Deportation threatens OSU Iranians

By Kipp Monroe

Despite recent government threats of deportation, the Iranian Students Association (ISA) at Ohio State plans to continue working for the overthrow of the shah's regime.

Following a violent demonstration by Iranian students last week at the Beverly Hill's home of the shah's mother, Attorney General Griffin Bell called for a review of the immigration status of foreign students who are involved in protests. This action could mean deportation for many Iranian students now living in this country.

A spokesman for the Ohio State ISA, who referred to himself only as Ali, said that sending Iranian students back to Iran at this time would guarantee their deaths. Ali said that if Iranian students were deported for protests, they would be greeted at the airport in Iran with a "bullet in the head."

Ali said that he does not think that demonstrations by Iranian students will have an adverse effect on public opinion. The demonstrations make people ask questions about the true story in Iran and "the truth is on our side," Ali said.

"There is no difference between the efforts here and the efforts in Iran," Ali said. The ISA has been responsible for staging several peaceful demonstrations on the OSU campus.

Ali said that the struggle of the Iranian students in the U.S. is a continuation of what people are doing inside Iran and that the new civilian government, headed by Shapour Bakhtiar, will not satisfy the demands of the Iranian people.

The Iranian students at Ohio State have set up an organizing committee for the purpose of gaining support from groups and individuals who are sympathetic with their cause. "We are accepting support from any progressive and open-minded people who understand the correct stance of the Iranian people," Ali said.

One group which has pledged support to the Iranian cause is the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade. George Preston, a continuing education student from Columbus, and spokesman for the youth brigade, said that if the American people understood the situation in Iran they would support the overthrow of the shah.

Preston said he hopes the Iranian student movement in this country will help educate Americans about the political situation in Iran and limit the ability of the ruling class in Iran to carry out their "fascist and imperialistic tactics."

The Iranians at Ohio State and their supporters have tentatively scheduled a meeting for Jan. 20 where they will present a movie and lecture on the plight of the Iranian people and the effects of U.S. government involvement in Iran. "We want to make sure that the American people understand the degree of involvement that the U.S. government has in Iran," Ali said.

After the first meeting, the Iranian students and their supporters will elect an executive committee which will decide future actions of the group. Although they now have no plans of demonstrating, Ali would not rule out the possibility of future protests.
Iranian rally spurs counter-protest

By Kipp Monroe

A demonstration on the Oval Thursday afternoon by members of the Iranian Student Association (ISA) ended with some OSU students expressing disapproval of such demonstrations on campus.

About 120 members of the ISA and their supporters marched on the Oval for more than an hour chanting "Down with Bakhtiar" and "CIA out of Iran."

After their march, the demonstrators rallied in front of the main library where shouts from the Iranians were mixed with a chorus of "God Bless America" from students objecting to the protest.

A group of students calling themselves "Youths For America" formed spontaneously at the rally to protest the Iranians' march at Ohio State.

"We're tired of all this revolution and demonstrating on campus," said Dave Dye, a freshman from Columbus and spokesman for the Youths For America.

Dye claimed the Ohio State campus was not the place for such protests.

"If these people really believe in what they're doing they should be in Iran fighting for their cause," Dye said.

He said the Youths For America gathering was a "one-shot deal" and that the group probably would disband after the rally.

"We just wanted the Iranians to know how we felt and to show them that we don't want them protesting on our campus," Dye said.

Cries of "America, love it or leave it" could be heard as supporters of the Youths For America grew in number.

The demonstration by the Iranian students began Thursday morning at the Statehouse, where they marched for more than an hour.

An unnamed spokesman for the Iranian students said they were trying to educate American people about the CIA's effort to induce a coup d'etat in Iran.

"The American media has distorted the situation in Iran and we want the people to understand the true story," the spokesman said. He said it was disappointing to see students ridicule the situation in Iran.

This group of students gathered Thursday afternoon in front of the Main Library while angry Iranian students marched on the Oval. These students, calling themselves "Youths for America," attempted to drown out the shouts of the marchers by singing, "God Bless America."

