POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN IRAN
1905-1978

THESIS

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By

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The constitutional revolution of 1905 is seen to result from the impact of Western political values on Iran's traditional society.

Reza Shah's dictatorship is explained in the context of compromise between feudalism and growing capitalism.

The roles and interactions of nationalism, religion, communism and political parties in Iran, particularly during 1945-1953, shows they were the reflection of profound changes within society.

The Shah's policies were politically motivated; they caused social dislocation and the politicization of the peasantry. The regime's failure to respond to these forces brought about its isolation.

We confirm Huntington's concept of political development and decay. Iran's changes of discontinuity and violence are seen clearly.

This study recommends the strengthening of the political channels of communication for Iran.
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INTRODUCTION

This is a study framed with a purpose--namely, to see what we can learn about political development from the experience of Iran in the years 1905-1978.

The term political development has been much discussed. It is defined differently by different scholars in the field. The ideas and theories of Sam Huntington about political development have been the lens through which the subject matter has been studied. In addition to Huntington, one can see that the work of Pye and Almond\(^1\) deals with the same material but in different conceptual frameworks; but it is my contention that the Huntington model best explains the events in Iran in the time period noted.

One could also use the thought of Karl Marx\(^2\) for whom the infrastructure always determines the superstructure of society. Even Aristotle's\(^3\) ideas in regard to classification of political systems add some depth to the focus.

Marx uses the term "infrastructure" and "superstructure" to make the point that the first is involved due to the

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process of science and technology, while the latter is petrifying, because of the ruling class's interest in the status quo. As a result, the contradiction and conflict in the infrastructure is inevitable and sooner or later would be reflected in the superstructure, which includes political system, religion, culture, and the like.

Some scholars, including Huntington, have tried to define political development independent of economic factors. For example, Huntington refers to political development as an institutionalization of political organizations and procedures.\(^4\) By institutionalization he means the ability of political institutions and procedures to gain value, acceptance, stability, and adaptability within society. Pennock argues that political development is an analogue to economic development and that it has qualitative content.\(^5\) For him, political development is simply an increase in the efficiency of a political system to produce collective goods. Finally, Rustow defines political development as an increase of national and political unity with a broadening base of political participation.\(^6\) Here,


\(^6\) Huntington, p. 389.
Huntington's definition of political development is used because of its applicability to Iran as well as every other kind of society, regardless of its economic development.

The study of each particular political system should be carried out in the context of the society within which the political system operates. Western scholars tend to study political systems of developing countries by using Western political models and values; these impose the danger of misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the political systems of developing nations. For example, the systems model as elaborated by Easton cannot be an appropriate analytical framework for the explanation of political trends and changes in backward societies. Because the model analyzes political development in terms of given static capacity of the political system, I shall review major problems and concepts of political development in less-developed nations before discussing Iran's political development in particular.

The process of modernization in less-developed countries is peculiar to the political development of those nations. At least five characteristics of political development can be identified in the nations of the Middle East.

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First, the manner employed in modernization carried out in less-developed countries was different from that which took place in the West. This, in turn, has given particular content and application to political development of those nations. In the West, modernization was achieved in a relatively long and continuous period of time and was the outcome of a long process of action and interaction of social, psychological, and economic forces within the society. In developing countries, however, modernization was imported from outside and was imposed on basically traditional societies, usually in a selective manner, through direct or indirect colonization of society. As a result, modernization in less-developed nations was accompanied by sudden and disruptive changes in the structure of traditional systems, because this kind of modernization originated from without and clashed with traditional values and norms. For example, in Iran selective industrialization took precedence in modernization as a social phenomenon, and industrialization aimed to change traditional values and norms rather than vice versa. In the West, on the other hand, social and intellectual revolution led to industrialization.

The process of selective modernization in developing countries of the Middle East is as follows. The emergence of imperialism as an inevitable outcome of capitalist
systems in the process of their evolution provides a unique opportunity to the ruling aristocracies of traditional societies to increase their wealth and power. The ruling aristocracy benefits foreign capitalists as well, due to its ability to provide law and order in traditional society, which are essential for operation of economic enterprises. Through their influence over ruling aristocracies, the Western powers would usually be able to achieve their objectives without disturbing the population at large and without need of direct intervention. In Iran, the ruling aristocracy itself initiated selective modernization not only to increase its wealth and power, but to neutralize the middle-class appeal to the people, who demanded redistribution of wealth and power. Moreover, the aristocracy was highly selective in its modernization effort to prevent its base of power from being undermined. All aristocrats do not advocate modernization; the aristocrats with a national base of power, such as the king, top governmental and army officials, and powerful landlords, encourage modernization to secure their positions. Locally based aristocrats, whose field of activities does not include

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whole nations, are hostile to modernization due to their fear of losing their traditional legitimacy. It is surprising, then, that the modernization-minded aristocracy stresses industrialization rather than just distribution of national resources and power.

The joint modernizing efforts of powerful aristocrats and a colonial power inevitably result in the degeneration of traditional political institutions. This is due to the needs of both the ruling aristocracy and the colonial power for skilled and native manpower. Such a force would be needed to restructure the substantive economy and to build an outward-oriented economy that is responsive to the foreign market rather than to the national market. These needs force a ruling aristocracy to build universities and to expand educational facilities (e.g., Reza Shah's educational reform). The by-product of this process is the importation of Western values and ideas that contradict traditional sources of legitimacy. It is in this context that the role of intellectuals and educated people is important, even disproportionate to their number in developing societies as transmitters of new ideas and values to society at large. The native aristocracy and colonial

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10 Ibid., pp. 101-102.

powers also are forced to reform and modernize the army and the bureaucracy to defend their interests, a by-product of which can be the creation of potential opposition forces. The aristocracy must convert peasants into unskilled factory workers, too, because of an outward-oriented economy's need for manpower. The conversion of peasants into factory workers creates potential revolutionary forces to whom members of the discontented elite can appeal to in order to further their own interests. The capitalistic products in search of market make their way into the countryside; they shake the simple life of villagers and expose them to the luxury of cities. The process of the conversion of peasants to factory workers cuts them off from their traditional culture, and makes them men of no identity. As such, they are amenable to manipulation. Although poverty existed in the villages in the past, it was not felt there as much as in the cities due to its universality and to the conservatism and isolation of villages. In the cities, poor people are exposed to pressures, and feel unequal. Such a feeling is a source of alienation from the existing system.

Educated people and intellectuals, on the other hand, are also alienated from the existing system, because of

12 Kautsky, pp. 84-86.
its failure to integrate them into traditional society. The local power base aristocrats, who are conservative, are hostile to modernized aristocrats, too. The result is a mounting discontent with the existing system from both right and left. A coalition of conservatives with nationalists against the ruling class, which is common in many third world nations, is thus not surprising. The relationship of the ruling aristocracy with colonial powers changes from mutual interdependence to total dependence of the former to the latter in face of opposition from within.

The process of selective modernization from without first would create a dependent aristocracy, and then a dependent bourgeoisie. The dependent bourgeoisie emerges because of the effect of the joint industrialization efforts of the ruling class and the foreign powers. These efforts provide grounds for development of a comprador bourgeoisie [dependent]capitalism. The process of development is further reinforced because of the inability of the national bourgeoisie to support the modernized aristocracy in the face of its opponents. Here again, unlike the classical Western bourgeoisie who advocate independence

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and democracy, the comprador bourgeoisie of the third world nations advocate movement in the direction of a total subordination of the national economy to the outside market. Its very existence seems to be dependent upon it.

The unclassical growth of dependent capitalism has given a peculiar slant to the operation of the political systems of third world nations. Most notable is the predominance of coercive instruments over political institutions. This situation follows from the nature of the opposition forces and the weakening of traditional institutions, the latter due to the impact of modernization. In these cases, if the comprador bourgeoisie takes over political power from the traditional ruling aristocracy, the regime becomes more repressive. The reason for this phenomenon lies in the fact that the aristocracy, with all of its evils, has had a place in the traditional society and thus has been more or less legitimate in the eyes of ordinary man, whereas the comprador bourgeoisie is alien to both traditional elements and progressive elements of society. In Iran, the land reform of 1963 was an outright stripping away of the political power of the dominant aristocracy.

Further, in the process of modernization from without, the elements of political modernization have a different content and perform different functions than in the West.
For example, if political mobilization is defined as "collective and structured expression of commitment and support within society," it was achieved in the West through political parties and elections. Western political parties are the outcome of a long and continuous historical process of adjustment and adaptation within society. Parties in the West function as vehicles to provide legitimacy for the political system, and they are a means of defending the interest of their followers within society. The elections provide the necessary choice for voters.

In most developing countries, however—information is not shared among citizens. The rate of illiteracy is high, the gap between the elite and masses is high with regard to both their motivations and their interests. There are conflicting loyalties on the part of the masses and even the elite, and the authority of the central government is weak or is based on coercive instruments—neither elections nor political parties can work in the Western democratic sense. That is to say, if elections provide choice in third world countries, whose progress is impeded due to deep social, economic, and demographical dimensions, such elections would do more harm than good by further dividing the nation. Political parties in the Western [14] J. P. Nettle, Political Mobilization: A Sociological Analysis of Methods and Concepts (London, 1967), p. 123.
sense are thus alien to developing nations. These nations have a complex and intensive informal—rarely formal—traditional framework of communication. As a result, formal political parties in developing nations must be built from the top down due to the apolitical situation, including the alienation of people from the political system. Political parties in less-developed nations are more like factions, more akin to a temporary coalition of interests that are massed around a charismatic leader. Their function is not to further the interests of their supporters, but to build legitimacy for the regime, at the same time taking it away from the opponents of the regime—thus keeping the structural and socio-demographic lineage of society from development action, and this by internalizing conflict. As a result, those parties cannot be independent of the government. They are a means of control and propaganda for the regime.

Second, selective modernization from without will have a weakening effect on the traditional political institutions of less-developed nations by imposing an alien political system on them, even though it has been unable to replace or destroy them. The result has been persistence of traditional institutions, hand in hand with modern institutions. Thus, in the political system of less-developed countries, persistence, contradiction, and conflict exist between continuity of the past and alienation of the past, creating
a source of political instability and degeneration. By political instability is meant the inability of a system to create a balance between demands and policy,¹⁵ and it is not surprising that political development in third world nations is a balance between traditional and modern.

In all, the political leaders perform reconciliation and mediation roles between traditions and modernity by personal appeal, the latter due to the degeneration of political institutions. Such dualities and contradictions force the political elite of developing nations to maintain their traditional role in the eyes of the ordinary man, while at the same time, they are to achieve industrialization and modernization. Moreover, leaders of third world nations have to present an appearance of the least possible dependence on outside forces, while at the same time using Western techniques of building legitimacy and achieving economic development, in order to maintain the balance between modernity and tradition.

It is in the context of maintaining such a balance that economic development and growth are important as a means of national integration, providing legitimacy for political systems and responding to rising expectations of the populace. All economic development and growth

then assumes a more and more political content. Unlike the West, in third world nations economic development or planning is a means to bring about desired socio-political changes, not the outcome of them. It is designed to involve uncommitted and apolitical masses in the mainstream of politics, to mobilize them in support of the regime, and not to enlarge economic benefit to society. The existence of highly modern and show projects in populated cities of backward countries makes sense only in the political content of economic planning, because they are signs of the political system's achievements and a source of legitimacy for it.

