PaSe to the NEWS

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RELEASE: October 26

ARMS TO IRAN

One clearcut policy difference between President Ford and Governor Carter that surfaced in their foreign policy debate, but has unfortunately received little comment since then, is the matter of arms shipments to Iran. Although Iran is a faraway country with which not many Americans identify, our policy toward Iran could have as much impact as our policy toward another faraway country called Vietnam, albeit for a different reason.

In the big presidential debate on foreign policy, Carter criticized the Ford policy of selling arms to Iran -- both the dollar volume of the sales and the sophistication of the weapons and aircraft. He gave as reasons a confusing conglomeration of "idealism," "consistency," and a desire to give more priority to the military needs of our other friends. President Ford did a good job of defending our policy of military sales to Iran.

The Ford policy is soundly grounded in the economic facts of life. Iran's oil reserves are the second largest in the world. It has 65 to 70 billion barrels. When the Arabs, who have the largest oil reserves in the world, slapped their oil embargo on the Western world in 1973, Iran did not join that boycott.

Remember the shortage of gasoline while that embargo was in force, the long lines as we waited at service stations for a fillup, the inconvenience, the economic dislocations, the frightful costs to the United States, and even more so to our NATO and Japanese allies? If Iran had cooperated in that oil embargo, it would have been much worse.

(more)

If th Arabs saddle the est with another oil embargo, will *I :\Jn* succumli to pressu:re from it , Al'<"Jb and Hussian neighbors and join the embargo'/ Or will h·,1n1 co:nti:nue to ship to the West? '1ih.at i:s a question of potentially tre:m<:nuous sip niftcance because we n.r, even more dependent on imported oil today thara, ·we were three years ego. e 20w import 2 percent of our oil.

Irm:,: has a comm.on ·border with the Soviet Union and „;i th Irnq which is Co.mmunist dominated. Iran l'1as hacl t,m w.n·s with the Russians since the Bolsheviks came to power, which cost Iran 37 northern cities.

In t.?Je 1911.0s, thr:s Soviets inst,:dled a 1mppet Commun ,t government :i.n Iran. Thanks to the v:tsion r:n1rl the nnti-Communist foreign policy of Presi6H:m.t Harry Truman, our couutry gave Iran the support it needed to extricnte itself from Soviet control without military action. S0ving Iran from the Soviets is one of the few foreign policy victories our country has hfld s i.nce the end of World \?ar II.

In the con.text of Iran's obvious need to build up its own military ,·:e:.fenst , plus the .Arnericon need for oil, it is the height of irre sponsilJili ty for GoVt")rnor Carter to imply that he would refuse to sell to Iran because he doesn't approve **of** the percentage of the Iranian budget that iR spent on defense, **or** because Iron doesn't p:rr ctice the freedoms Wf: enjoy under tht, .1-\.mEiricmi Bill of lUg;hts, **or** lH'H1ause Iran doe::n1' t conform to Carter's 11idei':'!lism," whatever that may be.

Ther9 is e good ergwaent for setting a moral quid pro quo for our shiprmnts to those countries that are the beneficiaries of .Anu:ricnlll foreign eid, but Iran is paying for everything it receives.

The .11.merica:n people should stop, loolft and listen before they accept Carter's foreign policy. It might mean that next year we will not have enough soline to drive our cars.

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