Another member of the ISA, who referred to himself as Ali, said it is people like those in the Youths For America, who don't understand the situation in Iran, that Iranian students are trying to educate.

"At least they had a chance to talk to us and they now understand the cause of the Iranian people a little better," Ali said.
The recent overthrow of Iran's Bakhtiar government has left Iranian students at Ohio State anxiously watching the efforts of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and his chosen premier, Mehdi Bazargan.

In a weekend battle between Khomeini's followers and loyalist troops, the government of shah-appointed Prime Minister Shapur Bakhtiar collapsed as armed civilians captured Tehran, Iran's capital city.

A spokesman for Khomeini said Sunday that Bakhtiar had resigned and most of the nation's soldiers had aligned with Mehdi Bazargan, the ayatollah's chosen premier.

The Iranian Student Association (ISA) at Ohio State has, for the past year and a half, sponsored rallies and demonstrations calling for the ousting of the shah and the overthrow of the Bakhtiar government.

An unidentified spokesman for the Iranian Student Association (ISA) at Ohio State said that it is too early to tell whether the ayatollah's government will meet the demands of the Iranian people.

"We really have to wait and see. Khomeini has always spoken out against the shah and imperialist domination before, but what happens now is different," she said.

The spokesman said that the Iranian people have been struggling for an independent democracy that would put an end to imperialist intervention in Iran. She said that the ayatollah's government will have to prove that it is supportive of the people's demands.

"Obviously the overthrow of Bakhtiar is a victory," the spokesman said. "Everything the people in Iran have accomplished is a result of their work to remove imperialist domination of Iran."

"One thing is for sure, if the ayatollah's government fails to realize the needs of the people, they will again rise up to be heard."

"You must understand the total situation," she said. "It is the people in the streets who make the final decisions."

The spokesman said that the ISA supports Khomeini as a "progressive religious leader," but explained that the policies of his new government are still not clear.

She also said that Iranian students in the U.S. are still suspicious of American involvement in Iran despite Bakhtiar's overthrow. "The U.S. has too much at stake in Iran to just let it go," she said.

"We are cautious because we have had a long history of imperialist domination," she said. "We have gained a good understanding of the way imperialism can infiltrate and dominate a country."

The spokesman said that the ISA will continue working to educate the American people about the situation in Iran. She said that the ISA is also working to raise the consciousness of the Iranian students at Ohio State.

A group of Iranian students gathered on the Oval Thursday to protest U.S. involvement and alleged CIA intervention in Iran. The demonstration was one of many which have been sponsored on the Ohio State campus and in Columbus over the past year and a half by the Iranian
Iranian students protest arrests

By Kipp Monroe
5 March 1979

Cries of “come down Brickman” could be heard as about 25 members of the Iranian Student Association rallied outside Lincoln Tower Friday afternoon demanding an audience with Dorothy Brickman, director of the International Student Office.

The demonstrators were protesting the Tuesday arrests of two Iranians by agents from the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS).

Former OSU student Saifaddin Hodaie, 60 W. Hudson Ave., and Firooz Sorkhabi, here on a visitor’s visa, were arrested Tuesday night at their Columbus residences. Hodaie was charged with failure to maintain student status and Sorkhabi was charged with remaining in the country longer than his visa allowed.

Members of the Iranian student group paraded through campus toward Lincoln Tower carrying signs and chanting slogans accusing the administration and the International Student Office of “harassing” Iranian students.

When the demonstrators arrived at Lincoln Tower, they rallied outside and called for Brickman to come down and address them. She was attending a meeting in another building at the time.

“The arrests are part of a conspiracy by Brickman and the administration to get rid of the Iranian demonstrators on this campus,” said Farraz Ehia, spokeswoman for the Iranian Student Association.

Ehia said Hodaie had applied to Brickman for an I-20 form which would have permitted him to retain his student status. Ehia said Brickman refused to give him the I-20 form, saying his political actions on campus were the reason for her decision.

In a telephone interview Sunday, Brickman told the Lantern that the statement the Hodaie was denied an I-20 form for political reasons was “totally false.”

