



New book claims Israel was asked to assassinate Khomeini

Book by former Mossad official Yossi Alpher describes secret ties between Tehran and Jerusalem

Published May 16th 2015

Former Iranian Prime Minister Shapour Bakhtiar, the country's last PM before the Islamic Revolution in 1979, reportedly called on Mossad agents based in Tehran to assassinate the leader of the revolution, Ayatollah Khomeini.

The report is based on new information that was revealed as part of special conference at the **Institute for National Security Studies** in Tel Aviv via a book by Yossi Alpher, a former Mossad official, Israeli news site *Ynet* reported Friday. According to Alpher, former senior Mossad official Eliezer Tzafrir was asked by Bakhtiar in 1979 to kill Khomeini, at the time residing in Paris after being exiled from Iraq.

Iraq offered to lend a hand to the operation, by transferring Khomeini to the Shah, but the Iranian leader refused and the Ayatollah found asylum in France.

After Tzafrir heard of the request, he organized a meeting with Mossad officials in Tel Aviv so they could discuss their options.

"Mossad director Yitzhak Hofi announced at the beginning of the meeting that [he wouldn't] support the request on moral grounds but asked to hear the opinions of those who were present," Alpher was quoted by *Ynet* as saying. "I told the heads of the Mossad that I had difficulty supporting the request because we didn't know enough about who and what Khomeini was. I really regret not supporting that request."

Israel had secret ties and finalized a number of arms deals with the Shahs of Iran. Both countries also shared intelligence information.

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