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Iran has plan for Khomeini-style regime in Lebanon, intelligence indicates

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WASHINGTON — The government of Iran, working with scores of Lebanese Moslem leaders, has drafted a comprehensive plan aimed at trying to transform Lebanon into a fundamentalist Islamic republic on the Iranian model, according to Middle East intelligence sources.

The plan, which was said to have been approved personally earlier this year by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, includes a draft constitution, the selection of key clerical and judicial leaders and an increase in the flow of weapons, money and propaganda material to Lebanon.

Senior U.S. analysts said that although they could not confirm the details of the plan, the report was "plausible" and "entirely consistent" with U.S. information.

But they pointed out that Syria and the Druse and Christian communities of Lebanon, which would be the heaviest losers if the effort succeeds, would fight it bitterly. There have been reports of recent clashes between Syrian and radical Shiite units in the Bekaa Valley of Lebanon.

According to the intelligence sources, Iranian planners believe Lebanon represents the most fertile ground for attempting a second Khomeini-style revolutionary regime in the Middle East.

This, the sources say, is because of Lebanon's Shiite majority, the deep divisions generated during 11 years of civil war, the weakness of both the central government and the army, and the strength of pro-Khomeini armed factions, including Hezbollah and Islamic Amal.

Therefore, they say, a high-level conference was convened Jan. 30 in Tehran with a who's who of radical Lebanese Shiite religious and lay leaders and a sprinkling of senior Sunni clerics.

After the opening session, subcommittees were formed. They worked until mid-March on a constitution and on carrying out the plans.

The constitution is said to assert that Ayatollah Khomeini symbolizes the wisdom of Allah on Earth, and that he is the interpreter of Islamic laws and the guide for the world's Moslems. Therefore, according to the account of the document, the ayatollah will have supreme authority in Lebanon.

However, the document also reportedly says that since he is so far away, Ayatollah Khomeini will delegate his legal, judiciary and political authority to Ayatollah Sheik Mohammed Mahdi Shams a-Din, the acting head of the Supreme Shiite Council of Lebanon, which represents the radical and moderate Shiite communities.

The sources said Ayatollah Khomeini had approved the selection of Sheik Mohammed Hussein Fadlallah, the spiritual leader of Hezbollah, as "chairman" of new revolutionary courts, and had approved 40 other clerics named as revolutionary judges.

The draft calls for the disbanding of the Lebanese army in favor of a force built on the Iranian model.

The intelligence sources said Mohammed Nurani, the Iranian charge d'affaires in Beirut, was instructed by Tehran to use embassy vehicles to transport new supplies of arms and ammunition from Syria's Damascus airport to Hezbollah and other Shiite groups in the Bekaa Valley, to buy buildings in the southern suburbs of Beirut for use by Lebanese revolutionaries trained in Iran, to increase the dissemination of pro-Khomeini literature and to allocate increased funds for the effort.

The sources did not cite a dollar amount.

In addition, the sources said that Mohammed Ray Shahari, the Iranian minister of intelligence, had been instructed to try to unify the radical Hezbollah with the moderate Amal organization headed by Nabih Berri.

Mr. Berri, however, is said to have played no part in the meetings in Tehran and is presumed to be opposed to the plans. The sources, in fact, said Mr. Shahari was to try to replace Mr. Berri with a Khomeini loyalist as head of Amal.

The sources said the draft constitution has been circulated in Lebanon and now bears the signatures of more than 60 prominent Moslem leaders.

Among them are said to be two Sunni clerics, Sheik Mohammed Ali al Jouzo, the mufti of Mount Lebanon, and Sheik Said Sha-ban, the Sunni leader of Tripoli, who was the big loser when Syrian forces took control of that northern Lebanese city.

However, they said two prominent Shiite leaders refused to sign. These two reportedly argued that the effort would be counter to Syria's attempt to restore peace in the country on the basis of a tripartite agreement signed in Damascus by leaders of the Shiite, Christian and Druse communities.

The two Shiite leaders were identified as Sheik Abd al Amir Qablan, the Shiite mufti of Lebanon, and Rabab al Sadr, the widow of Imam Mussa Sadr, who is believed to have been murdered in Libya several years ago.

U.S. officials said they were aware that a large number of Lebanese religious leaders were in Tehran early this year during celebrations of the sixth anniversary of the Khomeini revolution.

They said that Iran had also set up a shadow revolutionary government for Iraq, called the Supreme Assembly for the Islamic Republic of Iraq.