“Of course there is no conspiracy to harass Iranian students,” Brickman said. She said she has never been contacted by the CIA concerning the Iranian students.

“Our role is to provide the foreign students with the best possible education and advise them of their legal rights,” Brickman said. She said before a foreign student can receive an I-20 form he must prove he has the finances to return to school.

Brickman said that because Hodaie could not guarantee finances he was refused the I-20 form. She said Ohio State has to follow the guidelines of the U.S. Department of Justice if they are to be permitted to accept foreign students.

“The foreign students have the same rights on the campus as American students,” Brickman said. “We have not taken action because of political involvement.”

The recent protests by Iranians have brought counter protests by OSU students who object to the Iranians demonstrating. At the Friday demonstration, one of the Iranians was hit in the head with an ice-ball thrown by an OSU student.

George Preston, a member of the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade, called the assault a “cowardly, fascist act.” Preston said that although the injured student did not intend to press charges, demonstrators will defend themselves in the future.
Marchers Support Takeover

By Robert Ruth
of The Dispatch Staff

About 65 chanting Iranians, shouting "Down with U.S. Imperialism" and other slogans demonstrated Tuesday outside City Hall, at Nationwide Plaza and elsewhere Downtown.

Ali Rabbani, a spokesman for the Iranian Moslem Student Association at Ohio State University, said the demonstrators were marching in support of the Iranian takeover of the U.S. embassy in Tehran, Iran's capital. Rabbani called for the death of American hostages in the embassy if the U.S. does not turn over Shah Reza Pahlavi to the Iranian government.

Iranian officials have demanded that the Shah, admitted to a New York Hospital last month for treatment of cancer, be deported to Iran.

The demonstrators at City Hall were confronted by a critic who identified himself only as John Makris of Columbus.

"This is outrageous," Makris, a 6-foot-4 professional engineer yelled at the marchers. Makris declined to give his address or place of employment.

"Here you are in this country on protective visas and you're telling us how to run our government. We should send over the Marines and get those people out."

Makris referred to the 60 American hostages being held by Iranians in the embassy.

One Iranian, who sat on the W. Broad St. steps of City Hall watching the demonstrators, was not in sympathy with them. Mitra Hedayat, a 22-year-old, Otterbein College student said she opposed the takeover of the embassy.

Miss Hedayat said most of the "intelligent people and political men and women" who are citizens of Iran are now in foreign countries or in prison. Without these people to lead the country, Miss Hedayat said, Iran will remain in chaos.

Asked what he thought of U.S. Rep. Ronald Mott's suggestion that President Carter dispatch U.S. troops to rescue the American hostages, Rabbani said, "I don't really care. It doesn't make any difference, we will keep struggling."

Columbus police, stationed in cruisers and at City Hall entrances, watched the demonstration, which began at 11:10 a.m.

As the marchers took to N. High St., they were followed by police cruisers and vans.

The marchers carried signs which read, "Victory to the Islamic Movement" and "Long Live Khomeini."

Noon-hour Downtown workers watched the demonstrators in confusion. One woman worker yelled, "If you don't like it here why don't you go back to Iran, you turkeys."

One Downtown worker said, "They ought to throw them in jail, all of 'em."

Employees in the federal building at 200 N. High St. shouted from balconies at the demonstrators: "Go home. Go home." Several of the employees spat down at the marchers.

STUDENTS DEMONSTRATE — About 65 shouting, chanting Iranian students demonstrate outside City Hall prior to their march through Downtown Columbus Tuesday in support of the takeover of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran. (Dispatch Photo by Craig Holman).
Iranians to march

Members of the Iranian Student Organization (ISO) will march from downtown to campus today to protest the Shah of Iran's martial law decree and alleged U.S. imperialism in that country.

The demonstration will begin at 9 a.m. at the Statehouse and move up High Street to the campus. The demonstration is intended to call attention to the "slaughter" of up to 15,000 men, women and children in Iran, according to the ISO.

