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Viewpoint

Iranian crises was a 'conscious retreat' for Jimmy Carter

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WASHINGTON — "Forecasting political upheavals and military coups," insisted CIA Director, Admiral Stansfield Turner, "is probably the most difficult part of intelligence, much more difficult than military or economic intelligence."

Turner made that observation Feb. 4, 1979, adding that no other intelligence agency in the world predicted the upheaval in Iran or that no journalist or scholar predicted the Shah would be forced to leave the country. However, on Feb. 9, 1979 the Wall Street Journal reported that Israel's Intelligence Service back in 1977 warned its political leaders that Iran was in danger of being disestablished and that the globe could be engulfed in a crisis over oil unless Israel looked elsewhere for oil supplies.

ISREALI political leaders took the estimate of its intelligence service seriously and prepared for the crisis that has since engulfed Iran while the Carter administration chose to ignore it. Turner is also wrong that no scholar foresaw the crisis and sought to warn the Carter administration.

Dr. James Brill of the University of Texas and an expert on Iran, in an interview with the Associated Press prior to the Turner statement, insisted that in March of 1978 he wrote a paper for the administration warning of the collapse of the Iranian monarchy, but that such warnings were never taken seriously.

The recent drop in President Carter's popularity in the polls clearly is tied to his inaction over Iran; first vacillating on support for the Shah, then strong statements of support followed by utterances the Shah leave the country and followed still by support for the Shah's foe, Prime Minister Bakhtiar, and in the end turning to support the Moslem revolutionary Khomeini.

HOWEVER, Admiral Turner must know the Soviet economist who defected to the West in 1976, Dr. Igor S. Glagolev, a senior member of the Soviet Academy of Scientists, Institute of World Economic and International Relations and a disarmament expert.

He told this columnist in December that prior to his defection from the Soviet Union he knew first hand how Moscow was planning to subvert nations vital to the West, like Iran, and that agents had been trained and sent into Iran.

The failure of the Carter administration in Iran is not some isolated incident, but part of a persistent pattern of retreat. The list of nations over the last two years is lengthy; surrender of Taiwan, the Panama Canal, and willingness to withdraw U.S. forces from South Korea.

IN AFRICA the Cubans and Russians have had a free hand in Ethiopia and Angola seeking to overthrow Zaire, and were blunted more by European than American action when France and Belgium sent paratroopers to Zaire. At the same time the Carter administration has sought to establish better relations with Russia, Vietnam, China and Cuba while turning on its former friends in the name of human rights violations. Nicaragua, Chile and Argentina are but three examples.

All this confusion and chaos does not appear an accident and the disaster in Iran illustrates this clearly. The Carter administration does not seem that upset by the cut off of Iranian crude, perhaps because it now provides the pretext for them to impose gas rationing and greater controls at home.

Its attitude toward Mexico as an alternative source has been negative, even to the point of seeking to make the Mexicans the heavy in a recent aborted gas deal.

Thus, the Iranian crisis was not, as Admiral Turner would have us believe, the failure of intelligence, but a conscious retreat of the Carter administration to reduce the United States as a global power. The Carter administration over the last two years has dismantled U.S. economic, military and political power against its enemies while they assembled an arsenal of weapons for a world at peace imposed by force.