

nation

Carter aids Iran's martyr request

NEW YORK — Every time President Carter threatens Iran, he plays right into the hands of the Ayatollah Khomeini, says an expert on the Persian culture.

The Iranians in their frustration with rapid modernization under the shah turned to religion — the only tradition they had left, said Professor

Peter Chelkowski of New York University. That religion is based on self-sacrifice, guilt and a hatred of villains, he said in a weekend interview.

"Khomeini has managed to take this syndrome of sacrifice and guilt, this hatred of villains and translate it to the shah and his supporters," Chelkowski said. "The whole ritual is

reenacted in a political framework."

When Carter retaliates to the holding of 50 Americans in the besieged U.S. Embassy in Tehran with threats, Chelkowski said this only helps Khomeini unify his people against a common enemy.

Iranian admirals responded to Carter's order to U.S. Navy ships to move toward Iran in the Indian

Ocean by donning the white shrouds of martyrdom. Those same shrouds, bearing Persian writing that says the bearers are willing to die, are worn by demonstrators seen outside the U.S. embassy in Tehran.

"Our nation looks forward to the opportunity of self-sacrifice and martyrdom," he said Khomeini wrote in a letter to the pope.

The Iranians are simply acting out in real life what they have seen depicted in their theatrically bloody folk passion plays known as "Ta'zieh" since the 10th century, said Chelkowski. He spent three years studying the dramas in Iran and has written a book about it.

The plays, which are similar to Christianity's Stations of the Cross depicting the death of Christ, show the "heroic martyrdom" of Hussein, the grandson of the prophet Mohammed, who was cut to pieces by his religious and political opponents in 680, Chelkowski said.

The Shiites believe martyrdom

can win Hussein's intercession for them at the final day of judgment.

The Iranian people turned to Khomeini, who returned to Iran after 15 years of exile last winter, because "the shah tried to industrialize too fast," Chelkowski said.

"The shah took a family and group-oriented society that had survived 25 centuries and completely disrupted it," he said.

"There were too many cars. There was no room to move. Things didn't work and there wasn't even time to do the traditional things like see the extended family," Chelkowski said.

U.S. industrial output falls 0.5 percent in November

WASHINGTON — The nation's industrial output fell 0.5 percent last month, prompting one government economist to say the economy is gradually eroding, an erosion that should culminate with a recession during the first half of 1980.

The Federal Reserve Board said the industrial output fell as the effects of sluggish automobile production began to spread to other sectors of the economy.

The motor vehicles industry is clearly in a recession," said Commerce Department economist Theodore Torda. "That weakness is beginning to spread to other sectors such as home goods and construction supplies."

The November drop in industrial production — the output of the nation's factories, mines and utilities — followed a flat performance in October and a 0.5 percent increase in September, the Federal Reserve Board said.

Production of home goods dropped 0.5 percent, reflecting weakness in sales of appliances, carpeting and furniture.

The output of construction supplies dipped by 0.6 percent, the third straight monthly drop.

Auto assemblies were nearly 20 percent below the monthly average in the first half of 1979.

Help for \$ savers

WASHINGTON — A new 30-month certificate of deposit will be offered Jan. 1 that will allow small savers to take advantage of record interest rates, federal financial regulators say.

Also, the new certificates will require no minimum deposit, a major breakthrough for Americans trying to protect their savings against inflation.

One of the main purposes of the certificate will be to help thrift institutions lure funds away from popular money market funds.

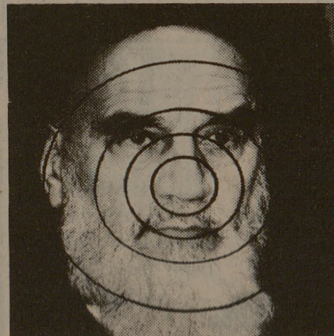
If the new certificates are successful, more money would become available for loans within the hard-pressed housing industry. That means home mortgages would become easier to obtain.

For those Americans not seeking a new mortgage, the government decision is still significant because it allows them access to high interest rates on their savings, no matter how little money they have to invest.

Six-month money market certificates now offered by financial institutions have a \$10,000 minimum. Most money market funds require a minimum deposit of at least \$1,000.

In addition to the high interest rates, the new certificates of deposit also will allow for compounding, a feature not available for money market certificates.

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