

Report of Nixon Aid to Iraq Rebels

Background story, WXP 13 Nov 75.

Washington

The House Intelligence Committee has turned up information that President Richard Nixon, acting at the request of the shah of Iran, ordered a reluctant Central Intelligence Agency in 1972 to serve as arms supplier for a border war in Iraq.

The CIA finally delivered millions of dollars worth of Soviet and Chinese arms and ammunition that were turned over to Kurdish rebels in northeastern Iraq, according to sources.

The CIA, one source said, collected some of the munitions in Cambodia.

The House committee confronted Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, who was Mr. Nixon's national security adviser, with the information in executive session Friday afternoon, but Kissinger said he would oppose public disclosure. 31 OCT 1975

The reported episode was first disclosed Saturday night on CBS News by correspondent Daniel Schorr. Sources confirmed to the Washington Post that the committee has uncovered such information and considers the operation illegal.

Iran's Shah Mohamed Reza Pahlavi reportedly asked Mr. Nixon for a secret supply of arms for the Kurdish rebels when Mr. Nixon visited Teheran in May, 1972.

The Shah had sealed an alliance with the Kurds led by General Mulla Mustafa Barzani just a month earlier when a friendship and cooperation treaty between Iraq and the Soviet Union convinced him he was being "encircled" and prompted him to try to keep the Iraqi Army pinned down in Kurdistan, a mountainous region carved up by the modern-day borders of Iran, Iraq, the Soviet Union, Turkey and Syria.

Both the CIA and the State Department, then headed by Secretary William Rogers, were understood to have opposed American involvement, but Mr. Nixon, reportedly confiding only in Kissinger rather than the National Security Council, insist-

ed that the CIA supply the arms, according to sources.

Several sources said the report of the CIA arms supply may also revive allegations, all strenuously denied during the Watergate investigations, that the shah funneled money to the Nixon reelection campaign.

Watergate prosecutors investigated the rumors, at one point even interviewing Saudi Arabian financier Adnan Khashoggi about allegations that he might have been a conduit, but the prosecutors were never able to establish anything.

According to the information supplied to the House committee, sources said, the Soviet and Chinese arms were sent to Iran by the CIA. The Kurds renewed the war against Iraq in March, 1974, at the expiration of a four-year truce, but were abandoned a year later when the shah reached his own settlement with Iraq.

The rebellion was crushed shortly after the head of Iran's secret police, originally founded with CIA help, delivered the word to Barzani that the alliance was at an end.

Washington Post