

# Iranians disagree about shah, but favor democracy

By Alice Hrnicek

"It's a tough situation. Tough, tough," concluded an anonymous Iranian graduate student about the anti-shah demonstrations in Iran.

Four Iranian students at UNL have reached similar conclusions although not all agree about what should happen to improve matters.

According to a report from the Washington Post Service, President Carter expressed dissatisfaction with the "political intelligence" in Iran and has initiated contacts with internal forces opposing the shah.

Abbass Mohaddess, a senior in civil engineering said, "I think the shah is going down and down and down. For what he has done to the people, he should go."

A graduate student in chemistry, Kahan Garmasgani, believes the shah should resign.

"He's tried everything and couldn't get the people to listen to him," Garmasgani said. "The situation is not getting any better. Everything is terrible. Few are happy. Inflation is high and expectations are low."

Not all Iranians support this view. One of the shah's supporters, an anonymous undergraduate student, thinks the shah "still has enough power to stay in power. His military is very strong."

"We need a ruler like him," he said.

He said he doesn't agree with the fact that the shah

controls everything.

Another graduate student, who wishes to remain anonymous, said he would like to see the ruler stay under certain conditions.

"I believe he will if he gives the people more freedom and changes his policy."

"He can be a good leader if he wants to," he said. "But I don't think the Americans will let him. As far as knowledge goes, he's the best—if he's away from the United States government."

Mohaddess questions why the U.S. government and President Carter support the shah.

"Doesn't he hear what is happening? The shah is killing and torturing hundreds of people every day."

He would like to see Carter remove his military advisers and CIA agents who are supporting SAVAK, the Iranian secret police.

"For our people it would be good enough if he (Carter) would stop support."

All four students favor a more democratic government in the country.

According to the undergraduate, the shah presently chooses his cabinet "not because of policies of the people, but because of his policies. He selects people who will work for him and not for the country."

The graduate student prefers to see "a government which is elected by the people, which respects Persian

values and is independent. But I really don't want it to be Communist."

Instead, he proposes that some ideas should be derived from communism and some from capitalism since Iran serves as a buffer zone.

"We should be somewhere in between," he said. Mohaddess stated that the governmental change should go a step further.

"The military government now doesn't work," he said. "It should be replaced with a democratic government without the shah."

The way this can happen, Garmasgani said, is by a takeover by the modern nationalists.

"I don't think the people can take any more dictatorship," he said. "In order for Iran to get self-determination and be a free country with freedom of speech, I would like to see the nationalists come into power."

Reports by the American press that the Moslems, which comprise almost 95 percent of the population, are led by conservative forces are "large misunderstandings," said the graduate student. He explained that what the Islamic religion was against was what violated its commandments.

"Persecution is going high, along with prostitution, alcohol consumption and bribery," he said. "I am not in favor of Moslems but they are right that this is going too far."

As far as the undergraduate is concerned, it would be "impossible to go back to the old ways. Some of the laws are not good for now, but were for 2,000 years ago."

Mohaddess charged that the U.S. press is defending the shah is doing is modernizing and the Moslems are conservatives.

This claim is further attested to by Garmasgani. "The Moslems want democracy," he reported. "A good monarchy would be democratic."

## Exon to face reporters

Nebraska Governor and U.S. Senator-elect J. James Exon will be questioned by newsmen on *Dateline Nebraska*, airing Thursday, December 7, at 9:30 p.m. on all stations of the Nebraska Educational Television Network.

Exon, who has served two terms as governor since unseating incumbent Governor Norbert Tiemann in 1970, was recently elected to the U.S. Senate by winning 68 percent of the vote.

Exon will be questioned by newsmen panelists Dick Herman, *Lincoln Journal*; Frank Partsch, *Omaha World-Herald*; and Don Walton, *Lincoln Star*. Joel Fowler, senior producer of public affairs for University of Nebraska Television, will moderate the program.

*Dateline Nebraska* is produced by the University of Nebraska Television public affairs unit and is directed by Mary Kosnopfl. The series is funded, in part, by Nebraskans for Public Television, Inc.

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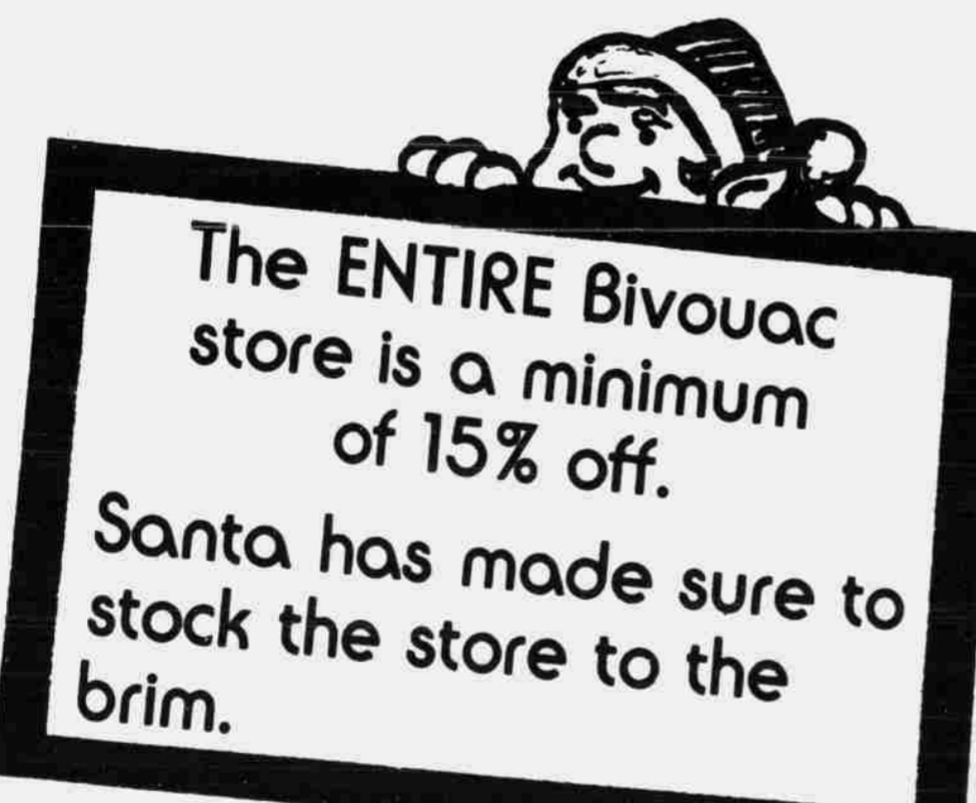
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