--Beth Cox--
OSU Iranian student leader supports embassy takeover

By Mike Korsmaki
11-14-79

Iranian demonstrations in the U.S. calling for the extradition of deposed Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi do not upset the American people, according to a man who identified himself only as Behzad, a spokesman for the Iranian Student Association (ISA):

"I think the average American person supports us," Behzad said at a well publicized ISA news conference at the Northend Community Center.

Officers of the ISA were unavailable to confirm whether Behzad is indeed a spokesman for the organization.

Behzad, who said he was an OSU student from Iran, added that he would not reveal his full name because of fear from "reactionary men."

"You should thank Iranian students who have opened up your eyes," he said to the noon gathering of about 30 people, mostly members of the press.

The ISA spokesman said his organization supports the students in Iran who captured the U.S. Embassy 11 days ago. They are still holding 62 Americans hostage.

"It is the U.S. government who is responsible if those people (Americans in Iran) are killed," Behzad said.

"We are not supporting any murderers in our country. You are," he said.

When asked why he and other Iranians do not leave the U.S. if they dislike America so much, Behzad said "Iranian students were forced to go to the U.S. because there is not any place else to go for higher education."

"I am here because of the economic and political system that the shah and U.S. imposed on Iran," Behzad said.

"Deportation of Iranians is not going to stop the students in Iran," he said.

Behzad said there are about 100 Iranian students in the ISA at Ohio State.

There are 174 Iranian students enrolled at Ohio State, according to the OSU International Student and Scholar Services Office.

Behzad said that the ISA does not have any plans to organize more marches.

According to an ISA press release, there will be an Iranian forum tonight at 7:30 on the Terrace Lounge in the Ohio Union.
Iranian OSU Student Says
U.S. Supports Revolution

A 23-year-old Ohio State University graduate student who claimed to represent the Iranian Student Association at Ohio State University told a press conference Tuesday that he believes most Americans support the revolution in Iran.

Behzad Bavarian of 2213 N. High St., identified himself only by the first name, "Behzad," during the press conference.

He told reporters crowded into a small room at the Northend Community Center that he was speaking for about 100 Iranian students when he expressed support for the takeover of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran.

His remarks came at a press conference arranged and orchestrated by Patty Preston, a representative of the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade, who also expressed support for the revolution in Iran. She called for an end to what she termed "the economic and political plunder" of Iran by the United States.

Mrs. Preston of 130 W. Patterson Ave., has previously expressed her views on Iran via the Committee to Support the Just Struggle of the Iranian People. She is also linked to the International Committee Against Racism and the Revolutionary Communist Party.

The pair read statements under a red banner which called for support for the Iranian revolution.

About six Iranian students and several representatives of the Yippies were on hand for the press conference, but made no attempt to speak and did not identify themselves.

One of the bystanders was identified as Bavarian's brother, Behnam Bavarian, an OSU graduate student, of 161 W. Maynard Ave.

Adding to the confusion was the fact that Mrs. Preston originally told reporters that the statement she read condemning "U.S. imperialism" was endorsed by a National Lawyers Guild, the Columbus Free Press, the Yippies and the Arab Student Organization. She later changed that list, dropping the National Lawyers Guild and the Columbus Free Press from the endorsements.

The Iranian said he does not think that U.S. citizens are upset with the Iranian action of taking hostages, adding that the student group has had several callers locally express their support. "The average American people support us," he declared, and those who do not support the Iranians are victims of "government propaganda."

Wednesday morning Bavarian became distressed that his full name would be published when he was located by the Dispatch.

"Don't use my last name," he said when asked to clarify conflicting records in which it is spelled both with one "r" and two. "If I had wanted it used I would have given it yesterday.

Bavarian said he is a graduate student at OSU and has been at the university about two years.

He would not identify his college. He claimed he is a member, but not an officer, of the Iranian student association.

He said before he came to the United States he was a resident of Tehran.

Asked why no more Iranians were present at the press conference, Bavarian replied, "Well, at the United Nations you don't have all the people of a country when someone is speaking for it.

Bavarian refused to say whether he had participated in underground revolutionary activities before the Shah was overthrown.

