

## Senate Report on Iran

# 'Secret' Nixon Arms Deal

### Washington

President Nixon secretly ordered the government to sell Iran any conventional arms it wants, creating a vast and continuing flow of weapons now beyond Pentagon control, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee reported yesterday.

As a result of Mr. Nixon's July, 1972, decision, the committee said, the United States has sold Iran an arsenal worth \$10 billion, including:

- 80 ultramodern F-14 jet fighters.
- 37 Hawk antiaircraft batteries with 1800 missiles.
- Six destroyers more advanced than those being built for the U.S. Navy.

The report quoted Ford administration officials as saying that Iran is now so dependent on American personnel that it could not go to war "without U.S. support on a day-to-day basis."

The study concludes that the Iranian armed forces lack the skills to operate the military systems they have purchased "unless increasing numbers of American personnel got to Iran in a support capacity."

Even this, the report said, "may not be sufficient."

The report estimated that by 1980, Americans in Iran could number "50,000 to 60,000 or higher," mostly tied to the arms programs.

The report also said the Pentagon could not keep track of these sales and former Defense Secretary James Schlesinger finally appointed a secret agent in 1973 to find out what was going on.

But Schlesinger's move backfired, the report said, when Richard Hollock, his agent, eventually became an Iranian government adviser on U.S. weaponry.

"U.S. arms sales to Iran ... have been out of control," said Senator Hubert Humphrey (Dem-Minn.), in releasing the 59-page Foreign Relations Committee report.

"There is little evidence that the President and the Secretary of State have recognized the far-reaching foreign policy implications of the U.S.-Iranian military relationship."

The report said Mr. Nixon established Iran's status as a U.S. arms client partly to offset Britain's military withdrawal from the Persian gulf.

"President Nixon," it said, "personally informed the Shah during his May, 1972, visit to Teheran that the United States would sell either the F-14 or the F-15 to Iran.

"A subsequent (Nixon) memorandum informed the (U.S.) bureaucracy of this decision and stated that, in general, future decisions on other requests for conventional weapons should be made by the government of Iran ...

"The decision not only opened the door to large increases in sales to Iran, but also effectively exempted sales to Iran from the normal sales decision-making processes in the State and Defense Departments," the report said.

"Insofar as is known, the May, 1972, decision has never been formally reconsidered even though the large oil price increase in 1973 enable Iran to order much more than anticipated in 1972."

Congressional sources said Mr. Nixon's memo, dated late July, 1972, remains classified.

The report said that Iran needs diversified weapons because it could become involved in wars with the Soviet Union, Persian gulf states, Pakistan or India. But it said Iran's arms purchases have outrun its capacity to master and use the weapons.

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