Third, nationalism in developing countries is functionally important as an instrument for nation-building, providing legitimacy for regimes and mobilizing people. The legitimacy building of nationalism is so important that, even after independence, leaders of third world nations find it politically expedient to attack imagined outside forces for deficiencies of the regime. For example, the deposed Shah of Iran periodically blamed an unholy coalition of black and red reactionaries for failures of the regime. Because of the leaders' roles as national reconciliators and arbitrators, due to weakening political institutions, the power gradually becomes centralized and personalized. It is in this process that
leaders' interests become identified with national interests. Moreover, because of highly personalized power, the political institutions receive their legitimacy in the person of the leader, as opposed to that of the West. The emergence of all-powerful leaders in third world nations further impedes the development of political institutions and parties. The coercive means is also used to defend the legitimacy of leaders, back up political propaganda, and maintain the independence of politics. As traditional institutions become weakened due to the impact of industrialization and modernization, the regime becomes less and less able to respond to the vocal demands of rising and new classes that are the creation of modernization, without jeopardizing the whole system. As a result, regimes become more and more dependent upon coercive means, political terror, and then mass terror. The terror's basic function in those situations is to deprive individuals and institutions of security and mutual trust and to impose upon them a sense of powerlessness in the face of seemingly all-powerful regimes. Regimes, by causing confusion between innocent and guilty parties, by poor definitions for acts of treason, and by unpredictable and arbitrary sentencing, further increase insecurity and uncertainty; this latter to prevent formation of opposition forces. In this process, regimes become less able to tolerate even modest critics.
But terror alone is not able to prevent human cooperation; and because terror contradicts other aims of the regime that are mobilizing the people in support of its programs and the building of legitimacy, the regime is forced to build organizations of its own to involve people in the affairs of state, giving them the strength that is derived from terror. In a majority of developing countries, labor unions, professional associations, and other organizations are not operating to defend their members, but rather for the purposes of propaganda and supervision of people by the regime. In Iran this was the case.

Fourth, the circumstances described above give particularities to the relationship of leaders with masses in developing nations. The relationship of the regime to its citizens is similar to actor-audience relationships in the theatre. This implies that political leaders in less-developed nations are stars, not professional politicians, and acceptance of political systems by the people, if any, is tacit rather than active. Due to a lack of any positive relationship between leaders and people, the changes that occur come through street riots, rebellion, turmoil, and coups, not through ordinary channels. The process of change is more disruptive if it is achieved by traditional leaders and traditional institutions. For example, in 1963, the Shah of Iran, as a traditional leader, initiated a series of social reforms aimed to
prevent revolution from the bottom by winning the support of the peasants who formed the majority of the population. By initiating this reform, he not only undermined his traditional base of power, but forced a centralization of power even more to counter this process.

Fifth, in a highly personalized and concentrated power relationship of the third world nations, the elite's political structure has a great impact on the political development of nations, even though their freedom of action is limited due to the environment in which they operate (e.g., of geopolitical position of the country, the degree of economic development, the value system of nation, etc.). Obviously, if political elites are interested in the continuation of existing political systems, the regime is more stable than when they are not, because wherever antagonistic political elites exist, they would appeal to groups to further their cause with the result of making uneasy and volatile the consensus of society. The ideologically unified, political elite structure is in a high degree stable, because un-ideological stands by members of the elite are not allowed. But this unity is not self-sustaining and real and has to be backed up by a high degree of propaganda and by force or threat of force. The diversity of interests within society introduces the fact that elites cannot stand up to those diversities. In cases where the unity of the
members of the political elite is based on interest and not ideology, the support of important groups within the society is necessary if that unity is to be maintained. There is a need for justifications of the regime, such as elections, parties, and the like. But in the personalized power politics of developing nations, whose political institutions are weak, the support of coercive forces is necessary for survival of the regime. This will result in a further concentration of power in the person of a king, president, or junta general. The Shah had such power.

It is in this general content of political environment of less-developed nations that I will analyze political development of Iran in the subsequent chapters of this study. As a developing country, Iran is faced with difficulties common to developing nations on the path towards modernization, but it has characteristics of its own as well. These can be either of an advantageous or a disadvantageous nature in Iran's political development activities. The country's geographical position as a bridge between east and west, and as a Middle Eastern nation (in a basically unstable region), its mineral resources, especially oil, its long and glorious history, and its having the Shah as a traditional leader, all have had their impact on the course of political development and modernization of the country.
This thesis is divided into four chapters that are based on historical perspective.

Chapter I analyzes the constitutional revolution, and the shortcoming of importing the Western model of political system in a traditional society. This finally caused the downfall of constitutional government.

Chapter II deals with the socio-political problems that come with rapid industrialization. Reza Shah's reign is analyzed as that of a traditional leader who attempted to weaken traditional institutions.

Chapter III is concerned with revival of Iran's nationalism. Iran's post-World War II era, up to 1953, was a period of freedom. This period was accompanied by an increase of the power of traditional institutions, communists, and nationalists. The emotional bonds between political elites and masses lead to the betrayal of the movement.

Chapter IV analyzes the land reform of the 1960's as an attempt on the part of political leadership to break down the power of landlords. The land reform and other social reforms of 1960-1963 were carried out without effective participation of the masses. They were political-oriented reforms, without any regard to socio-economic factors. The reform of 1960-1963, caused replacements in social forces and politicized the peasantry. The regime's
failure to respond effectively to the demands of the newly mobilized and politicized peasantry and of the bureaucratic middle class was responsible for the revolution of 1978-1979.
CHAPTER I

THE CONSTITUTIONAL MOVEMENT AND GOVERNMENTS
IN IRAN (1905-1925)

The Constitutional Revolution of Iran in 1905 was the reflection of the frustration of the people of both the distortion of the Iranian economy and the inefficiency of the political system in responding to the forces of change, including that for the maintenance of Iranian independence. Iran's economy in the early 1900's went from bad to worse. Less than 1 per cent of the population was literate, the rate of mortality was high, over 80 per cent of the population were involved in agriculture, and the industries of Iran were primitive. Iran's political system was ruled by a corrupt and privileged elite that had lost its legitimacy in the eyes of the majority of the people. Iran lacked a regular army, and the government was unable to maintain the internal security or even the unity of the country.

Moreover, Iran had been exposed to the challenges of Western powers, especially those of Britain and Russia. Those foreign powers had penetrated Iran's economy and political system both by making overt or covert alliances with different sections of Iran's aristocratic (or oligarchic) ruling elite, and by force. Iran was of great
importance to Britain, both strategically and economically, primarily because of Britain's desire to prevent hostile powers from jeopardizing its position in India through Iran. In addition, Iran provided a market for British goods and a cheap labor force for its investors.

Since 1908 the Russians were greatly interested both in Iranian oil, and because the northern region of Iran had traditionally been a trading partner of Russian merchants. Politically, the Russians wanted to keep Iran under their influence, or at least keep it neutral, to use it as a buffer zone in case of war between Russia and the European nations.

Iranian authority, unable to defend itself in the face of the internal influences of these foreign powers, tried to maintain a balance between Britain and Russia by contemporary alliances with one against the other or satisfying both by giving economic concessions to one country and then to the other. The Iranian court also looked to the British or Russians for loans, and the payment of those loans placed heavy burdens on the common people. As a result of all of these stresses, different factions began to form within the ruling class, each with its eyes on the external forces, so that the ruling elite's unity was broken. The impact of the Western penetration on the Iranian economy and politics was awakening the
people, and along with it came the importation of Western ideas and beliefs into the Iranian society. In a sense, the West at that time was a source of great hope and fear for the Iranian Nationalists who wanted to take advantage of the Western institutions and ideas while at the same time maintaining their country's independence.

Three significant internal and external events prior to 1905 had a profound effect in awakening the people. The first of these was the granting of tobacco concessions to an English firm in 1890 by Nasir-Din-Shah, giving the firm a monopoly over the sale and production of tobacco in Iran. The impact of these concessions was the weakening of the Iranian merchants and subordination of the economy to foreign markets. The concessions caused a popular uprising against the Court which was attacked because it had betrayed Iran's independence. The merchants and clergy became allies in order to exert pressure on the Shah to cancel the concession agreement by forbidding the smoking of tobacco. Finally the Shah yielded to the people. The impact of this event was profound and lasted a long time. It made the people aware of their power and showed them that they were able to force the government to answer to popular aspirations. Moreover, the members of the government realized that to remain in power they not only must satisfy foreign powers but also take into account the
public opinion of the Iranians themselves. The Shah's yielding to the people also caused a loss of Britain's prestige in Iran.

The second event was the defeat of Russia by Japan in 1905, proving that Eastern peoples were not inferior to Western states and that, if modernized, the eastern peoples could defend themselves against the challenges of the West.

The third event was the Constitutional Revolution of Russia in 1905, which proved to the Iranian people that it was both possible and desirable to restrict despotism, if not to replace or destroy it. These three events had their deepest impact on educated Iranians and clergy, because they were sensitive to social phenomena and because they had the most frequent contacts with the foreigners. Finally, it was the coalition and leadership of those two heterogeneous groups--the intellectuals and the clergy--that brought about the Constitutional Revolution of Iran in 1905.

The power of the Iranian clergy stems in part from the uniqueness of the Iranians' religion, namely Shism, a particular branch of Islam. Shism has both a general law and a rule of conduct for its followers, both socially and individually, so there is no distinction between the function of Church and State. As a result, the
Iranian clergy are involved in all aspects of life, including politics and economics. Their political power comes from their ability to mobilize masses due to their direct connection with the ordinary man. This is achieved through numerous extensive channels of communications, both formal and informal. Not only do the people understand the clergy, but often turn to them for social and individual advice. Since 1905, the clergy as a group has been an effective legitimizing force in support of government or in support of the people's resistance against authority. The clergy not only has articulated the people's grievances against authority, but has also been a last resort for oppressed individuals and groups.

The Iranian intellectuals, although they constituted a small group without effective and direct connection with the masses, yet they have played an important role in Iran's politics disproportionate to their number. Their function has been that of providing an intellectual base for progressive movements, as a vehicle for the transmission of new ideas in Iranian society. But their lack of effective communication with the people, the absence of legitimacy and a popular power base for them within society have forced them to come under the leadership of
the clergy and form an alliance with them to influence the Iranian political scene.

The merchants have also played an important role in the political development of Iran, as a result of their ability to control trade through bazaars. The bazaar is not only a concentration of trade but also a communicating framework for traders. So the bazaar has been a political force in Iranian society by advocating nationalism and freedom of trade. Even though its role is declining due to the establishment of trade centers, its influence still is real and significant.

The Constitutional Movement of Iran was a contemporary alliance of progressive clergy, intellectuals, and merchants, while each pursued its own particular interest through the movement which was subsequently reflected in the Constitutional Laws and actions of the first and second Parliaments. The clergy's objective in the movement was the creation of an Islamic state; the intellectuals adhered to democratic ideas and modernization of the country; and the merchants supported the independence and protection of the domestic market against foreigners. So it is not surprising that this movement was opposed to colonization and despotism, but did little for more equal distribution of national resources or reduction of exploitation.
An anti-movement camp included members of the Court, nobles, conservative mullahs, and the new emerging elite who had become rich and were influenced through dealing with foreigners. Clashes between these antagonistic groups have occurred again and again since 1905 in Iran. The Constitutional Movement had its origin in the Tobacco Concession, and it was organized and administered mostly by traditional elites using traditional means. In the time of Nasir-Din-Shah, due to his despotic rule that forbade any open opposition to his rule, a whole chain of secret societies started to develop. In those societies clergy, intellectuals, and merchants gathered regularly to coordinate their efforts and communicate with the ordinary people while maintaining secrecy. The rise of these secret societies was due to a lack of effective political parties and the existence of extensive family and personalization of power relationships in Iran. The assassination of Nasir-Din-Shah on May 1, 1896, by a member of one of these societies was an indication of the dimension of their activities. In June of 1896, Nasir-Din-Shah was succeeded by Muzaffrad-Din-Shah, who was both an ill and an indecisive man.

