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"Story Behind the Headlines" — Iran

By Nancy Davis

"Tell your friends to support the people of Iran and not the generals of Iran."

Don Luce, noted reporter and leader in human rights issues brought this message from political prisoners he had talked to recently in Iran. Speaking before some 200 students, faculty and members of the Charlotte community, Luce and Pari Sabety, an expert in Iran and U.S. policy, had much to say about the situation in Iran. The symposium, "Iran—The Story Behind the Headlines" was sponsored by the Center for International Studies at UNCC.

Sabety spoke first on U.S. policy in Iran, and the reasons Iran is so important to the United States. She noted only five percent of the oil used by the United States came from Iran, but because of the large percentages of Iranian exported oil used by other countries (90 percent of Japan's and South Africa's supply), relations with this middle eastern country were important.

Its location in the Persian Gulf is also a reason for importance to the U.S. According to Sabety, "Iran is a buffer zone" in regards to possible Soviet encroachment and causes stability in the Persian Gulf.

Military involvement in Iran was Sabety's main concern with the present United States policy. "25 percent of the weapons that leave the U.S. go to Iran," Sabety said. She also raised the question of Iran's own ability to produce weapons, citing American corporations working on military contracts in Tehran, the capitol of Iran.

Besides these "white collar mercenaries" as Sabety called them, there are Americans operating most of Iran's communications and intelligence activities. "So on day-to-day activities, we have already intervened ... there are as many military advisors in Iran as there was in South Vietnam in 1965.

"There are 185 military assistance groups, 900 technical instruction teams and 10-20,000 Americans working with corporations on military contracts.

"Iran is at war," Sabety said strongly. "At war with the people. And there are few signs we're on the way of leaving anytime soon."

Dealing specifically with Carter's policy, Sabety said despite his human rights rhetoric "the President had sidestepped the real problems in Iran. She told the audience the reason for the work Carter has put into supporting this regime was the belief the Shah would continue to have things under his control. Even with the Shah exiled out of the country, he is still in

limbo, awaiting plans for an indefinite 'vacation.'"

Sabety expressed fears of what the civilian and military presence in Iran meant. She said America was assuming "if you ship enough arms, it will remain stable ... this is a paramount example of the failure of that."

Human Rights

Luce, in Iran only last week, began his lecture by asking, "What is it like to be in Iran now?" He said, for the most part, the people of Iran are not as angry with Americans as the media presents them as being. "They really want Americans to know what's going on in their country."

During the past year, Luce has traveled throughout Iran, talking to the people and visiting the prisons. He spoke to a prisoner who had been in jail for more than five years for writing on a wall, "Down with the Shah." There was another prisoner who had spent eight years in jail so far for reading a "Marxist" book.

Luce said, most of the prisoners didn't know why they were in jail. They were mostly student leaders and other youths who had spoken out against the Shah in some way. He also said some were students who, while studying in America, had not supported the Shah's regime.

The prisoners showed Luce their feet which he said was just "a mass of scar tissue. I've never seen any evidence of torture as brutal as this." Luce expressed the fear of what will happen if the Iranians are continued to be treated like this. So far, he said, there have only been peaceful demonstrations with no use of arms. But Luce is far more concerned with



(Photo by Sophia Koinis)

Don Luce told UNCC students what he knew concerning Iran and the story behind the headlines.

the "brutal war" that could follow if Iranians decide to use sub-machineguns themselves.

Many Americans believe the anger towards the Shah by Iranians is because of his efforts for modernization. According to Luce, the revolt was not because of modernization but was because of militarization. He also feels this is the reason for Ayatollah Khomeini's popularity, the exiled religious leader, scheduled to return to Iran as soon as the airports open again.

Khomeini wants to use the money from the sale of oil to develop the land. The money is presently being used to produce more oil, a resource which may be drained by the year

2000. Iran, a country which for years sufficiently produced its own food, is now, according to Luce, importing one-half of their food needs.

Luce finished his lecture by outlining four things he feels America should do in Iran.

(1) The U.S. should stop interfering ... let the Iranian people decide what kind of government they want.

(2) Withdraw military and CIA personnel. I don't believe we have any right to advise Iranians how to kill other Iranians.

(3) End arms sales.

(4) Change U.S. ambassadors. Sullivan is closely related to military and intelligence operations.



(Photo by Pam Freeze)

King and Devone up for a big win.

Homecoming '79 history

There won't be another UNCC Homecoming for another year, but the memories of this year's very different array of Homecoming events will definitely be remembered until then.

With the new format, there was a possibility for four different organizations to win awards. First House Holshouser sponsored this year's Homecoming Queen, Tina Oliver. The Delta Zeta sorority won the Spirit Award and the Kappa Sigma fraternity won the Parade Award. Best Overall Award went to the Delta Zeta sorority.

Attendance at every event from the Klinger Contest to the Midnight Disco was well attended by all students. And to add to the festivities

of the week, there were five victories for the 49er teams. On Monday, the women defeated Coker 107-45. Tuesday, both the men and women 49ers defeated N.C. A&T handily. The women won 86-73, while the men handed A&T their loss, 70-61.

Then on Homecoming Day, it was an enthusiastic coliseum crowd that saw the men win again in a big game against South Florida. George Devone was named Most Valuable Player for his help in the 81-62 victory. Afterwards, some of the crowd traveled to the Mine Shaft to see the women win their 12th game of the season against UNC-Asheville, 71-62.

Pictures and stories are on page eight.