

World



Police inspect blown-out prison wall

ITALY

Taunting Clues

And the terror spreads

An ominous voice delivered the message in identical calls to newspapers in Rome and Milan: U.S. Brigadier General James Dozier, kidnaped from his Verona apartment on Dec. 17, had been executed. The anonymous caller said the corpse of "the Yankee pig General Dozier" could be found in an abandoned building 30 miles from Pescara on the Adriatic coast. Italian police searched the area fruitlessly.

At the same time, Dozier's abductors issued a ten-page communiqué that provided details of his interrogation by a "people's court." In the transcript, the presiding officer explains to Dozier why he was captured: "Your military career is the story of American aggression against the battle for liberation and revolution in Southeast Asia and against the proletariat struggle in Europe."

With no solid clues to go on, the authorities were hoping to break the case by enticing one of the terrorists to betray his comrades and earn a 2 billion lire (\$1.67 million) reward for information about the kidnaping. The money is believed to have been put up either by wealthy Italian industrialists, who fear that terrorism is eroding business confidence, or anonymously by the Italian government.

Even as police tramped the hillsides in search of Dozier, the Brigades struck again. A tiny Autobianchi A-112 car moved unnoticed through the deserted streets of Rovigo, 40 miles southeast of Verona, and parked next to the walls of the town prison. Four masked men leaped from the car and began spraying machine-gun fire at two guards in a watchtower. In the prison courtyard, four women inmates who were Red Brigades members heard the shots and overpow-

ered a guard. Then the car exploded, killing a pedestrian, shattering windows within a quarter-mile radius and blowing a 4-ft.-wide hole in the wall. The four convicts scrambled through the smoking gap, joined their rescue team and vanished without a trace.

Three days later, Nicola Simone, 41, local deputy head of the special antiterrorist police force that is leading the search for Dozier, was shot three times in the face by an assailant disguised as a postman. As Simone lay critically wounded in a hospital, the Red Brigades claimed responsibility for the shooting. The attack was staged in apparent retaliation for the arrest of two Brigades suspects captured in Rome with an arsenal of machine guns, shotguns and grenades in their car. Police also arrested eleven other suspected left-wing terrorists, including Giovanni Senzani, 42, a Florence University professor who is thought to be a top Brigades leader.

The latest surge of terrorist activity has spread uneasiness throughout Italy, yet there are distressing signs that the Red Brigades still enjoy latent sympathy among younger Italians. In a poll of 20- to 24-year-olds by the newsmagazine *L'Espresso*, 21% believed that the Red Brigades were fighting for a better society, while 35% felt that the terrorists had the right ideals but were using the wrong means to achieve them. Only 27% said they would inform the authorities if they knew someone who was a terrorist. ■

IRAN

Moscow Mission

Just a friendly gesture

For months the Soviet Union has been gaining a long-coveted foothold in Iran. In mid-October the ruling Islamic Republic Party accepted Moscow's offer to send agents to Iran to strengthen Tehran's intelligence and security forces, as well as bolster the Islamic Guard, the I.R.P.'s military arm. Another Soviet team was dispatched to assist in rebuilding the country's devastated economy. Now the Soviets, in their boldest ploy to date, are pressing Iran to sign a mutual cooperation pact that would effectively draw Khomeini's revolutionary government into Moscow's sphere of influence.

The proposal was first made during a Nov. 18 meeting in Tehran between Vladimir Vinogradov, the Soviet Ambassador to Iran, and Iranian Prime Minister Mir Hossein Mousavi.

Vinogradov argued that the growing discontent of fundamentalist, right-wing clergymen with Khomeini's policies, together with what he called the "CIA-backed leftists" of the *Mujahedin-e-Khalq* (People's Crusaders), had brought Iran to the brink of a civil war. Vinogradov told Mousavi that Iran would be ripe for a U.S.-backed counterrevolution. His deal: increased Soviet protection, presumably

in the form of arms and technical advisers, in exchange for a formal five- to ten-year "friendship and mutual assistance treaty" between the U.S.S.R. and Iran. The Kremlin would stand ready to defend Iran against "foreign-led subversion."

The following day Mousavi briefed the Ayatullah on Vinogradov's proposal, then officially informed the Soviets that it was under consideration. Khomeini is known to be deeply suspicious of Moscow for its role in crushing Islamic revolutionaries in Afghanistan, and is wary of allowing Iran to become a strategic pawn of either superpower. But growing numbers of the ruling clergy are beginning to believe the Soviets can be used for protection and economic assistance without compromising Iranian autonomy.

The Soviets are keenly aware of the Khomeini regime's vulnerability. Iran's foreign reserves of \$1 billion are drying up rapidly. The government needs \$800 million more per month than its oil revenues provide just to supply the basic needs of its restive population. Since November the regime has had to divert \$1.5 billion in development and welfare funds to help finance the prolonged war with Iraq. Oil exports have leveled off at 900,000 bbl. per day, providing \$966 million a month in revenues, compared with \$1.74 billion in 1978. In a nation of 39.8 million, 4 million are now jobless, and as many as 2 million are homeless because of the war. Some observers believe that much of private industry will come to a standstill by spring because of a lack of raw materials and spare parts.

The talks about the friendship treaty between Iran and the Soviet Union are reportedly continuing. The mullahs seem intent on drawing out negotiations in order to assure themselves of Soviet assistance without paying the political price of aligning the country with Moscow. But the Kremlin wants a signed deal before it will start to deliver. ■



ILLUSTRATION FOR TIME BY PHIL ROSE

TIME, JANUARY 18, 1982