The spark occurred when a group of merchants took sanctuary in the Shrine of Abdul-Azim and soon were
followed by clergy in protest to the rising price of sugar. The taking of sanctuary in holy places corresponds to the traditional tendency of Iranians toward passive and non-violent protests. They demanded both a House of Justice and the dismissal of unpopular officials. The Shah's lack of popularity and confidence forced him to yield; and, when he failed to fulfill his promises, again merchants and clergy took sanctuary. This time the clergy went to the Qum, a holy place south of Tehran, and the merchants went to the British Legation in Tehran. The tactical decisions of the opposition forces were a manifestation of uneasy alliances of basically divergent elements of opposition movements. Now they demanded a Majlis (National Assembly) and a code of laws. The Shah finally agreed to this demand, and the Constitution was granted on August 5, 1906. As far as the movement asked for the end of foreign concessions and loans, it was nationalistic; and as far as it demanded the rule of law, it was democratic. The attitude of Britain towards the Constitutionalists was, at best, ambivalent. She at first supported them in order to weaken the Court, which, in British eyes, were basically under Russian influence. Second, since the internal governmental structure of Britain was democratic, she was unable to take a stand of open opposition toward a movement that demanded democracy.
The Constitutional Movement of Iran was in many respects unique with regard to previous Iranian revolutions. For the first time it tried to restrict the power of the Shah instead of removing it in a country that traditionally has regarded the Shah's rule as a divine rule, strong and wise. Second, it crossed different sections and classes of society and encompassed both traditional and modernized elements. Third, although its objective was alien in the Iranian traditional political scene, that objective was carried out in a relatively short period of time. This accounted for the subsequent shortcomings of the Constitutionalists' governments. The Constitutional Movement with its divergent elements and objectives--tradition and modernity--caused confusion and misinterpretation of its meaning. For certain educated Iranians, it meant democracy; for the merchants, independence; for the clergy, an Islamic society and the provision of greater autonomy. But the confusion did help to sustain the uneasy alliance of the opposition against the autocracy.

Those confusions and conflicts were reflected in the Fundamental Laws of Iran that were passed after the establishment of the first Majlis (Iranian Parliament) in 1906. The Fundamental Laws stated that the power of the government comes from the people. This idea was alien to both the Iranian and the Islamic traditions, which
regard leaders as wise and strong, as the ones who know the answer to every problem. Such a leader can be the Shah or an Ayatollah (prominent priest). The declaration that the people are the source of the government's power demonstrates the impact of Western ideas and political theories in Iran. But the clergy, in order to control the modernization drives of the intellectuals, provided in the Fundamental Laws for the formation of a committee of five Majtheds (prominent priests) to supervise laws that pass through Parliament in order to ensure their compatibility to the Sharia (Islamic Law).

The compromising nature of the Iranian Fundamental Laws between tradition and modernity is reflected in the Electoral Laws as well, in their provision for the universal suffrage of the male population and simultaneous prohibition of suffrage to women. Compromises between the modernizing and the traditional elements were due to the interdependence of both groups upon each other. The former needed religious institutions and the clergy to mobilize support for the constitutional government, while the latter had to adhere to the modernization programs of the intellectuals due to their inability to resist the popular aspiration that their power was based on.

The determination of the first Majlis to put an end to foreign loans and foreign concessions caused the strict
control of financial affairs by Parliament. The constitutional policies of the Majlis resulted from the emergence of new kinds of policy-makers in the Iranian political scene and the awakening of the people. They were also due to the impact of the Constitutional Movement on Iranian political development that created new sources of authority and legitimacy hand in hand with the monarchy, clergy, and aristocracy. Since that time conflict occurred between the Majlis and the Court, mostly through manipulation of power and informal shifting of power of one institution against the other, rather than a formal change in the laws.

The other noticeable event in the period of the Constitutional government was the expansion of the Iranian newspapers between 1906 and 1908. For the first time, they began to criticize government policies and foreign powers, and to function as a control device over government and bureaucracy. They also served as a legitimizing force, whereas in the time of the dictatorship their status was reduced to that of a puppet of the government, becoming its means of dissipating its value within the society.

Due to the alienation of the Constitutional modernizing ideas from the society and the low educational level of the population in general, the Constitution was unable to put forth any roots and become institutionalized. The first blow to the Constitutionals came when Russia and
England forgot their old rivalry and signed the Anglo-Russia Treaty to divide Iran, Afghanistan, and Tibet into a sphere of influence in 1907. As far as Iran was concerned, she was divided into three parts: north under Russia's influence; south under the British; and the center to remain neutral as a buffer zone between Russia and England. Again the political development of Iran was affected by actions taken outside its borders and beyond its control. For many years Iran had been able to maintain at least its formal independence due to the rivalry of Russia and Britain while the Iranian policy-makers tried to play off the two nations against each other, whether through negative policies of the Qajar rulers that granted concessions to both, or through the policies of the Constitutionalists that restricted foreign influence. Moreover, England had defended the Constitutionalists to weaken the Russian's position in Iran and to enhance its own prestige. But by the Treaty of 1907, England in fact acknowledged Russia's expansionist policy in Iran. This treaty depressed and disappointed the Iranian nationalists and intellectuals who had looked to Britain as an ideal democratic society, and it caused anti-British feelings in the Iranian public who felt that they had been betrayed by England. The objectives of the British in signing the Treaty of 1907 with Russia was to keep Germany away from India and the Persian
Gulf, and even to prevent the spread of the constitutional nationalist movements in Asia and especially India, after observing Iranian actions with the National Assembly, and turning Iranians' attention away from their real enemies that were the British and Russians. Russia's objectives in signing the treaty were to reduce its tension with England over Iran because of internal turmoil over Russia's defeat by Japan in 1905, and the stress caused by the Russian Constitutional Movement in 1905.

An important side effect of the Treaty of 1907 for Britain was its loss of political maneuverability vis-a-vis Russia in the case of Iran that in part caused Russia to encourage Mohammad-Ali-Shah to attack the Parliament with the direct help of Russian officers and dissolve it. But thanks to the Iranian Nationalists and the Bakhtiari tribesmen, who took arms in defense of the Constitution, the Russian-sponsored coup was defeated, the Shah was deposed, and the second Majlis was set up in August, 1909. This time the country was on the edge of chaos; Russian troops refused to leave the north of Iran on the grounds that Russia's interests were in danger because of the turmoil in Iran. Moreover, they encouraged the chaotic conditions so that they could exert more pressure on the Iranian government. The financial situation of the country went from bad to worse, and the Majlis was forced to spend most
of its time and money trying to counteract the rebellion. In the Majlis itself, two factions began to grow, the Democrats and Moderates. The former was in the minority but was more vocal and had the support of the bazaar that adhered to nationalistic ideas, as well as that of the secret societies, some of which were terroristic organizations (e.g., Mujahedian); the Moderate faction had the support of the clergy and the Bakhtiari tribes. Being squeezed by Russia and Britain and being the minority in Majlis, the Democrats tried to involve a third party in the affairs of Iran; they hoped that this party would counterbalance the Anglo-Russian Treaty, while remaining disinterested and far enough from Iran to have any imperialistic designs. The Democrats invited Morgan Shuster, an American citizen, to organize the finances of the country. He was given a wide range of power by the Majlis and he created a Treasury Gendarmerie. The Democrats' initiative finally brought about the dissolution of the second Majlis. At this time, the Iranian Majlis-appointed Cabinets fell regularly due both to the instability of the Iranian political system and to the presence of foreign influence; the army's lack of cohesion and the division of the ruling elite added to these problems. Moreover, the Constitutional Revolution divided Iranians into Royalists and Constitutionalists, and that caused a further division with
political degeneration of the traditional political institutions and sources of legitimacy.

The weakening of government was clear when the British moved their Indian troops into Iran in 1911 in order to secure British interests, especially the southern oil that had been discovered by an Englishman, William D'Arcy, in 1908. This move reflected the strategical differences between Britain and Russia in Iran, even though they were substantially in accord under the Anglo-Russia Treaty of 1907. Because the British wanted security in Iran, whereas Russia wanted chaos and instability, Russia's warning to Iran was all the more disgusting: . . . dismiss Shuster and don't employ foreigners in the future without prior approval of the Anglo-Russians!

This direct intervention into the internal affairs of Iran was an insult to the pride of Iranians who remembered their glorious past. So, the Majlis stood firm to resist the Russian threat while the Russians brought their troops closer to Tehran. The outcome was the informal dissolution of the second Majlis on December 24, 1911, by the Prime Minister who sent troops--mostly from Bakhtiari tribe--to the Parliament and prevented the Deputies from entering the Majlis under Russia's pressure. Finally, Shuster resigned and a new era of dictatorship, that of the Bakhtiaris, began.
For the second time, foreign powers dissolved an Iranian Majlis that was the symbol of democracy and modernization for Iranian nationalists. Foreign intervention, aside from the failure of the Iranian Parliamentary System, can be traced to internal structural shortcomings within Iranian society. The high rate of illiteracy and the lack of communication facilities able to expose the true meaning of the Constitutional Movement caused differing interpretations of that movement. For the countryside, the Constitution meant a greater autonomy, while for the central government it was the rule of the law.

The Constitutional movement shook and weakened the traditional source of authority of the ruling aristocracy, and the Shah, who claimed divine rights. By emphasizing that authority of the political system comes from the consent of citizens, not from God, the Constitutional movement removed the Shah as a symbol of authority and the Majlis replaced him. But the Majlis was unable to provide effective leadership in the feudalistic society, and the reciprocal to this was disunity. The personalization of power and the lack of genuine political parties with national programs and the ability to mobilize and organize people, especially the middle class, in fact handicapped the Majlis. The division of the Majlis between modern and traditional elements reinforced the process of weak
leadership. Moreover, by maintaining the Shah, the Constitution created both duality and conflicting legitimacy.

What was happening in the period from 1906 to 1921 was the rising of the people's expectations and the politicization of the urban people, without political education. The degeneration of the Majlis was due to the failure of the political system to respond to the aspiration of the people. At the time of the second Majlis' dissolution, the Constitution had lost its attraction, although its symbol, the Majlis, remained. Yet, the Majlis, in spite of all of its shortcomings, had been able to contribute to Iran's independence, through its resistance of Britain and Russia. The internal political division of Iran was weakened by foreign influence and was unable to maintain cohesiveness within the society. By the dissolution of the second Majlis, the only political institution that was less amenable to foreigners was dissolved, and the Bakhtiari Cabinet got a free hand.

Still, the old aristocracy which ruled Iran for years was strong; its members were those who knew government machinery and were educated enough to keep it running with a long-standing legitimacy from roots in the countryside. They finally found a new opportunity in the Majlis to strengthen themselves as they became Constitutionalists,
and more and more of the aristocracy's members gained seats in Parliament.

It should be mentioned that the Bakhtiari rulers were tribesmen, not statesmen, and they quickly returned to the old practice of maintaining the negative equilibrium between Russia and Britain by satisfying both through granting economic and political concessions to them and using the national government to increase their forces. From the time of the second Majlis until the rise of Reza Shah, Iran was occupied by foreign armies, Russians in the north and the British in the south. The country lacked a regular army of its own, and the local nobles were defying the central government. This was the result of parliamentarism and the increasing popular participation in the Iranian political scene.

In 1911, Nasir’l-Malk, an Iranian nationalist, was regent for the crown prince, who was under eighteen years of age. Nasir’l-Malk tried to form responsible political parties within the Majlis. But due to the backwardness of the economy and the general lack of maneuvering room in the Iranian traditional society, the particular functions that the political parties of the backward society should perform, that is, legitimacy-building and nation-building, failed.
Failing to achieve his goals and unwilling to witness Iranian soil under Anglo-Russian occupation, Nasir' l-Malk fled to Europe in 1912. This was a form of passive resistance and protest which presented the Anglo-Russians with a great dilemma. Because he was the regent, his approval of the acts of the government was necessary. So, in effect, Russia and Britain had to deal with two governments; one in the person of the regent, and the other in the form of the Iranian Cabinet in Tehran. Nasir' l-Malk was thus able to cause delays in the implementation of the Anglo-Russian designs. The other characteristic of the Iranian political system at that time was the instability of the Cabinet and the Prime Minister. In fact, the average life of the Cabinet was three months. This instability was due to a lack of cohesiveness at the national level, parochialism, and a highly personal base of power. As a result, the Cabinet was in fact temporary—a shifting coalition of powerful groups within the Iranian society, each with its own particular base of power and probably an eye on foreign powers due to the deep involvement of the Anglo-Russians in the internal affairs of Iran.

