

PERCEPTION MANAGEMENT: IRAN

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1. ~~(S)~~ Purpose. This plan outlines a ~~concept~~ for employment of psychological operations (PSYOP), ~~and other~~ appropriate measures in support of resolution of the present crisis in Iran on terms favorable to the interests of the United States.

2. (U) Situation.

a. (U) ~~(S)~~ Militant Iranian terrorist have seized US citizens in Tehran. Their actions have generally been supported by governmental and religious groups within the country, although there are tenuous indications that some individuals in these groups favor release of the US personnel.

b. (U) Subsequent to the Iranian terrorist action, the USSR has invaded Afghanistan. The Soviet actions are of concern to Iran in both a religious and political context, as well as to the US and most other non-Soviet/Warsaw Pact countries.

c. (U) The potential effects of US actions against Iran are of great concern to our Allies, friends and other nations of the world.

3. (U) Assumptions.

a. (U) ~~(S)~~ The principal decision makers who can authorize release of US citizens held in Iran are the Ayatollah Khomeini and/or the terrorists holding the prisoners.

b. (U) ~~(S)~~ Information conveyed to Khomeini is screened by his advisors who are kept informed by the Iranian intelligence service and by public commercial media.

c. (U) ~~(S)~~ The terrorists holding the US citizens have access to and use significant world public media, both as a source of information and as a means of communication.

4. (U) Target Groups

a. (U) ~~(S)~~ Primary

- (1) Terrorists holding US citizens
- (2) Groups that can influence Ayatollah Khomeini
- (3) Ayatollah Khomeini

b. (U) ~~(S)~~ Secondary

- (1) USSR
- (2) Nations of the Middle East and Southwest Asia
- (3) Other nations of the world

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5. (U) Objectives

a. (U) (S) Convince primary groups that Iran is more directly and seriously threatened by the USSR than by the US, and that the US citizens should be released now.

b. (U) (S) Reduce the support within Iran for the militant terrorists.

c. (U) (S) Convince those who advise the Ayatollah Khomeini that Iran cannot defend itself against modern military forces and that use of US military force is likely only if US citizens are harmed.

d. (U) (S) Preserve operations security and the element of surprise for rescue or retaliatory actions.

e. (U) (S) Enhance foreign respect for US in the long term, and gain the degree possible of understanding for the US use of force should it prove necessary.

6. (U) Perceptions (See Tab A).

7. (U) Concept.

a. (U) (S) General. Perceptions to be conveyed to the target groups and specific actions desired from each target will be clearly defined. Measures to evoke desired perceptions will be identified. Multiple measures will be employed in a mutually supportive manner. Some measures will be totally overt in nature, others will be designed so they will become known over time, and some perceptions will be induced through non-public channels.

b. (U) Organization.

(1) (S) Planning. A small group of perception management planners drawn from DOD, OJCS, the Services, [REDACTED] other concerned government departments and agencies will identify as clearly as possible the specific target groups that can influence the Ayatollah Khomeini, the Revolutionary Council, and the terrorists holding the US citizens. They will refine the perceptions to be conveyed to exert influence on the target groups, and plan a series of actions to evoke the desired perceptions.

(2) (U) (S) Decision to Execute. The National Security Council will approve perception management plans and will direct execution.

(3) (S) Supervision of Planned Actions. A flag or general officer from the OJCS and a senior official [REDACTED] will coordinate execution and evaluation of approved actions, and will report results to the National Security Council. The planning group will act as staff to these individuals. As necessary and dictated by operational security and compartmented access requirements, other working groups may be required to execute the overt aspects of perception management plans.

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c. (U) Measures to be examined. (Not all inclusive)

(1) (U) (S) Radio broadcasts. Facilities include Armed Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS), Voice of America (VOA), Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/PL), clandestine radios (if available) and military PSYOP radios (if proximate sea or land basing is possible). Radio propaganda broadcasts, particularly military PSYOP broadcasts, would present an overt demonstration of US psychological resolve.

(2) (U) (S) Radio Communication Transmissions. Transmission and/or intrusion on radio communication frequencies used by Iran for the delivery of specific messages; US high frequency (HF) transmissions designed for intercept by Iranian SIGINT facilities.

