

Vets question U.S. involvement in Iran

By SALLY HODGKINSON
Of the Emerald

The crisis in Iran could have been a U.S. set up, say members of the University Veterans Association.

"We believe that this situation in Iran has been partially contrived by the U.S. government with the CIA," says Russ Linebarger, a UVA member.

"It was set up," says John Lawrence, UVA president. "Carter was well-informed of the consequences of bringing the shah into the country. It just looks suspicious."

But in Washington, State Department representative Sue Pittman says the crisis is definitely not "contrived" by the United States, although an embassy takeover has been a possibility since an attack occurred in February.

"It's against every international law and bilateral agreement with Iran," Pittman says. The State Department was aware of the tense situation created by letting the shah into the country and was in contact days before the takeover with embassy security personnel and an outside Iranian security force near the embassy, she adds.

The Iranian security force promised "to be there in times of need," but the force didn't show when called about the embassy attack, Pittman says. "There is only so much an embassy guard can do," she adds. "It's the responsibility of the host government to protect the embassy."



Emerald graphic

After the first embassy attack Feb. 14, staff was reduced to about 30 people, Pittman says. The U.S. later increased to a "core staff" of 70 to maintain embassy activities.

The veterans cite "historic precedence" as the reason for their suspicion, saying contrived U.S. incidents have happened before and a similar set-up in Iran "wouldn't be a surprise."

"We're just asking some questions," Lawrence says. "No one is asking questions. They're all reacting emotionally."

The UVA has studied congressional and defense documents, reports, budgets, hearing transcripts and newspaper clippings. Last fall, they predicted draft legislation would appear in Congress this year. In January, seven bills dealing with draft and draft registration were introduced in Congress.

UVA members have predicted there would be a crisis in the Middle East for the past year.

"We just didn't know what situation it would be," Lawrence says. "We predicted the script, now we're watching the play unfold. I hate to tell you I told you so, but it's coming down to that."

The crisis has created a dan-

gerous military mood in the country, Lawrence and Linebarger say.

"Most people I know are ready to go and kick the shit out of Ayatollah," Linebarger says, adding that the outcome of the crisis could have a "drastic impact" on efforts to reinstate draft registration, the draft and recall of veterans.

Pittman agrees "there is mounting anger in a lot of people." But Pres. Jimmy Carter hasn't approved any military action against Iran. "We're trying to secure the release of the hostages through diplomatic actions," Pittman says.

Linebarger says the crisis is "enticing the American people to war" — in Iran, or an area such as Saudi Arabia.

Dave Fidanque, aide to Congressman Jim Weaver, is more cautious about the impact of the crisis on military actions.

"It's too early to say, but there's a definite feeling that the U.S. has gotten stepped on and kicked around too much," Fidanque says. "We want to show that we have a limit."

"The longer the Iranian crisis goes on, the closer we are to draft legislation and the recall of veterans," Lawrence says. A bill currently tabled in the U.S. Senate that reinstates draft registration and the recall of veterans is "going to look pretty juicy to a lot of people" because of the crisis, he adds.

The U.S. probably won't use troops to rescue the hostages, Lawrence says, but he predicts the U.S. will retaliate by bombing Iranian military bases.

The real military hot spot is Saudi Arabia, Lawrence says. According to a congressional hearing transcript, the U.S. is building an \$8.5 billion military city, named King Khahid, in Saudi Arabia, he says.

National leaders, including Secretary of Defense Harold Brown and House Speaker Tip O'Neill have discussed military intervention in the Persian Gulf to secure U.S. oil interests. In a congressional hearing on security, defense department officials indicated they were ready to defend oil fields in the Middle East.

Corrections

A line was left out of Wednesday's "Ask the Sexpert" column.

The beginning of the answer should read: The mucous method, or Billings method, involves the checking of secretions that flow out of the vagina to determine ovulation, and then avoiding intercourse during these "unsafe" days. The few studies to date have been conducted with a limited number of women, and rates reported range from about three to 25 failures for every 100 women using the method for a year.

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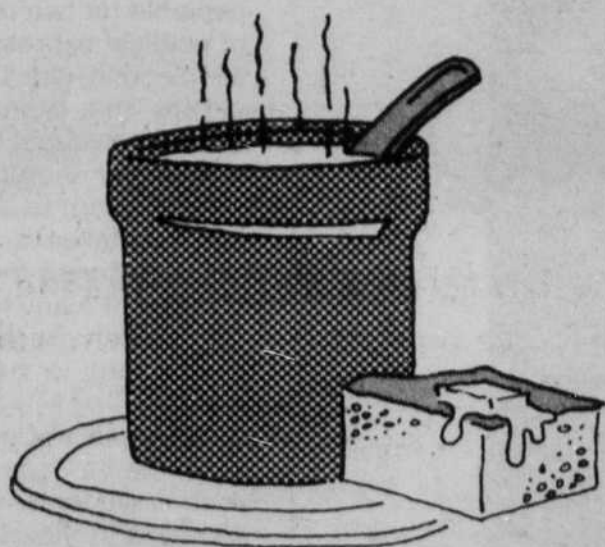
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