To make matters worse, in 1914, World War I broke out in Europe. From the very beginning the Iranian government declared its neutrality in the conflict. The underlying foundation of this policy was the emergence
of the Constitutional government and the new policy-makers, who had at least in common their xenophobia. This policy of neutrality sounded good in theory, the North of Iran was under Russian occupation and the South was under the British, and the neutrality zone was in reality nonsense. Moreover, public opinion in Iran was profoundly pro-German due to public bitterness with the Anglo-Russians, and to Germany's alliance with the Moslem Ottoman Empire. The British interest as far as Iran was concerned was to keep Germany away from India and Iran's southern oil fields. The Russians' interest was to prevent the use of Iranian territory by Germany as a base for attacking them. The impact of World War I on Iranian political development was initially fortunate because the conflict reduced the Anglo-Russian hold on Iran, so that the Iranian government was able to exercise its authority more effectively. Moreover, the coronation of Ahmad Shah in 1914, and the opening of the third Majlis in 1914, enhanced the Iranian's hopes and confidence, but they were disappointed when the war spread into Iran.¹

CHAPTER II

THE DEGENERATION OF POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS IN IRAN
AND THE RISE OF REZA SHAH: INDUSTRIALIZATION
WITHOUT MODERNIZATION

The Constitutional revolution broke the old traditional power structure of Iranian society. The Majlis, democracy, and nationalism emerged as new sources of legitimacy, hand in hand with the clergy, the monarchy, and the aristocracy. As a result, power in Iran became dissipated and loose.

The Constitutional movement, although increasing political participation and mobilization, failed to provide leadership and direction for the people. Its impact was limited to urban areas and affected only the middle class and the upper class. The countryside remained untouched by the Constitutional revolution. The isolated and uneducated peasants, as before, were bound to their feudal masters and landlords as a source of subsistence and guidance. In this situation, the result of democracy was nothing more than a new source of opportunity and power for aristocrats. This was what happened in the election of the third Majlis in 1914.

The third Majlis became a place for upper-class members to translate their economic power into political power, and through it to control the Prime Minister and the Cabinet. In fact, the dysfunctional Majlis, elected by the manipulation of politically unsophisticated people, itself became a source of instability.

The third Majlis was divided between Moderates and Democrats, with the former in the majority. The Moderates had the backing of the nobility, the clergy, and the Anglo-Russians. The Democratic party, basically pro-German, was a rallying point for all who were dissatisfied with the existing establishment. The dilemma that the Democrats were faced with was their aspiration to follow the Western paths and at the same time maintain the independence of their country. Soon antagonism between the Democratic and Moderate factions began to develop as members of each clustered around the leading personalities with few supporters outside the Parliament to further their interests. They were not interested in the nation through the national programs, particularly at this time when the monarchy was not a strong factor within the Iranian political scene.

The most important impact of the Democrats on the political development of Iran was created by their nationalism, their hatred for foreigners, and their suspicions of the Court, which reached their peak in subsequent
years. The Iranian Cabinet at that time was highly unstable due to the rapidly-changing configuration of social forces within Iran resulting from World War I and the involvement of foreigners, particularly Britain, Russia, and Germany. During this period Iran's Cabinet changed every seven months.² By the time of the extension of World War I into Iran in 1915, the Germans had achieved a degree of success in Iran, especially the South. All of the British sphere of influence was insecure except in the oilfields, and German agents were everywhere. In November of 1915, Prime Minister Mustaufiu'l-Mamalik tried to achieve a political coup to emancipate Iran from the Russians and the British by asking the Majlis to dissolve itself and move to Qum. The aim of this move was to form a pro-German Cabinet and change the capital of Iran to a city far from the Russian troops. But the Anglo-Russians successfully persuaded Ahmad Shah to remain in Tehran and, as a result, the coup failed on November 15, 1915. But in the province of Kermansha, the Governor-General, Nizamu'l-Saltaneh, formed a pro-German provisional government with the help of self-exiled deputies and Democrats. Again, the plan failed, because Russian troops forced them out of Iran and because the Ottoman Empire's effort to

²Peter Avery, Modern Iran (New York, 1965), p. 178.
form an Islamic state had alienated intellectuals and modernizers who feared that the conservative mullas would get the upper-hand. By the end of 1916 the Allies regained their hold on Iran.

In 1917 the Bolshevik Revolution occurred in Russia, affecting Iran very deeply. First, all of the traditional Iranian foreign policies, which were designed to create and maintain the balance between Russia and Britain and through which Iranian independence was achieved, were shaken. Second, the Iranians were faced with far more threats from the Soviet Union than from the Tsarist Russia, for since 1923 the new Russian government had pursued the old Tsarist imperialist designs by trying to control the waters of the Persian Gulf. But this time there was a new technique of Communist surveillance and penetration in an overall context of capitalist-socialist struggle.

The immediate impact of the Bolshevik Revolution of Russia in Iran was chaos and famine in the entire Tsarist Russian sphere of influence under the agreement of 1907. The British took the opportunity to gain control of all Iran except for the Gilan Province in the north. In 1918 the Soviet government apologized for all the wrong-doings of the Tsarist regime to Iran and declared that the 1907 agreement with the British was no longer valid.

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3 Rouhollah K. Ramazan, The Foreign Policy of Iran 1500-1941: A Developing Nation in World Affairs (Charlottesville, Virginia, 1966), pp. 139-140.
These concessions by the Soviet Union were coupled with strong Communist propaganda against the British and resulted in anti-British feelings in Iran, in the loss of prestige for the British, and for those Iranian politicians who cooperated with them.

A new trend in British foreign policy toward Iran emerged. The underlying elements of this trend were the weakness of the British economy due to the war and the appearance of the first Communist nation with its 1500 miles of common border with Iran. From now on the British advocated a strong, substantially prosperous, and pro-West Iran, which could not be overturned by the Communist propaganda and which would be a buffer zone against the spread of Communism into India. This policy was based on the assumption that the division of Iran, as in the 1907 agreement, between the Soviet Union and Britain would allow further expansion of Communism and cause more expenses for the embattled economy of England. It was in this context that Britain offered an agreement to Iran in 1919 that, if applied, would have made Iran, in fact, a protectorate, colony of Britain. The British offered the Iranians modernization of the country's economy, its army, and its communication, as well as the help of British advisors. The British motivation was to become the sole partner of Iran by filling the power vacuum
that existed in Iran because of the withdrawal of the Russian army and preventing Germany from doing so. The economic motivation was also important. Iran would provide raw materials, markets, and cheap labor for the British industries, and Iran was to be modernized even if it had to import its capital goods from England.

The agreement was signed between the British Government and the Iranian Prime Minister, Vousgu'1-Daulah, in 1919, but the Majlis refused to ratify it. The Iranians' anti-British feelings and Iranian frustration with Britain, particularly after 1907, were so high that ratification of the agreement through the Parliament was out of the question. The people saw the agreement as a threat to Iran's independence and dignity. Moreover, the young Shah of Iran was not willing to sign the agreement because of the pressure of public opinion, and his lack of power to resist that pressure. Making matters worse, Vousgu'1-Daulah as Iranian Prime Minister tried to influence the election of the fourth Majlis; this raised the Iranians suspicions of the goodwill of the British. The agreement of 1919 finally died due to the Soviet Union's invasion of Northern Iran in 1920 and the British's failure to defend the area.

The aim of the Soviet Union's invasion was to counter and neutralize the pro-British policy of Vousgu'1-Daulah,
forcing the Iranian Government to forget the unratified agreement of 1919. The British's failure to defend Iran was due to Britain's financial crisis which came about because of the war that had forced her to withdraw most of her troops from Iran.

While the Vousgān's government sought to protect Iran against the Soviet Union by the agreement of 1919, internally the Iranian political system went from bad to worse. The withdrawal of British and Russian troops from Iran caused a period of chaos, and the shaken economy suffered badly upon the extension of World War I into Iran, while the Constitutionalist government failed to provide effective leadership as they did in the Revolution of 1905. This failure stemmed from the uneasy coalition of diverse forces gathered to combat the despotism of the monarchy, which sought to extend foreign powers' involvement in the affairs of Iran. When the Shah was removed, the coalition failed to sustain Iranian unity; in the aftermath of the Constitutional Revolution the unity of leadership levels to utilize it for the good of the nation was lost. The greatest achievement of the Constitutional Movement in Iran was the enhancing of the mobilization and participation of the people, the constructing of new and modern sources of legitimacy, and the bringing of ideas of democracy into Iran's basically traditional and despotic
political system. However, the movement's failure to destroy tradition forced it to make a compromise between modernity and tradition, as reflected in its acceptance of the Shah and Islamic ideas. It also failed to maintain the political stability and independence of the country, due to the lack of political parties with national bases of support, concrete national socio-economical programs, and the basically traditional nature of Iran's economy. The Shah, as the traditional and spiritual leader of Iran, was no longer able to perform his duties as initiator of the policies and the symbol of national unity, because of the shifting of power to the Parliament and the Prime Minister's office.

Moreover, these shortcomings were due to the structural shortages within the society, such as the low rate of literacy and the wide gap between the elite and the masses. In a word, Iranian society at that time was not able to assimilate such a sophisticated and imported political system into its own feudalistic economy. The foreign powers' intervention and the rise of policy-makers all with their own narrow self-interests, accelerated the institutional degeneration of Iran's political system.

Reza Shah's Industrialization

Reza Shah's regime was a synthesis of Iran's socio-economical situation in 1920. The Constitutional
governments had failed to protect Iran's border, the economy was in serious trouble, and corruption prevailed. The demand for modernization and security was so high that people were receptive to change. During his reign, Reza Shah carried out selective industrialization and provided law and order. Moreover, he successfully maintained Iran's independence, at least as far as occupation of the country was concerned. But he tried to westernize Iran, which alienated the Iranian people. In fact, Reza Shah's regime had not shared common values with people. The following section of this study analyzes the socio-political impact of industrialization during Reza Shah's rule.

After World War I, Iran faced several secessionist movements. In the North, a nationalistic and religious Kuchak Khan revolt took place against the central government. In Azarbijan, the national Democratic Movement fought for secession of that region. The southern oil field was under the control of Shiekh Khazal's forces and the Bakhtiari tribe. These secessionist movements were an indication of dissatisfaction of the people with the Constitutional governments. In the summer of 1919, the Gangali Movement was defeated by troops of the national government. The Kuchak Khan agreement with Britain, which permitted British troops to go to Baku through
Gilan, deprived him of popularity. The people were anti-
Britain, due to its agreement in 1907 with Russia; thus,
they rejected any kind of dealings with Britain. As a re-
sult Kuchak Khan was forced to seek the support of the
Soviet Union and its Iranian comrades.

The Gangali rebellion was the first experience of
Iran with the new regime of the Soviet Union and its tactic
of setting up Soviet republics. The new Soviet Union's
offensive against Iran was carried out in the context of
capitalist-socialist warfare. In 1920, the Soviet Repub-
lic of Gilan was declared, and the fourth Majlis of Iran,
when it was finally convened in 1921, was divided between
socialists and reformists. The Soviet Union's support of
Gilan's Republic aimed to make Britain more amenable to
its demands in other parts of the world, and to put pres-
sure on Iran's government to reject the unratified agree-
ment of 1919 with Britain. The Soviet Union's direct in-
vansion of Gilan in 1920 broke off the uneasy alliance of
nationalists and communists in Gilan.