(3) (U) (S) Leaflets. May be delivered by hand, mailed to individuals in Iran, dropped from aircraft, used to wrap, or inserted in, material being shipped to Iran, hand delivered to the proximity of Iranian embassies, etc.

(4) (U) (S) Letter Writing Campaigns. Letters sent to selected Iranian individuals; content white, gray or black propaganda.

(5) (U) (S) Person-to-Person Contacts. Attaches, diplomatic contacts, business contacts, intelligence liaison, others; used for controlled "leaks," rumor campaigns, etc.

(6) (U) (S) Expatriate Iranians in US and other nations. Organize and mobilize sympathetic groups, convey material by rumor, press release, etc.

(7) (U) (S) Military Demonstration of Capabilities. Flyovers, electronic interference and jamming of radios and radar, simulated operations using communications deception to pointedly portray Iranian vulnerabilities, and operations using flares, chaff and multiple aircraft.

(8) (U) (S) Audio Cassettes. Production and dissemination of audio cassettes carrying messages by opposition religious and political figures.

(9) (U) (S) Sea-float Operations. Use of float techniques to deliver messages to population centers along the Persian Gulf.

(10) (U) (S) Actions by Other Nations. Cooperative statements by Allied and friendly nations, induced actions and statements by Soviet/Warsaw Pact nations.

(11) (U) (S) Double Agents. (if available)

(12) (U) (S) Covert Actions. (if feasible)

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TAB A

PERCEPTIONS: POTENTIAL THEMES

1. (U) (S) Terrorists holding US citizens have objectives that serve their own self-interest.

- Links to non-Iranian terrorist groups
- Links to communist elements
- Enhancement of personal power
- Hardship, unemployment and anarchy in Iran partly due to their acts.
- Irrational to expect US and other nations to concede to threats.

2. (U) (S) US is united in seeking release of US citizens. Most of the world community supports this position.

- US government responds to the will of the people.
- Thousands of US citizens are directly and adversely affected because of terrorist actions (families of servicemen 30-40,000, etc).
- Nations are duty bound to protect their citizens.
- US has learned patience and the need to deal with foreign nations with respect for their national beliefs and traditions through experience.
- US does not desire to use military force against Iran, nor to retaliate if US citizens released unharmed. Force will be used if US citizens harmed.
- UN resolutions, statements by national leaders.
- Rescue of prisoners deemed impractical.

3. US desires peaceful relations with other nations.

- Many ethnic groups in US society, inequities exist, evolution of more equitable outlook.
- Religious tolerance
- Recognition of limits of military power.
- Working through UN and in consultation with allies.
- Humanitarian actions by the US (Orphanages adopted by ships, Army civic action (Korea, Germany, etc) Air Force mercy missions (Turkey, Iran, etc)).

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- Respect for treaties and lawful behavior.

4. The Soviet Union threatens Iran

- Treaty permitting Soviet intervention in Iran.
- Brezhnev doctrine.
- Soviet actions against Afghanistan (also earlier actions against East Germany, Hungary, Czechoslovakia).
- Soviet use of proxy force (Angola, Ethiopia, Korean War, Vietnam/Laos/Cambodia, Afghanistan, Yemen).
 - Isolation of Iran
 - Historical threat from north, Russians, Mongols.
 - Soviet repression of religious groups, fear of uprisings.
 - Soviet gradual assumption of full control (liberator/protector, takeover of police and military, execution of moderate leaders, assumption of police state powers); imposition of communist rule dependent on military force.

5. Civil War brings death, destruction, and risk of Soviet intervention.

- Disputes among religious and ethnic groups (cite historical examples).
- Indicate specific targets that if destroyed by civil war, would bring great suffering to the full nation (these should be targets the US can destroy easily).
- Cite Cambodia and Laos, use of poison gas, starvation, loss of doctors, collectivization of farms, etc).

6. Iran's military posture deteriorating (for Iranian military and political leaders).

- Lack of spare parts and maintenance
- Desertions
- Loss of leadership
- Balance of sea and air power
- Demonstrations of US air superiority without inflicting damage.