

Iranian Said to Have Warned of Storms

By George C. Wilson

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Decision makers were asking for trouble from and or dust storms by launching the hostage rescue mission over the desert back country of Iran in late April, according to information brought to light in a closed session of the House Armed Services Committee.

Rep. Robert W. Daniel Jr. (R-Va.), a former CIA officer and pilot, told Pentagon witnesses that an Iranian air force general, Amir Hossein Ghoreishi, had informed him that late April was risky for the helicopter part of the mission because of sandstorms in southern Iran.

Although Daniel would not discuss what went on during Tuesday's secret committee session, he did confirm in an interview that Ghoreishi had made that point about the storms.

"He knows what he talking about," said Daniel of Ghoreishi, a one-star general in the Iranian air force who is now in the United States and recently met with the congressman. "He said it

was a well-established fact that the chances of these storms were increased" by waiting until April 24 to launch the mission rather than earlier in the year.

The Pentagon has denied that it had expected an increased risk from sand or dust storms if the mission were conducted after March. As it turned out, one of the two would-be rescue helicopters turned back to the aircraft carrier Nimitz because of a huge dust storm and two others landed on the desert until the worst of it blew over. The mission was scrubbed for lack of enough helicopters.

In other developments yesterday: • Chairman Birch Bayh (D-Ind.) of the Senate Intelligence Committee denounced leaks of details about the plan and demanded an FBI investigation in a strongly worded letter to Director William H. Webster.

• The Joint Chiefs of Staff sent a formal report to the House Armed Services Committee about the first phase of the raid, revealing little new information.

• The Pentagon announced that

President Carter will deliver the eulogy for the eight servicemen killed in the raid at a memorial service in the Arlington Cemetery amphitheater tomorrow at 9:30 a.m.

• Two of the commandos burned in the raid were released from the Brooke Army Medical Center at San Antonio after a two-week stay.

Released were Marine Maj. John Schaefer of Los Angeles and Air Force 1st Lt. Jeffrey Harrison of Warren, Ohio.

Col. Basil A. Pruitt, hospital commander, said Staff Sgt. Joseph Beyers III of Charleston, S.C., remains in critical condition, and Marine Maj. Leslie Petty of Jacksonville, N.C., is in serious condition.

The fifth injured serviceman, Airman 1st Class William Tootle of Fort Walton Beach, Fla., was released last week from the Lackland Air Force Base hospital in Texas after treatment for a knee injury.

In making his demand for an FBI investigation of leaks, Bayh acknowledged that prosecutions rarely result but said "if we find out who's doing

this and kick their rear end out of government, that's a good start." He said the leaks especially angered him because they obviously were coming from the same administration that complains Congress cannot keep secrets.

Chairman Les Aspin (D-Wis.) of the House Intelligence oversight subcommittee voiced a similar complaint. He said details leaked by the administration could endanger any operatives left in Iran.

In their 22-page unclassified report on the raid, the Joint Chiefs confirmed that "classified material" had been left aboard helicopters abandoned on the Iranian desert near Tabas.

Retrieving the secret material, said the chiefs, "was determined to be too dangerous" for the helicopter crews and people in the C130 transports alongside. A giant fire was raging at the time as a result of a collision between a helicopter and a C130, setting off ammunition.

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The chiefs revealed that the lead RH 53 helicopter and the one flying alongside it, both landed during the dust storm and then took off again, making them late for the refueling rendezvous.

Adm. Robert Long, Pacific commander, said in Honolulu yesterday that fighting the dust storm, which was 5,000 feet high and 190 miles long, had left the helicopters in a near "state of exhaustion." They were supposed to fly on to a mountain hideaway the first night under the plan.

Staff writer George Lardner Jr. contributed to this article.

Morticians Trying to Identify Bodies of Men Killed in Iran

DOVER AIR FORCE BASE, Del., May 7 (AP)—Morticians worked today to connect the human remains contained in nine coffins to eight names of American commanders known to have perished in the aborted hostage rescue attempt in Iran.

Defense Department spokesmen refused to comment on reports that the remains in the ninth coffin could be those of an Iranian civilian.

"The Iranians returned nine caskets. We have nine caskets and our mission is to identify our eight servicemen," Maj. Sam Floca said.

The State Department says eight Americans died when a helicopter and transport plane collided in a ball of

flame in the Iranian desert almost two weeks ago after U.S. forces aborted an attempt to rescue the American hostages in Iran.

The Iranians insist nine or 10 bodies were recovered, and sent nine coffins to the United States.

Air base officials said they had no idea when the identifications would be completed.

By presidential order, American flags will fly at half-staff through sunset Friday, in mourning for the commanders. A national memorial service also will be held in Washington Friday.

The bodies were brought to this Delaware air base because its mortuary, built to handle Vietnam War casualties, is among the largest and best equipped in the world. It can process 100 bodies a day.