In the political sphere of Iran, changes desirable to
Russia occurred. The Vousgiu government fell and Mushir'il-
Daulah became Prime Minister in 1920. In foreign policy
he pursued a much more realistic program than his

4 Ramazani, p. 140.
predecessors. His basic policy toward the Soviet Union was a policy of reconciliation without appeasement. He rejected the agreement of 1919 but declined to recognize the new Soviet regime as long as Russian troops remained in Iran. Moreover, the new regime of Russia came under attack by the Iranian press that again placed it on the same footing with Britain. As a result, by 1921, the Soviet Union was no longer willing to support the Gangali Movement, and that was further divided because of open war between the Communists and the Nationalists. Finally, the Movement on September 8, 1921, was suppressed by a Cossack Army headed by Reza Khan. The National Democratic Movement of Azarbijan on September 14, 1920 and the Shiekh Khazal Rebellion of December 15, 1924, were suppressed as well. Reza Khan gained popularity and publicity throughout Iran because of his victories over the Gangali secessionists.

To understand the Reza Shah's regime not only is it necessary to review the socio-economic and political condition of Iran, but the attitude of Britain and Russia towards the situation as well. When the British became sure that the passage of the agreement of 1919 by the Iranian Parliament was impossible and the young Shah of Qajar was not willing to support it, they turned to another

\[5\text{Ibid., p. 152.}\]
tactic. Now they advocated an Iran that was both able to defend itself under a strong leadership and committed to the maintenance of law and order for the peaceful operation of British enterprises, particularly the oil operations. Moreover, a strong and substantially prosperous Iran would be a buffer zone against the expansion of the Communists into India and the Gulf States. Although the extent of British involvement in Reza-Syyid-Zia-Din coup was not clear, the coup obviously corresponded with England's foreign policy objectives in Iran. It is noticeable that the coup of 1921 was launched from Qazvin which was the British military headquarters. In addition, the coup took place only a few days before British troops left Iran. Thus, the coup seems to have been designed to fill the power vacuum that would be created following British withdrawal. The Syyid-Zia-Din himself was intermediator between the British and Iranian nobility. Moreover, Reza Shah during his reign was very selective in his modernization drives and was very careful not to jeopardize British interests.

Reza Khan's power was due mostly to his control over coercive forces that enabled him to bribe and terrorize his opponents and influence Cabinet decisions. Reza Khan was not only a soldier but also a deceptive politician. He sided with the Shah to oust his rival and co-conspirator.
Syyid-Zia and then turned on the Shah by siding with the clergy and Nationalists. After providing stability and exploiting it, he deposed Amad Shah, and in 1925, after already actually becoming an undisputed leader, declared himself Shah and received the approval of the Majlis.

Reza Shah's greatest contribution to Iran was enhancing the independence and stability of the nation. His acceptance of the role of Shah as traditional leader of Iran was in conflict with his westernization efforts, limiting his success and undermining his very base of legitimacy. The political power at the time of his reign shifted from the Majlis and the Cabinet to the Court. He tried hard to make the people aware of their nationality and to combat the secessionist tendency, but he failed to develop viable political institutions to hold the country together when he was no longer on the scene. His objective was to bring the Iranian people back in contact with their pre-Islamic past, that had alienated the majority of the people from him, because nationalism and religion in Iran were intertwined, and because of the peculiarities of Iran's religion and language. Reza Shah's stress on national loyalty rather than Islamic loyalty deprived him of a strong source of legitimacy and religion, especially in the countryside where the majority of the peasants were deeply traditional
and religious. This forced him to personalize power and rely on nationalistic ideas and monarchical institutions as sources of legitimacy. His personalization of power in a society whose power relations had been basically personal further impeded institutional development. Although he maintained the mockery of the Constitution and the Majlis, he in fact subordinated the Majlis to the Shah. In reality, even the direct intervention of the Shah in Parliament was not usually necessary because the mere threat of despotism or force made the deputies vote as they thought the Shah wished. In the economic sphere, he pushed forward a selective industrialization that had mainly a political content, as will be shown later in this study. The result was the undermining of legitimacy of monarchical and traditional institutions.

Among Reza Shah's first acts was educational reform; the first university in Iran was established during his reign. The Shah's aim was to train the skilled workers, for whom there was a great need in the programs of industrialization. He also wanted to reduce Iran's dependence on foreign experts, maintaining that these were dangerous to the continuation of the country's independence. The other motive for educational reform was the limitation of the clergy's power. Until that time education had been their exclusive domain. Then he took bold steps to
create a new western-oriented middle class and intellectual group who would support his regime. The Marxist critics of Reza Shah argued that his efforts would subordinate Iran's economy to western developed nations and that his educational reform resulted from the need of foreign enterprises for skilled native technicians. This claim was further supported by the fact that the educational system of Reza Shah stressed operational and executive knowledge and not the personal initiative and development that are the real sources of a nation's technical independence. In fact, management and decision-making power remained in the hands of the foreigners, and Iran's industry was not independent or responsive to the needs of the society.

The Shah created the Civil Code of Laws and the Civil Courts, but, again, the institution motive was mostly political rather than economic. By instituting the courts, not only did the Shah reduce the power of the clergy, who were the only class that could interpret Sharia, Islamic Law, but he abolished the right of capitulation that foreign nationals enjoyed in Iran.

These reforms, particularly in education, creating a group of educated Iranians who were unable to integrate themselves into a traditional society, resulted in a potential force of opposition. The reform of the judiciary system was doomed to failure at that time due to Iran's
administrative inefficiency and the shortage of trained judges.

The state and the entire governmental bureaucracy under Reza Shah's regime became agents of modernization and industrialization. A series of state-sponsored light industries was introduced, due to Iran's shortage of both native entrepreneurship and capital. In fact, Reza Shah helped the middle class to use the state bureaucracy for its financial base. The result was the development of capitalist bureaucrats who depended on the state for their survival. The by-product of this was concentration of power at the top offices of government.

The establishment by Reza Shah of the National Bank of Iran in 1927, was a major achievement of the regime. The construction of the Trans-Iranian Railway was completed on August 24, 1938. It was financed by domestic capital through the levy of taxes on sugar and tea. The construction of the railway had political power attraction in that it could prove to the Iranian people that they were not inferior to foreigners. It could also help the regime gain domestic legitimacy for an unpopular and repressive Reza Shah, by showing the people the achievements of his regime. The railroad also was aimed at reducing the

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economic dependence of the northern part of Iran on the Soviet Union. But it might have been cheaper and more useful to construct roads than railroads. In the construction of the railroad, Reza Shah did not rely on any single country for technical aid, but on many countries.

Reza Shah's regime abolished honorary titles that distinguished people according to their social status. The aim of this policy was to reduce class distinctions and particularly to reduce the upper class influence of the Qajar families. The abolition of traditional dress and the introduction of European clothing were aimed at cutting people away from their traditional culture and at easing the obvious differences that were based on region, tribes, et cetera.

The compulsory unveiling of women by the Shah's orders angered the majority of the Iranians who were Islamic. The object of this rule was to provide for the social participation of women. Some measures were introduced to improve administrative efficiency, including a universal system of promotion and the enforcement of punctuality. Reza Shah was not quite successful in his nation-building, as the experiences of subsequent years show; but through massive expansion of communication, education, and industrialization, he provided the ground both for development of a viable parliamentary democracy in subsequent years and for national unity.
The negative aspects of his role were the autocratic rule and the imposition of heavy financial burdens on the lower and middle classes, who were forced to finance the industrialization of the nation. Reza Shah's industrialization impeded development of the national middle classes and failed to direct the middle class's talent and zeal in support of his regime. Deep state involvement in the economy and the restriction of foreign trade were carried out. A new bureaucratic middle class was created, of army officers, governmental employees and contractors, who owed their existence to the Pahalavi dynasty. Inflation during Reza Shah's reign mounted because of the heavy investments in unproductive and show projects and in the projects that gave long-range results, such as education. The inflation and industrialization widened the gap between the poor and rich as well as between the urban areas and the countryside.

It is not surprising that no attempt was made to narrow the gap with the implementation of economic justice. In fact, the basic economic structure of the society remained intact. For example, the issues of land reform never came to the surface during Reza Shah's reign because of the regime's fear of politicizing peasants who formed the large majority of the population and thus alienating of the upper class people. Although individual
landlords or priests were treated ruthlessly, their power base and their wealth remained intact, if not increased. The selling of state-owned land to finance industrial projects increased the wealth of the nobility; the landlords were allowed to control Parliament and, through it, their class interests. These issues were much more important for the long-run development of Iran than selective modernization.

Quick degeneration of the Iranian political system during World War II proves that what Reza Shah brought to Iran was not unity but forced conformity. The whole system was put together by the person of the Shah with his iron hand, and that caused a deep hatred of and bitterness toward the monarchy by the people. In actuality, his repressive rule not only did not depoliticize clergy power but indirectly increased it. People turned to the clergy for help, and the struggle for legitimacy between the Court and clergy continues even now.

The national army created by the Shah was identified as covered by him, creating another nobility hand-in-hand with the Court, clergy, and aristocracy. The army with its uniforms, guns, discipline, and ruthlessness was viewed by the people as a threat to democracy, and it obviously had no place in the traditional society. In fact, while the Shah's office was traditional, he was a
modernizer. The result was an inherent conflict and a dual role played by the Shah that undermined his legitimacy. The regime created both a middle class and intellectuals, who began to place more and more demands on the political system, to which it was not able to respond; instead it was suppressed by the regime. Two-way communication between the regime and the people was blocked as the Shah relied more and more on repressive instruments. The quick defeat of the Iranian army in World War II is not surprising and indicates that the army was designed to suppress domestic opponents and to function as a symbol of independence, not to defend Iran against foreign powers.

The ad hoc nature of Reza Shah's modernization failed to provide a basis for sustaining economic growth and development. The lack of positive ideological justification for his programs resulted in the lack of direction for change. He felt an obligation to reinterpret the relationship of Islam and the state in justification of his efforts. This was because Islam is a total all-encompassing religion, without separation of church and state. So, Westernization came into conflict with religious values. Reza Shah's attempt to separate state and religion deprived him of the support of strong traditional and religious institutions. The hostility of the clergy toward the Shah's ad hoc westernization,
doomed it to failure. The clergy emerged as a symbol of traditional values and resistance to dictatorship. In addition, industrialization had virtually no influence upon the countryside.

The rise of Reza Shah as a strong leader raised the expectations of the people who have suffered colonization and exploitation. But as the living patterns were not changed for the majority of the people, they became alienated from the system, forcing the regime to rely more and more on repressive organizations. The result was again frustration, apathy, and passive resistance on the part of people. Reza Shah, in order to both mobilize people in support of his regime and to control them, tried to form political parties from the top. They all failed, because they did not express the need of people, and because the absolute rule of the Shah made political parties meaningless.

In foreign affairs, Reza Shah generally pursued a policy of neutrality. In 1921, after the Reza-Syyid-Zia coup, Iran signed a treaty of friendship with the Soviet Union. Under its terms both countries recognized the boundaries of 1881, and the Soviet Union cancelled all previous treaties of Tsarist Russia with Iran. Both countries also agreed to prevent the formation of any hostile group directed against the other to prevent
their territories from being used as an attacking base to the other by a third party. Moreover, the Soviet Union gained the right of intervention in Iran if attacks seemed likely. The other noticeable part of the agreement was that Iran did not have the right to grant the cancelled Russian concessions in Iran to other countries.

As a whole, Reza Shah's policy towards Russia was the same as Mushir-l-Doula's policy of a conciliation without appeasement. So, although he came to terms with the Soviet Union, native Communists were severely suppressed. The agreement of 1921 enhanced the Soviet Union's prestige in Iran and was accompanied by strong Communist propaganda, while at the same time, it caused anti-British feelings in Iran. Almost at the same time, the regime of the coup came to power and it rejected the unratified 1919 agreement of Iran with Britain to prove that the new regime was independent. To enhance Iranian independence vis-à-vis foreign powers, particularly the Soviet Union and England, the Shah tried a regional agreement, without seriously confronting the British and Soviet interests. He was also particularly anxious to get help from distant and apparently disinterested countries like the United States and Germany. For example, Dr. Arthur Millspaugh, an American citizen, worked in the Finance Department from 1921 until 1927. Trade with the United
States and Germany increased during the Shah's reign, and German technicians entered Iran. The rapprochement with Germany was due to the emotional and negative reactions of Iranians toward Britain and the Soviet Union and to the similarities of Reza Shah's way of ruling and Hitler's between 1933 and 1945.

