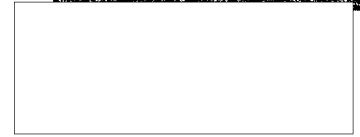


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National
Foreign
Assessment
Center

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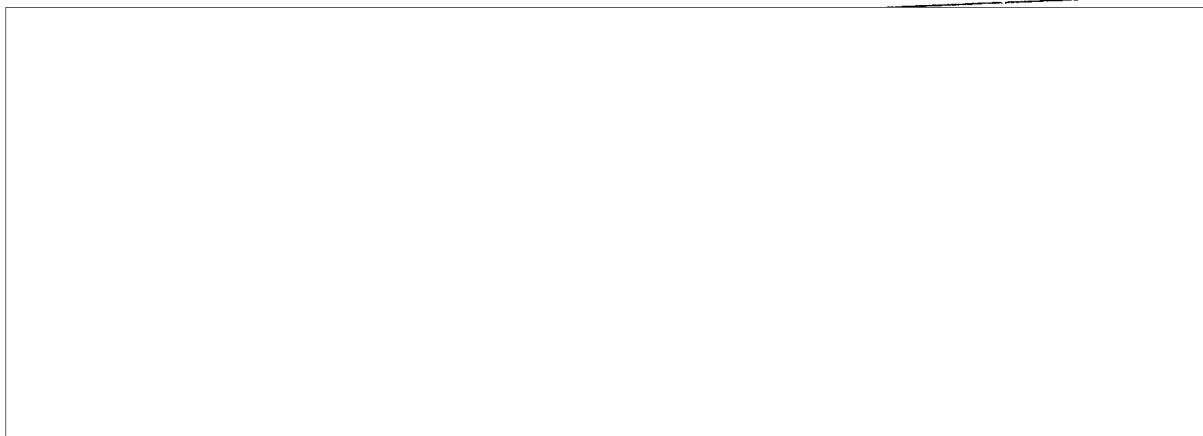
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Warning Notice

**Intelligence Sources
and Methods Involved
(WNINTEL)**

**National Security
Information**

**Unauthorized Disclosure
Subject to Criminal Sanctions**



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(b)(3)

**Iran: Forces Occupying
the US Embassy in Tehran**



(b)(3)

Summary

There are conflicting reports on the composition of the forces occupying the US Embassy in Tehran. The principal organization involved may be the "Islamic Monotheists," a group of Islamic militants which has declared its loyalty to Ayatollah Khomeini, but which apparently has been heavily infiltrated by leftists whose loyalty to Khomeini is probably only a protective measure. Leftists in the group may have links to a radical Palestinian organization, but there is no evidence that members of Yasir Arafat's Fatah organization were involved in planning or carrying out the occupation of the Embassy.



(b)(3)

Spokesmen for this group have remained adamant in refusing any negotiated compromise that does not include the return of the Shah to Iran for "trial." If a basis for negotiation short of returning the Shah receives support from Khomeini, the latent ideological differences among those occupying the Embassy could cause dissension within the group and confusion over policy. It is unlikely, however, that the group would continue to hold the hostages if Khomeini ordered them released.



(b)(3)

The group occupying the Embassy reportedly numbers 150 to 200. Reports of security measures, including the posting of guards equipped with light arms both inside and outside the Embassy gates, indicate they are well organized. The hostages are dispersed among at least three separate buildings in the Embassy compound, and relations between the hostages and their captors reportedly are good.



(b)(3)

This memorandum was prepared by [redacted] of the Iran Task Force. It was coordinated with the National Intelligence Officer for Near East and South Asia. Information available as of 13 November was used in its preparation. Questions and comments are welcome and should be directed to the Chief of the Iran Task Force on [redacted]



