden will be his. The question is whether he will pick up on his predecessor's patient, studied, conventional manner of negotiation or whether he will seek out a new style of his own, one based on his own conception of leadership and his own political and strategic perceptions. Iran's evident contempt for Jimmy Carter's way has made it hard to think of any fresh approach Ronald Reagan could take that would not win broad popular support.

The Job at Interior

THE JOB of the secretary of interior boils down to a balancing of fiercely conflicting

of farsighted interior policies



OFFICE OF CURRENT OPERATIONS

STAT

Bulletin

FBIS 55''''''

16 December 1980
Item No. 2
0656 EST

(SUB FOR 53--RAJA'I ON HOSTAGES)

IRAN'S RAJA'I SAYS U.S. CAN HAVE HOSTAGES 'ANY TIME'

TAKE 1--RAJA'I STATEMENT

LD161110 TEHRAN DOMESTIC SERVICE IN PERSIAN 1035 GMT 16 DEC 80

(TEXT) PARS NEWS AGENCY REPORTS THAT PRIME MINISTER MOHAMMAD 'ALI RAJA'I, ACCOMPANIED BY MINISTER OF STATE (EXECUTIVE AFFAIRS) BEHZAD NABAVI, WAS RECEIVED THIS MORNING BY IMAM KHOMEYNI, LEADER OF THE REVOLUTION AND FOUNDER OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN. DURING THIS MEETING MR RAJA'I CONFERRED WITH THE IMAM OF THE NATION REGARDING THE ISSUE OF THE HOSTAGES.

FOLLOWING THIS MEETING IN AN INTERVIEW WITH PARS NEWS AGENCY, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID: THE IMAM WAS CONSULTED REGARDING THE FATE OF THE AMERICAN SPIES. THE IMAM GAVE PERMISSION TO US TO REPLY REGARDING THIS MATER; WE HOPE THAT SOON WE WILL NOT HAVE A SO-CALLED HOSTAGE ISSUE.

FBIS 56''''''

TAKE 2 OF 2--55 (RAJA'I STATEMENT)

/// SO-CALLED HOSTAGE ISSUE.

(TEXT) THE LAST REPLY HAS BEEN RECEIVED FROM THE U.S. GOVERNMENT:

U N C L A S S I F I E D

CONT'D OVER
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RE: HOSTAGES .

WE HAVE PREPARED A REPLY WITH CONDITIONS ACCEPTABLE TO ALL OFFICIALS AND THE PEOPLE OF IRAN. FOR, AS WE HAVE STATED BEFORE, THIS ISSUE IS LIKE A DEAD ISSUE TO US. WE HAVE PREPARED REPLIED, IN ORDER TO FREE THE ISSUE FROM PROCRASTINATION AND CUMBERSOMENESS, WHICH WE WILL ANNOUNCE TO THE U.S. GOVERNMENT THROUGH THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ALGERIAN GOVERNMENT WHO HAS COME TO IRAN FOR THIS SAME PURPOSE. MR RAJA'I ADDED: IT IS NOW UP TO THE UNITED STATES, IT CAN AT ANY TIME OR ON ANY DAY, ANY TIME OR ANY DAY, FOR ANY FESTIVAL OR BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY OR ON ANY OTHER OCCASION THAT IT LIKES, TAKE AWAY THE HOSTAGES FROM IRAN. WE NO LONGER HAVE A PROBLEM WHICH COULD BE REGARDED AS A POLITICAL PROBLEM AND WHICH WOULD NEED TIME HERE. THE UNITED STATES HAS ONLY TO PROVIDE CERTAIN FINANCIAL GUARANTEES, WHAT WE HAVE DEMANDED, THROUGH THE ALGERIAN GOVERNMENT, WHICH IS PROTECTING IRAN'S INTERESTS, AND THEN TAKE AWAY THE SPIES.

(ENDALL)

16 DEC 1144Z MLD/TN''''''

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OFFICE OF CURRENT OPERATIONS

Bulletin

STAT

16 December 1980
Item No. 1
0630 EST

FBI 537777

REUTER: IRAN TO ASK U.S. ONLY FOR 'FINANCIAL GUARANTEES'

WA161056 LONDON REUTER IN ENGLISH 1052 GMT 16 DEC 80

(TEXT) TEHRAN, 16 DEC, REUTER--PRIME MINISTER MOHAMMAD

ALI RAJA'I GAINED CLEARANCE TODAY FROM REVOLUTIONARY LEADER
AYATOLLAH RUHOLLAH KHOMEYNI TO SEND IRAN'S NEXT REPLY TO THE
UNITED STATES OVER TERMS FOR RELEASING THE 52 AMERICAN H
AGES,

THE OFFICIAL PARS NEWS AGENCY SAID.

HE SAID IRAN WAS ASKING THE UNITED STATES ONLY FOR
FINANCIAL GUARANTEES"--WHICH HE DID NOT SPECIFY--WHICH WOULD BE
"ASSURED" THROUGH THE ALGERIAN GOVERNMENT.

ALGERIAN OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN ACTING AS INTERMEDIARIES
BETWEEN IRAN AND THE UNITED STATES ON THE HOSTAGE ISSUE.

"THEN THEY (THE AMERICANS) CAN TAKE THE HOSTAGES," PARS
QUOTED THE PRIME MINISTER AS SAYING.

"AS WE HAVE REPEATEDLY SAID, THE ISSUE HAS BECOME A DEAD
SUBJECT FOR US, SO IN ORDER TO GET RID OF THE HINDRANCE AND
WASTE OF OUR TIME, WE HAVE PREPARED FINAL ANSWERS THAT ALL WILL
BE CONVEYED TO THE U.S. GOVERNMENT THROUGH THE REPRESENTATIVES
OF THE ALGERIAN GOVERNMENT...."

16 DEC 1104Z MLD/TN7777

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