The Sadabad Pact between Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Afghanistan in July 1937 was aimed at easing boundary differences between Iran and its neighbors and was the first step towards regional grouping and alliances for Iran to counter Anglo-Russian pressures. This kind of foreign policy was new in the Iranian scene.

Reza Shah unilaterally cancelled William D'Arcy's oil concessions between Iran and England; but he was careful not to confront the British, and he proposed a new agreement that was signed in 1933. The agreement allowed Britain to exploit Iran's oil for another sixty years; and Iran was deprived of the right to cancel the agreement unilaterally. The dependence of Reza Shah's industrialization on oil income forced him to come to terms with Britain.

In 1941, although Iran declared its neutrality, she was occupied once again by British and Soviet troops, and Reza Shah was forced to abdicate. Reza Shah's actions were opposed to the Constitutionalist government that had pre-

7Avery, p. 325.
ceded. He enhanced Iran's independence and maintained stability, while downgrading democratic ideas and values; he terrorized Iranians. During his reign Iran walked both on the paths of industrialization and those that form the basis for true democracy; the Shah was able to reflect the need of the majority of the people for economic progress, and that was a constructive development. The negative aspects of his modernization programs were the establishment of new industries which were dependent on foreign experts and were based upon cultural and political borrowings from Western ways.

In all of Reza Shah's attempts to reshape his country, he was, as noted before, caught by the forces that he unleashed. Professor Huntington has predicted that these would be a part of the destabilizing results of modernization.8

8The materials of this chapter are derived from: Avery, pp. 210-341; Ramazani, pp. 114-300.
CHAPTER III

THE POLITICS OF SOCIAL CHANGES, 1941-1953: RELIGION, COMMUNISM, AND NATIONALISM

Before Reza Shah took power in 1925, Iranian society was a traditional society. The possession of land was important both as a source of wealth and as a demand of political power. The state in traditional societies is very simple. It is merely a collection of self-sufficient and isolated entities, the basic task of government being the provision of law and order through the keeping of a balance between the existing groups. The loyalty of a citizen to authority is based on the personal qualifications of the holder of office, and the relationship between the rulers and the ruled is personal. The major classes within such societies are landlords and peasants and, in the case of Iran, small traders, called the Bazarri middle class. The peasants' demands from the political system are both a necessary living and security for their families. Whatever government meets those two demands can rely upon their support. Moreover, peasants are not directly faced with the holders of authority, but rather have contact with them through landlords. This means that rebellion in traditional societies is not
against the holders of authority, but against the landlords. The stability of a traditional society is achieved through use of the family as the basic social and economic unit with strong and persistent social values that bind landlord and peasant in a stable and hierarchical system.

The Bazaari middle class world-view was limited. Its sphere of activities was confined to the local town. Reza Shah's crash program of industrialization, which was concentrated in a few urban areas, while the countryside remained untouched, created a duality: the modern cities on the one hand, with traditional villages in the countryside, on the other, and an ever-widening gap between them. Being aware of the lack of resources and sophistication of the Bazaari middle class, Reza Shah fully utilized the government machinery as the backbone of progress. The government acted as the owner of raw financial resources for a new kind of middle class; the bureaucratic middle class.

This class, unlike other classes of Iranian society, did not possess a source of economic power independent from the state, such as wealth or capital, but its members had their profession and knowledge. The bulk of this class consisted of bureaucrats, technocrats, army officers, and intelligentsia. Their world-view included their own nation and others of the world however, and their fields of activities included the entire nation-state. Their
program of action would mobilize the whole population. For the first time, they brought issues such as national integration, and territorial integration into focus in Iran. The Bazaari middle class was weakened by the more powerful bureaucratic middle class and by foreign competitors. However, to a large degree, the Bazaari middle class was able to maintain itself as a political force due to its utilization of the intensive operations of informal religious and Bazaar institutions. The Bazaari also pressed for more than a mockery of ideology; they wanted the moral values and principles of Islam to have a position in politics.

Reza Shah, who was a traditional leader, brought about profound social reforms which resulted in the alienation and isolation of the political system from the majority of Iranian citizens, particularly the peasants. In an Islamic society, such as Iran, any kind of reform inevitably implies redefinition of the relationship of religion and state. Reza Shah's cautious and selective modernization at first pushed the bureaucratic middle class into an alliance with the upper class, who very much controlled the machinery of state, which consisted of powerful landlords, the industrial elite, the royal family, and the

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big ulamas--respected theologians. But the modernization did not touch the countryside, because of the regime's fear of politicization of the peasants. The governmental machinery remained in control of the traditional elite. Thus, the bureaucratic middle class, who advocated mobilization of the nation and national integration, turned against the regime.

The extension of World War II to Iran in 1941 increased the number of business groups, who benefited through dealing with foreigners. They gained huge profits through speculation in commodities and the black market. Politically, the existence of these groups depended upon the support of occupying forces of Iran, and the two were allied. As long as Reza Shah was in power, an artificial stability was maintained in Iran. His dictatorial rule prevented any single group from becoming too powerful, and he eliminated all actual or potential opposition that might offer leadership to discontented groups. In short, he utilized military solutions for primarily socio-economic problems.

At the international level, a redistribution of power due to World War II occurred. Near the end of the war, it became obvious that Europe would not be the center of economic and military strength any longer; the Soviet Union and the United States would dominate the post-World
War II international world order. Post war international politics would be bipolar rather than multi-polar. For Iran this change implied the weakening of its traditional enemy, Great Britain. This replacement and the temporary loosening of the hold of foreign powers in Iran, coupled with the abdication of Reza Shah, was responsible for the freedom that Iran experienced from 1945 to 1953.

The lack of able leadership in the post-World War II era in Iran came hand in hand with increased demand for political participation and resulted in political instability and confusion. After the war, the lines of struggle were clearly drawn. The upper class of Iran sided with the Shah and his court. They defended the status quo, while the middle class and the lower class, each for reasons of its own, demanded changes. The lower class, with strong roots within the traditional society, was highly religious. The Bazaari middle class was receptive to religious ideas, too, due to its traditional function. Both the lower class and Bazaari middle class supported the right wing of the nationalist movement. The bureaucratic middle class and intellectuals sided with the secular wing of nationalist movement, as it was manifested by the left wing of the National front, particularly by the Iran Party. The more politically sophisticated workers and the radical middle class adhered to the Iranian
communist party, the Tudeh Party. For an understanding of the role of these diverse groups in Iran's political development, this chapter analyzes religion, nationalism, and communism in Iran.

Religion

Iran's official religion is Shism, a sect of Islam. In the revolution of 1905, and again in the nationalist movement of 1953, religion was used to enhance Iran's independence. In fact, Shism as a religion incorporated features of Iranian culture. The allegiance of an overwhelming majority of Iranians to Shism has been a source of national integration. Loyalty to Shism exceeded even family and kinship loyalty.

In the modern history of Iran, religion has been a counterbalance for Western cultural ideas and, to some extent, for the Western economic offensive. The rapid and vigorous imperialistic offensive of the West in Iran, in the early twentieth century, radicalized religious movements and gave them more and more political content, because the Western offensive against Iran was political as well as economic.

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Although Shiism as the faith of the majority of Iranians has not changed, its content has changed over time, due to rapid changes of the socio-economic forces of society. This has been reflected in various religious movements.

The clergy has been divided between those who totally rejected any kind of Westernization, and those who accepted Western notions of economic progress but reject Western cultural and economical domination. The former were reluctant to give up their faith and exchange it for both the uncertainty and the complexity of the modern world. The power base of those fundamentalist clergy was basically in the countryside and was found among the lower echelons of the working class. Due to the illiteracy and backwardness of the countryside, religious appeals to the masses have been emotional rather than rational. This has resulted in religious rigidity and dogma in the countryside and among the lower class. The urban-based clergy, on the other hand, have been progressive. They have adapted Islam to life in modern societies.4

The other characteristic of Islam is its pervasiveness. It claims the loyalty of individuals in every

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aspect of life, both spiritual and secular. The result has been tension between religious institutions and government institutions as each claims to possess the legitimacy to rule. These claims sometimes have resulted in open warfare as when Reza Shah, or a coalition, the National Front, each claimed to possess the legitimacy to rule. The religious leaders—Ayatollahs—have been maintained through institutions independent of the government economically; socially; and, to a lesser extent, politically. The religious institutions are financed by donations or waqf income from lands. The mosque in Iran has been freer than any non-governmental associations and organizations.

Socially, religious institutions have performed many functions that are usually government duties, such as education. Those extensive networks of religious institutions within Iran have given the clergy wide political power, which can be used as leverage against any secular sphere of government. The illiteracy of the peasants has reinforced the clergy's power as they turn to their mullahs for cues and guidance. The clergy, thus, is the only group in Iran that is able to mobilize large sections of Iranian society, particularly in the lower- and lower-middle classes. Ideologically, the dynamics of change have been built within Shism, and the ulama—respected
theologians—have been given wide power in interpreting Koranic laws, and in adopting them to changing conditions. Shism's social goals are not considered incompatible with modern democratic ideas. Equality of all men has been accepted, and Shism has rejected dictatorship by clearly stating that man is only subordiante to God, not his fellow man.

In economic matters, Shism emphasizes the sacredness of private property, albeit with some limitations. This has made it the favorite ideology of the Bazaari middle class. It also accepts the sanctity of labor, a creator of value. Lower-class acceptance of religious leadership is less a matter of consciousness than of custom. In the countryside one notes that religion is highly conservative. In brief, Shism has been a source of political independence, social integration, and economic progress for Iran. The organizational shortcoming of religious institutions in Iran is the anarchy at the leadership level. This is due to the fact that the ulama are not chosen through formal procedure and approval, but by the allegiance of specific people to them. The political implication of this has been the failure of the clergy to present a monolithic leadership vis-a-vis the government.
In Iran, informal institutions, e.g. religious institutions, are bases of political mobilization. This process is reinforced by the non-ideological content of politics in Iran, the existence of the extended family, and the personal relationship of power. The failure of the government in establishing "artificial" political parties from the top is attributable to the strength of informal institutions within Iran's society. The political parties with a mass base of support cannot ignore the informal social and political institutions.

Nationalism

The second component of Iran's political development in the post-World War II era is the emergence of a strong sense of nationalism. Nationalism as a powerful ideology of the middle class and as an integrative force within society emerged in the West and only after the creation of a modern nation-state. Nationalism in its modern sense is non-existent in traditional societies with a weak middle class. The political structure of a traditional society is more akin to empire-state rather than nation-state. A nation itself should include at least four characteristics:

1. common language;
2. common territory;
3. common interdependence economic life; and
4. common culture. Nationalism is the sense of belongingness that emerges from these conditions.

In the East, it emerged later than in the West and after traditional societies were weakened due to the impact of modernization. Moreover, nationalism in the East is not a monolithic ideology, due to the heterogeneity of these societies with regard to language, race, religion, and degree of economic development. For example, the Iranian state includes Turks, Kurds, Baluch, et cetera. Thus, nationalism in Iran implied the imposition of the ruling class' nationalism on the minority groups' culture. Reza Shah's solution to the nationality problem of minority groups was their elimination by force and by indirectly and gradually assimilating them into the Persian culture through economic development.