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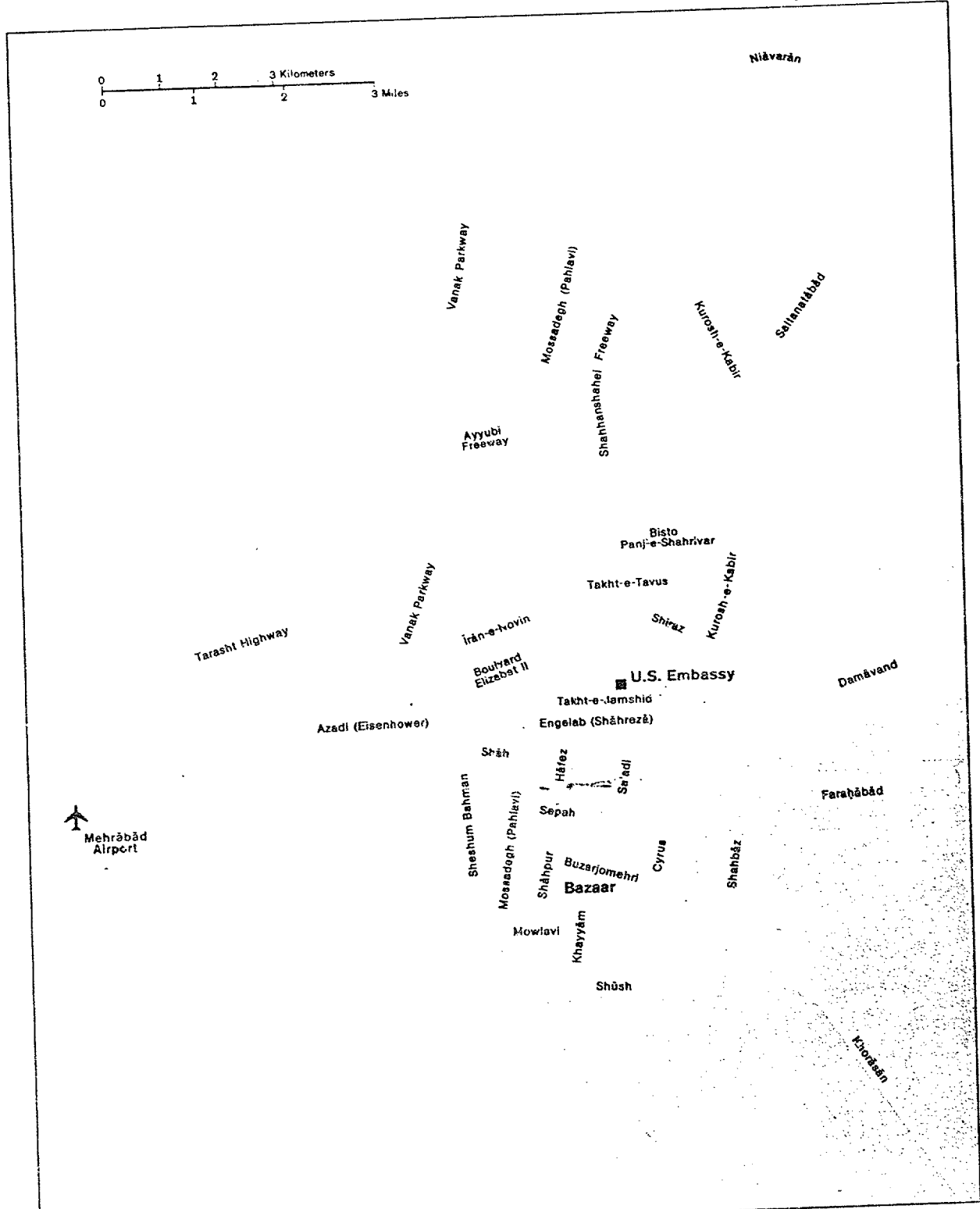


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**Iran: Forces Occupying
the US Embassy in Tehran**



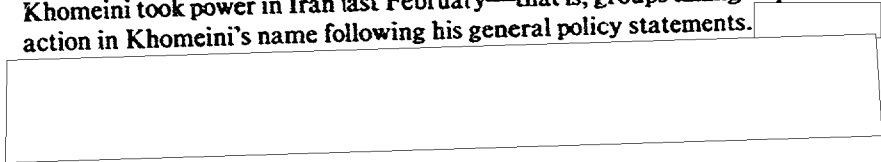
(b)(3)

**Occupation of the
Embassy**

On 4 November a group identifying itself only as the "Muslim Student Followers of the Imam's Policies" occupied the US Embassy in Tehran. The incident followed a pattern that has been frequently repeated since Khomeini took power in Iran last February—that is, groups taking a specific action in Khomeini's name following his general policy statements.

