

An epic

Not only is the unfolding Iranian arms scandal getting worse by the day, it appears to have dealt America's foreign policy a truly devastating blow. Out of this epic disaster, four major subplots emerge.

THE GULF WAR: Iran has just won its seven-year war against Iraq. Not, as expected, on the battlefield but by a dramatic psychological triumph. The Iranian Affair showed the world that Iraq's ostensible backers, the U.S. and Saudi Arabia, had secretly concluded that Iran was destined to win the war.

By pulling out the Persian carpet from under Iraq, the Reagan team has ensured that Iran would not only win the Gulf War but also emerge as a deadly challenger to America's modern Raj in the Mideast. Call it Mossadegh's Revenge, after the Iranian nationalist prime minister overthrown in the 1950s by the U.S.

No wonder that Iran's merry mullahs are celebrating. In one coup, they have humiliated their American foes, gotten even for past grievances and totally demoralized Iraq. Formerly discreet aid for Iran from China, Japan and Western Europe will now surge. So long as Iran can assure foreign financial credits, it cannot lose the war — and Iraq cannot win. A coup in Baghdad against President Husein is now probably only a matter of time.

ISRAEL: The unnatural and pervasive influence of Israel's hard right over the Reagan administration has now been exposed to public view. Most of the senior administration officials making Mideastern policy were, as a leading pro-Israeli lobbyist recently boasted, "our boys." Such as National Security Council aides Robert McFarlane, Dennis Ross, Howard Teicher, the late Don Fortier and a "consultant" closely linked to Israeli intel-

disaster for Uncle Sam



This column plainly stated on Nov. 21, four days before the scandal broke, that the U.S. was supplying the Contras through Israel. It will likely soon be revealed that the Contras received not only money from Israel but also arms. I wrote an article on this very subject for the *Chicago Tribune* back in February, 1984. If I knew about this dark "secret," readers may be assured that plenty of people in Washington did too.

FALLOUT: The Iranian Affair may sound the death knell for the Contras fighting Nicaragua's Marxist regime. Congress will vote them no more funds. As a consequence, Nicaragua will become a new base for Soviet subversion in Latin America. Victory in Nicaragua means Moscow can turn its attention to stirring the pot in Mexico.

Similarly damaged may be anti-communist guerrilla movements in Angola and Afghanistan. Nor is there much doubt that the Reagan administration will remain in such disarray for its remaining two years that few new foreign initiatives will be undertaken. The Soviet Union and its allies will be emboldened to seize this opportunity to attack the West's allies such as South Korea, the Philippines, Egypt, Morocco, Pakistan and Thailand. A victorious Iran will threaten to topple America's shaky Mideastern allies.

This disaster may at least teach the naive Trilbys of the American right that there is more to the complex Mideast than the simple tales of good and evil spun them by their Israeli Svengalis. Perhaps all those Mideast experts dismissed by Reagan's praetorian guard as "pro-Arab" or "soft on communism" really did know something after all.

ligence, Michael Leeden. These officials eagerly and quite uncritically adopted policies crafted for them by Israel's powerful military-industrial complex.

These policies led to deep involvement with shady Israeli arms dealers and their Iranian agents — one of whom was recently murdered. Some of the funds from the triangular Israel-Iran-Contra deal may well have been pocketed by the arms dealers. Knowledgeable Israelis who opposed the deal were dismissed by Washington as "leftists."

Anti-American forces from Morocco to India have been given a huge boost. Clearly, Reagan must bear final responsibility for allowing America's Mideastern policy to be subcontracted to a foreign power.

WHO KNEW: The coverup under way will assuredly backfire and cause many heads to roll. Secretary of State George Shultz, called "Israel's best friend in Washington," must have been privy to the Iranian arms deal. His denials are not only unbelievable but show shocking disloyalty to his president. Also in the know: The CIA; National Security Agency; the Defence Intelligence Agency.