On the other hand, Iran's communist party accepted the peculiarities of the minority cultures within a broader framework of national unity. In Iran, nationalism emerged hand in hand with the Western imperialists' penetration of society. The nation's drive had a highly xenophobic character. Due to the existence of minority

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nationalism, Persian nationalism alone has been unable to integrate Iran. Thus a mixture of Iran's nationalism with religion, both as a distinctive character of Iran, is utilized to integrate the nation. After all, if nationalism implies revival of traditional values in the face of a Western cultural offensive, religion is one of the elements of it. In other words, the emergence of nationalism hand in hand with the revival of Islamic values has proved quite crucial for the mobilization of people in Iran. They are reflections of more profound socio-economic changes, including the development of political awareness among the mass of the people.

In Iran, nationalism does not focus its attack on foreigners alone, but their native allies as well. The latter group includes the court and Iran's upper class who are both economically and politically united to each other.

Marxists argue that nationalism is the beloved ideology of the middle class. The Bazaar middle class of Iran accepted it to defend itself against powerful foreign competitors.6

The bureaucratic middle class was receptive to nationalism in order to mobilize people in support of its

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6Halpern, p. 209.
modernization programs. Nationalism in Iran is more powerful than it would be if it were the ideology of middle class alone. It has been able to mobilize a large section of society, because of its interrelationship with religion, and the religious roots in Iran.

Although nationalism and religion in Iran are highly interwoven. They are not the same. Nationalism is a secular trend and asks loyalty to the nation. Religion is spiritual and demands loyalty to Islam or at least to God. So, there is an inherent contradiction within Iran's nationalism, as it is both secular and spiritual. This can be attributed to the existence of a tension between religion and non-religious elements within the nationalist movement. The popular acceptance of nationalist values may be attributed to its light burden in that it demands only loyalty to the nation and is not associated specifically with a particular way of life or specific programs of action.

Psychologically, nationalism gives a sense of protection and security to the people, as individuals feel threatened by the conflicting values and complexity of modern life.

The breakdown of traditional values in many third world countries has resulted in psychological disintegration in the warp and woof of the people. Ultimately,
this would result in popular surrender to the alien cultures of the West. Thus nationalism performs family and kinship functions at the national level.

Nationalism in Iran is important functionally as well. The uneven and unclassical economic development in Iran has created few developed urban centers in a backward society. Thus, there is always danger of social fragmentation and disintegration, which may be averted by the efforts of nationalism and religion.

Communism

Nationalism attacks foreign domination and usually lacks clear and objective programs for the future, particularly in the case of economic development. Religion basically is an ideology of the past and, without dramatic modernization, is unable to solve socio-economical problems of a modern society. As a result, although religion and nationalism have mobilized large sections of Iran's society, and have even caused political changes, they have failed to control the pace of socio-economic changes.

On the other hand, Communism had coherent and positive programs for the future.7 Communists clearly

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stated where the nation was and where it was heading. Unlike nationalism or religion that included all citizens, Communism recognized only class distinctions. Thus by supporting the causes of the lowest classes, it was able to focus an attack on the internal enemies of revolution. The scientific developmental approach of Communism, combined both with its analytic tools-historical dialectic and materialism dialectic- and its organizational ability, made educated members of the middle class receptive to Communism.\(^8\) Communism disregarded race, religion, et cetera—everything except class; thus it functioned in Iran as a uniting force. Iran's political scene in the post-World War II era was marked by the unstressed re-emergence of the Iranian Communist party under the name of Tudeh. It soon became a broad mass party.

The Iranian Communist party had been formed in 1920 by former members of the ADAULT (justice) party of the Constitutional period. Their first experience in revolutionary action was participation in the Gangali movement. But lack of objective conditions for the rise of Communism at that time, such as the high rate of illiteracy and lack of industrialization, pushed the movement toward a basically

nationalistic position (Chapter II). Before the rule of Reza Shah, Iran's Communist Party (ICP) was an intellectual-led movement. The party tried to organize workers and peasants for direct political action.

Their Western Marxist-orientations were obvious in their enmity and rigidity toward religion. This turned the people against them and thus isolated them from the masses. Reza Shah's industrialization program provided objective conditions for the subsequent rise of Communism. His failure to comprehend that Communism is a socio-economic phenomenon caused him to try to extinguish it by force. Thus, after he was deposed the Communist party emerged in a relatively short period of time, with various national subordinate organizations. Aware of the lack of true left-wing parties to represent the different strata of workers, the party built up a broad alliance. The Communist party's united front included workers, peasants, intellectuals, the middle class, and even the anti-imperialist section of the upper class. The Tudeh party was clearly a nationalist party, particularly after the defeat of the communist rebellions in Kurdestan and Azarbijan.

10 Kazemzadeh, p. 200; Zabih, p. 124.
The relationship of Communism and Islam was intentionally ill-defined by the party leadership. They emphasized that Iranian communists were good Moslems, too. The nationalistic view of the Tudeh party was clear in its slogans that advocated bread, education, and health for all Iranians.

Some scholars argue that Islam is a barrier to communist expansion. If that is said to be the case, Iran's experience disproves it. In fact, as far as goals are concerned, there are many ideological similarities between Communism and Islam, if not in the tools of achieving them. Both ideologies oppose poverty and inequality and are to some extent authoritarian, and both were imported into Iranian society from without. But one should recognize that Islam, with its emotional and subjective appeal to the masses, somehow is prevented from being useable in dealing with a modern and complex society.

As far as Iran's Communist party was concerned, the rapid socio-economical changes resulted in constant change in the class affiliations of its supporters. This means the existence of non-proletariat elements within the party. In fact, the Tudeh party, by supporting substantial socio-economic reforms, became very similar to other modernizing or nationalist parties. It engaged in fierce competition for the leadership of the middle class with other nationalist
parties. Even its advocacy of a forceful seizure of power was not unusual in a country where political violence was the rule of the day. The lack of any cohesive political parties in the post-World War II era of Iran, and the Tudeh party's nationalistic view, obtained cross-national support for the Tudeh party.

The major drawback for the Tudeh party was the result of its participation in the Azarbijan and Kurdestan secessionistic movement. This caused a "loss of face" for the Tudeh party, although not necessary for Communism. This participation identified the Tudeh party as being pro-Soviet Union. Although the Tudeh party accepted democratic procedures, and participated in the election of the Majlis, Tudeh branches in Azarbijan and Kurdestan revolted against the central government. They manipulated the racial and linguistic differences of Iranian Kurds and Turks with Persians. Reza Shah's chauvinistic policy against minority groups provided a receptive ground for communist propaganda in those regions. The Tudeh branches in Kurdestan and Azarbijan seized power in 1946 in these regions through revolutionary means and with the active support of the Soviet Union's army.

The Soviet Republic of Azarbijan in its short-lived rule achieved profound socio-economic reforms. Most land was distributed to the peasants. For the first time in
Iran, universal suffrage—including women—was introduced. Education became compulsory. Corruption among government officials declined.

By distributing lands to the peasants, the Soviet Republic of Azarbijan attempted to gain their support for they formed the majority of the population in the region. But the peasants' support of the regime remained passive, due to their illiteracy and the isolation of the villages. The subsequent attempts of the regime to regulate the peasants' lands even alienated them. Thus the regime's failure to translate the passive support of the peasants into active political participation in support of its programs, isolated the regime. Moreover, the undemocratic rule of the regime, alienated liberals and the middle class. These factors combined with the deception of the Soviet Union's policy toward the republics, caused their defeat by Iran's army in 1946. The Soviet Union supported the republics to put pressure on the Iranian government. The Azarbijan episode damaged the Tudeh party's prestige in the eyes of the Iranian people; it became known as a tool of international Communism, limiting the party's appeal to the Iranian people. To recover the damage, the Tudeh party adopted an even more nationalistic view in the aftermath of the Azarbijan incident and attempted to rely on domestic sources of support.
The Azarbijan incident also provided the Shah with an opportunity to present himself as a nationalist leader, as he identified himself with Iran's army in recapturing Azarbijan and Kurdestan.

National Front

The National Front was a contemporary alliance of diverse groups who massed around Dr. Mohmad Mossadagh. Ideologically, it was opposed both to foreign domination of Iran and to domestic allies of foreigners, particularly the Shah's court. Its rise came in train with the economic deterioration of the post-World War II era of Iran; it was a time of continuous and destructive tension between the Shah and Majlis, to the despair of the common people. Although supporters of the National Front came from diverse classes of people, it was basically a middle class party that tried to prevent the take-over of power by both left and or right wing extremists. The rise of Dr. Mossadagh as an indisputable leader of Iran in 1950 may be attributed both to the weakness of the political institutions and to the need for a charismatic leader to provide them with legitimacy, rather than vice versa.

In contrast to the West, where political institutions are a reflection of widely shared beliefs and values, in Iran they have been imposed from the top by political leaders. The weaknesses of political institutions in Iran
were due to the rapid socio-economic changes that brought legitimacy of the traditional institutions in question, without creating new institutions. Their weaknesses were also due to the unprecedented increase in governmental authority since 1925, without public political experience and sophistication. The cohesiveness of political institutions was broken in Iran after World War II, due to revolutionary conditions. They failed to adjust themselves to the masses' demand for political participation. This provided a favorable ground for the rise of new leadership whose legitimacy was based on personal qualifications and on his stand toward the socio-economic problems of Iran. Dr. Mossadagh was a rare, uncorrupt, and honest Iranian politician. He achieved wide popularity through expressing the needs of people and symbolizing their resistance against the attempts of foreign powers to dominate them. Under Mossadagh's leadership, the National Front consciously held back from presenting the nation with specific programs. Instead, it focused its attack on broad and socially acceptable issues in order to maintain cohesion of the front and to mobilize the masses as much as possible. These issues were oil and dictatorship. As head of the oil committee within the Majlis, Dr. Mossadagh rejected a supplementary oil agreement in 1949 between Iran and the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (A.I.O.C.). Instead, he
presented a proposal for the nationalization of the oil industry. The Majlis ratified this in 1951. The nationalization of the oil resources damaged the Shah's prestige, due to the anger of the people at the A.I.O.C. They believed that the A.I.O.C. had cheated Iran. The Shah's advocacy for the supplementary oil agreement of 1949, was held against him too.

Many scholars in the West, and even the Shah himself, have described Iran's great leader as an emotional and irrational man.¹¹ They claim that Mossadagh did not take into account Iran's lack of capabilities to explore, transport, and sell oil in the international market. And, if he did so, he supposedly bankrupted the country! These critics simply or intentionally failed to comprehend that the issue of oil was very important politically, but not so important economically. When a company such as A.I.O.C. in a less-developed country like Iran, which depended very much for its well-being on its oil income, controls the market, and the transportation of oil and mobilizes enormous capital, the company gets important political leverage. As will be seen later in this study, among the first acts of the Shah's regime after the coup of 1953, was his coming to term with the oil consortium.

Moreover, in the political environment of Iran, the people's understanding of politics was subjective rather than objective. As a result, the A.I.O.C. was blamed for most, if not all, of Iran's economic difficulties. In other words, the attack on the A.I.O.C. was an indication of the dissatisfaction of the people with domestic leadership and political system.

For the Iranian people, the nationalization of oil was not merely cutting off the hand of the absentee management of A.I.O.C., but also an assertion of independence and an implementation of the people's will. For the National Front, the attack on the A.I.O.C. was also a device that could take away attention from domestic problems. The nationalization of oil was presented to the Iranian people in both a nationalistic and a religious content. These politicized a large section of the urban areas. The mobilization's effect was such that Mossadagh attacked the oil company even after the United Kingdom accepted the principle of nationalization. Then, when Britain blocked Iranian oil shipments after Mossadagh's defense of the Iranian cause in the international court of justice at the Hague, the people became even more united behind Dr. Mossadagh as their hero.
Democracy

Iranian society after World War II was characterized by all types of political backwardness. The lack of common values and consensus resulting from economic and social gaps between modernist elite and illiterate men was not helpful for the viability of democracy. In addition, Reza Shah's dictatorship subordinated the Parliament to the executive branch and deprived it of its legitimacy to power. The gap between the modernist elite and the illiterate masses was translated into the Majlis, as conservative, feudal-orientated deputies were elected from the countryside; nationalists were elected from the urban areas. This converted the Majlis into an obstacle to progress, due to lack of accepted rules of the game in post-World War II Iran up to 1953.