(b)(1)

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Although individual members of the occupying forces are reportedly equipped with light arms, the initial entry into the Embassy came as a protest demonstration rather than an armed attack. _____ people _____ involved in the initial entry. Their number apparently has since been reduced to about 150 to 200. _____

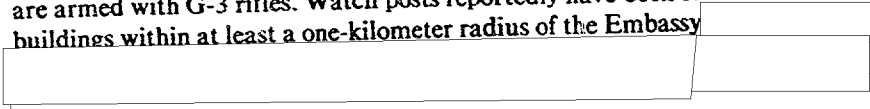
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The occupying group is well organized. There is a security force of 20 to 30 men outside the Embassy gates, some are carrying walkie-talkies, to control the crowd of anti-US demonstrators on the street. Five or six of these guards are outside the main gate and three or four are at each of the other gates or on patrol around the Embassy in several jeep-type vehicles and reportedly are armed with G-3 rifles. Watch posts reportedly have been established in buildings within at least a one-kilometer radius of the Embassy

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~~Top Secret~~**Composition of the
Occupying Forces**

Although there are conflicting accounts on the forces occupying the Embassy, the principal group involved reportedly is the "Islamic Monotheists," a group of Islamic militants devoted to Ayatollah Khomeini that was formed a number of years ago. The group has been infiltrated recently by leftists who reportedly compose nearly 50 percent of the present membership and who strongly influence the group's policies. On 9 November, when documents apparently recovered from Embassy files were released, a statement was issued by spokesmen for the group that was couched in leftist jargon and contained sophisticated analysis which indicates that at least some members of the occupying group are university educated. [redacted] (b)(3)

Spokesmen for the group have refused adamantly any negotiated compromise that does not include the return of the Shah to Iran for "trial" and have stated they will not obey an order from the Revolutionary Council to release the hostages unless the Shah is extradited to Iran. If a basis for negotiation short of returning the Shah receives any support from Khomeini, the apparent ideological differences among various members of the forces occupying the Embassy could result in dissension within the group and confusion over policy. It is unlikely, however, that the group would continue to hold the hostages if Khomeini ordered them released. [redacted] (b)(3)

The Islamic militants who reportedly form the nucleus of the Islamic Monotheists may be an offshoot of the "Hezb-eh-Allah" (Party of God): groups of young, poorly educated, lower class Muslim fanatics, initially organized during the 1967-68 period by the Mujahidin-eh-Khalq guerrilla group. The Mujahidin organized the Hezb-eh-Allah as a means of drawing sympathizers and recruits from lower class opponents of the Shah. Hezb-eh-Allah groups were poorly organized and engaged in limited operations such as attacks on police to acquire weapons. These groups, which have gone by a variety of names, have in the past year stated their allegiance to Khomeini and have been involved in such activities as attacking liberal demonstrators protesting Khomeini's policies. [redacted] (b)(3)

The size and organization of groups such as the forces that have occupied the Embassy are difficult to determine. Unlike the two guerrilla groups active during the Shah's regime—the Mujahidin-eh-Khalq and the Cherikha-yeh-Fedai-yeh-Khalq—that developed a cohesive ideology, tight organization, and security procedures that isolated them from the social environment, the more loosely organized groups of Islamic militants have tended to remain embedded in the society, drawing support from their families and coming together on an ad hoc basis. [redacted] (b)(3)

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[Redacted]

(b)(3)

The leftists among the forces occupying the Embassy may have infiltrated the Islamic organization as a means of advancing their goals under the protective coloration of ostensible fidelity to Ayatollah Khomeini. Khomeini has been strident in his attacks on the left, and the leftist guerrilla groups that played a prominent part in overthrowing the Shah have since been driven underground.

[Redacted]

(b)(1)

(b)(3)

Possible PFLP Involvement

We do not believe that the PFLP, whatever its involvement in the Embassy seizure, is in collusion with Iranian Government officials. Ayatollah Khomeini and his entourage have been deeply hostile toward the PFLP and other radical Palestinian groups. Prime Minister Bazargan's government was even more suspicious of radical Palestinian activity in Iran. We cannot rule out the possibility, however, that the PFLP is involved with at least some faction of the group occupying the Embassy. For a number of years the PFLP has had contacts with Iranian leftists.

(b)(3)

The Palestine Liberation Organization's Role

There is no evidence that Yasir Arafat's Fatah organization had any role in planning or directing the occupation of the US Embassy. Principal PLO leaders, however, moved quickly to gain what international and American good will they could from the situation. They presumably believe they gained a minor victory in the relaxation of Washington's ban on contacts with them, but their primary goal appears to be the major improvement in their image if they can play a mediating role in obtaining the release of the hostages.

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