Bavarian also refused to answer questions about how he was paying for his education, whether he or his family was independently rich, or whether he has relatives holding governmental posts either during the Shah's reign or under the new government.

"These are personal questions. I don't want to answer. The purpose of the press conference was to make a political statement. That was all," Bavarian said.
Despite Attack, Iranian Will Stay

BEHZAD BAVARIAN, president of the Ohio State Iranian Student Association, holds a fragment of a Molotov cocktail thrown at his apartment building Monday.

The president of the Ohio State Iranian Student Association said he will continue to lead the 150-member organization, despite the fire-bombing of his apartment building Monday.

"Behzad Bavarian," 27, said he blames the American government and not the American people for the attack on his residence at 3213 N. High St.

Bavarian said two Molotov cocktails were tossed against the two-story stucco building while he slept about 2 a.m. Monday.

However, fire investigator Jack Ward said he has only found evidence of one fire bomb.

No one was hurt in the attack and Bavarian's neighbors doused the fire before firefighters arrived.

Bavarian, who is working toward his doctorate in engineering, said the student organization will keep trying to "communicate with the American public about past American involvement in Iran."

Bavarian said the question of the 52 American hostages is not easy to answer.

"It's a two-sided story," he said. "It may not be fair to be holding them for 300 some days. Some are innocent; some are not."

But he added that "the American government is not trying to do anything" to have the hostages released.

Bavarian said he plans to return to Iran when he completes his studies in about six months.
OSU group raising money to assist Iranian relief efforts

By P.S. Phillips
Lantern staff writer

Although the Iranian earthquake last week happened halfway around the world from Columbus, some local organizations are at work to aid the victims of the disaster which has taken at least 50,000 lives.

One campus group is raising money to assist the Iranians.

The quake, which registered 7.7 on the Richter scale, hit an area 190 miles northwest of Tehran Thursday at 12:30 a.m. Latest reports state 200,000 people were injured and half a million people were left homeless.

Since the quake, 400 aftershocks have been felt in the 342 cities affected by the disaster.

Mahmood Karbasi, president of the OSU Iranian Cultural Society, said his group is trying to raise money to send to Iran by selling food at Kabob Korner in the Ohio Center this Saturday.

The Iranian Cultural Society will serve traditional Iranian food, like beef kabobs, from noon to 7 p.m. The cost will be $1.6 per plate.

Karbasi said the group will also sell raffle tickets for a painting donated by Dr. Jahan Pirasteh, who is from Iran. The painting is valued at $1500-$2000.

Proceeds from the dinner and the painting will go to the Iranian Relief Fund.

Karbasi said although some Americans are concerned with the tragedy, the media does not publicize the event as much as they should because it happened in Iran.

"Iran receives negative publicity, so people are less concerned with it," he said. "Local news organizations are less willing to broadcast about Iran."

The negative press may have caused Americans to not care about the disaster, Karbasi said. He said that these feelings are irrational.

"The problems are between two governments, and that has nothing to do with the people," he said. "These people have not done bad things to anybody, and the policies of the government should not make any difference in how we feel toward the people."

Roya and Hossein Sheedfar, owners of Kabob Korner, have been in the United States for three and a half years, and have family in Iran.

Roya said she is from northern Iran, but her city was not hurt by the earthquake.

"I know my immediate family is safe," she said, "but I still do not know about my cousins and more distant relatives."

She said the area did not have many conveniences before the disaster and now the situation will be even worse.

A dam that supplied the electricity to this agricultural area has been broken, and she and her husband predict shortages in water, food and electricity.

Roya said the people affected by the earthquake are simple, poor people and even though tensions between the United States and Iran exist, she hopes people will be helpful toward Iran.

"If this would have happened in any other country — in England or in South Africa — I would feel just as badly. The victims are people — mothers and fathers," she said.

Barb Stein, assistant director of communications for the Columbus chapter of the American Red Cross, said the National Red Cross has donated $50,000 in response to Iran's appeal for money, but the National Red Cross has not made an appeal to the local chapter for aid.