This trend was reinforced by a lack of political parties possessed of social roots and able to bring cohesiveness into the Majlis. To curb the situation, Reza Shah relied on both the executive branch and the Persian glory of the past. To modify uneven political situations some nations have introduced the one-party system in order to unite the people and their leadership. In Iran, this device was politically impossible due to the memory of Reza Shah's dictatorships and the peoples' demand for political participation. In 1949 the Shah introduced the
senate and obtained the right to dissolve the Parliament conditionally. By doing this, he tried to bring some kind of order to the Majlis, but this attempt failed when Iran was plunged into political turmoil in 1951.

The socio-political gap between the elite and the masses was destructive to democracy in another way. The poverty and illiteracy of the people focused their attention on bread rather than politics, resulting in high freedom of action for the leadership. As a result, the Majlis was not controlled by the people and was not representative of them. The ruling class kept power, while the real political struggle was waged within the different strata of the ruling class, but not in electoral campaigns and elections. The high degree of personalization of power in Iran further accelerated these trends.

In brief, the elected Majlis did not reflect the preferences of the people. For example, in the election of the sixteenth Majlis, members of the National Front were elected from a few urban centers, and from their religious wings. The old and influential landlords were elected from the countryside, and they formed the majority. Mossadagh, as a first deputy of Tehran to the Majlis, in order to pass a program of progressive legislation through predominantly conservative Majlis was forced to create a new source of legitimacy. This new source was
direct appeal to the people and the mob in the streets of Tehran. Those people in the streets successfully forced the conservative Majlis and the Shah to take the step they wanted: to approve the nationalization of oil as well as to elect Mossadagh as Prime Minister to implement it.

Mossadagh's reliance on the emotional man of the street forced him to fight an all-out battle with A.I.O.C. He was prevented from reaching any understanding with the Shah's court or with the British government, and continuous mob rule forced him to adopt more and more radical policies. This was due in part to the fact that political issues confronted leaders in all of their complexities, while the masses perceived only their simplest form, e.g., freedom, independence, et cetera.\textsuperscript{12} On the other hand, Mossadagh as the people's leader felt a bond with them not through the army and police or even the vote; by sharing the emotional nationalism of the people, their confusion toward the West, and their feeling, he floated along. Elected as Prime Minister, and faced with a hostile Majlis, court, and opposition from the left and right, Mossadagh asked for extra-legal power, and for control of the army. The dependence of Mossadagh on the

emotional mob radicalized him as such, so that even his fellows within the National Front began to fear his policies. He constantly maintained mass emotion high in order to mobilize the people.\textsuperscript{13}

The popular support of Dr. Mossadagh brought a degree of stability within the political system. From World War II until 1953, the Majlis gained enormous power; it elected the prime minister, who was then approved by the Shah. Due to the Constitution's statement that the ministries were responsible to the Majlis individually and not as a whole cabinet, Parliament failed to sustain the very prime minister that it had elected. In fact, the cabinet was the outcome of a coalition and of bargaining between Parliament and the executive branch. This resulted in conflicting demands on the cabinet, and prevented it from taking unified action. The great popularity of Dr. Mossadagh prevented a conservative and feudal Parliament from challenging him. Even when the Shah dismissed Mossadagh as prime minister on July 17, 1952, the mob on the street forced him to reappoint him only a few days later on July 22, 1952.\textsuperscript{14}

Elections were not helpful; their dysfunctioning is clear in the election of the seventeenth Majlis, held in

\textsuperscript{13}Peter Avery, Modern Iran (New York, 1965), p. 423.

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., p. 428.
January of 1952. Although by every standard this election was free, the outcome was again the entrance of reactionary and feudal individuals into the Majlis. Only from Tehran and Tabriz cities that had a large middle class population, were National Front deputies elected, and even here they came from the religious wing. The religious wing of the National Front was most conservative, headed by Abolgassem Kashanie, who was a member of the clergy. This contradiction of democratic procedures and liberal institutions resulted from illiteracy and the apathy of the countryside where the majority of the people lived. The uneven socio-economic changes which permitted the pursuit of private interest via democratic institutions by officials through providing a high degree of freedom of action for them was taken as acceptable too. So, it was not unusual for a popular leader like Mossadagh, who received overwhelming support from the people in a national referendum in July 1953, to find himself trapped in the Majlis. To counter this trend, Mossadagh halted the election of the seventeenth Majlis in the remaining cities. Those structural shortcomings that forced a democratic prime minister to concentrate power in his hand through a national referendum and through the dissolution of the Majlis, turned the

15 Even before the national referendum in 1953, to decide on the fate of the Majlis, the Majlis was practically dissolved, because the National Front deputies resigned on July 16, 1953, which caused the Majlis to be unable to function. Bahman Nirumand, Iran: The New Imperialism in Action, translated by Leonard Mins (New York, 1969), pp. 85-86.
clock against him. The dictatorship of Reza Shah was still fresh in the minds of the people, and Mossadagh's followers gathered in the non-homogeneous National Front feared losing control of their leader. They soon began to defect.

First, defection occurred from the right wing of the National Front, as Ayatollah Kashani split with Mossadagh; then the left Tailor party and Socialist party leaders defected. Those who defected from Mossadagh were blamed by the Iranian people, but Mossadagh's popularity remained high, for he was not an ordinary politician, but a national hero; nevertheless, these defections hurt the National Front. The defeat of Kashani was not the victory of secular nationalism over religious nationalism but simply the defeat of Kashani. The Ayatollah Kashani was a man who was able to utilize religious institutions in order to mobilize an army of the politically unarticulated people into a mob who would come into the street to support Mossadagh.

The defection of the Tailor party from the National Front damaged the latter. The Tailor party appealed to the workers and prevented their supporting the Tudeh party. Those defected leaders easily provided leadership for Mossadagh's opposition, while their defection at the same time caused the National Front to become an even more homogeneous party.
The reactionary court and its allies, which had not moved tactically against the Front up to that time, in order to prevent it from being more radicalized sought to use it as a buffer against the Communist Tudeh party. Their opportunity came from those defections. First, the Shah unsuccessfully attempted a coup in August 16, 1953 that resulted in his escape to Rome.\textsuperscript{16}

The Shah's escape was a tactical move aimed to divide opposition forces by still further presenting his flight as the surrender of the aristocracy that was the common enemy for opposition. As his support base narrowed and he lost the mastery of the mob, which was his basic means for rising to power, Mossadagh turned both to the Tudeh party and to some sections of army for support. But the Tudeh party, being basically a middle-class party with ties with the Soviet Union, lacked consistency in its policy toward nationalism. The party's members saw the National Front and religious leaders as representatives of the national bourgeoisie, and thus not revolutionary enough. As a result, if it were going to be cooperation with the National Front, according to the Communists, it

\textsuperscript{16}On August 16, 1953, the Shah issued a decree that deposed Mossadagh as prime minister and appointed General Fazialah Zahedi to replace him. The order was carried out in an unusual way. Officer Nassiri, later the head of Iran's Secret Police, arrested three of Mossadagh's ministers and presented Shah's decree at 11 p.m. in his home. The timing and place of presentation show that Nassiri intended to arrest Mossadagh. But due to the guarding of his home, Nassiri failed. Nirumand, pp. 85-86.
should be under proletarian leadership. The Tudeh party simply failed to comprehend the basic principles of Communism—that is, exact analysis of exact situations. In the West, where the proletarian class was large and strong, nationalism and religion can be conservative, if not reactionary. In the East, on the other hand, where the proletariat is small and lacks class consciousness, nationalism and religion can be progressive. Thus, support of the Tudeh party came too late for Mossadagh, and its effect, in fact, was to isolate him further from the moderate elements. The Tudeh practice of sometimes supporting policies of Mossadagh further alienated the National Front's major supporters. In brief, the defeat of Mossadagh may be attributed to (1) the split within the opposition; (2) Britain's blocking of Iran's oil, causing economic hardship on the Iranians; and (3) lack of politicization in the countryside, which prevented the mobilization of the peasantry in support of nationalism. These factors provided a receptive condition for the CIA-backed military coup of August 22, 1953. The coup brought back and imposed the


Shah on the people, and caused twenty-five years of a rule of dictatorship, treason, and corruption.

The psychological effect of the coup was long-lasting for the Iranian people. Again, the foreign initiated coup of 1953 defeated Iranians' challenge to the West. This caused a sense of despair and powerlessness to prevail among the Iranians. This made the people still more apolitical and alienated from the political system. Iran's middle class became apolitical, not because of its lack of political awareness, but because apoliticality seemed the only safe course to take. This, in turn, brought about a long period of artificial political stability, analogous to the stability of a cemetery.

Since that time, the regime of the coup had condemned Dr. Mossadagh's policies as negative. This is an unfounded accusation. In international relations, the National Front advocated an independent foreign policy of non-alignment for Iran. The Front argued, given Iran's strategic position in the Middle East, its natural resources, getting close to each of the super-powers, would cause competition between the West and the Soviet Union over Iran. In the case of oil, the National Front argued that this resource is for the welfare of the Iranians. Thus, if oil was going to be sold at a low price, and its income would not be
spent in productive sections of the economy, then it would be better to save it.

In the case of domestic policies, Mossadagh was very positive. He symbolized the Iranian struggle for independence. He brought a high degree of unity to Iran, and during his days of power not a single secessionist movement was aroused. The corruption in government declined. The unholy "hand" of the British was cut away from Iran's internal politics.

Even in the regime's short-lived existence, programs for improvement of the conditions of the peasants were introduced. The law required landlords to give up 20 percent of their income to the welfare of peasants: 10 percent for the improvement of villages and 10 percent to the peasants directly. Which of those programs were negative? One should ask His Majesty, The Shahshah, and king of kings?

The defeat of Mossadagh's regime came on August 22, 1953, at the hands of mobs and the army. The regime's defeat may be attributed to Mossadagh's implicit assumption that distinguished between foreign imperialism and domestic reactionary forces. Instead of fighting on two

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20 Mohamad Reza Pahlavi, 1961, p. 84.
fronts simultaneously, internal and external, Mossadagh became too obsessed with the British. He downgraded Britain's main tool of penetration, namely, the native aristocracy. Although Mossadagh purged some of the army's leaders, he failed to reorganize the army as an institution, so that it never could come under foreign influence. He also failed to train local military groups able to fight in case of attack by counter-revolutionary forces. It seems that Mossadagh forgot Iran's experience in 1907 with the Constitutional government, when democratic Britain had allied itself with dictatorial Russia over Iran. He hoped that the United States would come to Iran's aid, because the U.S. was democratic and the prime minister was democratic too, elected by legal procedure. Mossadagh also mistakenly thought of the Tudeh as a national communist party. Those misconceptions and mistakes, although they cost Iran much, they should be remembered by the Iranian people in their present revolution and beyond.
CHAPTER IV


The root of Iran's social and economic problems is in the countryside where the majority of the citizens live. That means industrialization and modernization eventually must involve a "green" revolution. The dependence for life of an overwhelming majority of Iranians on the land, in one way or another, has resulted in under-employment in the agricultural sector and a minimum standard of living for the peasantry. This in itself is an impediment to both economic and political progress in other sectors of the Iranian economy. Not only the ownership of land, but the water is a determining factor in these problems, because in most parts of Iran rainfall is low, and wells must be dug to reach the necessary water. This creates a need for capital that the majority of peasants are unable to provide. The ownership of this water, in turn has given an added powerful political and economic leverage to the landlords, as well as their ownership of land.
For years, Iran's peasant class has been responsible for the creation of an agricultural surplus to be consumed in urban areas or for providing revenue for the government, but only a small fraction of that surplus ever returns to the countryside to contribute to the well-being of the peasantry. Absentee landlords and urban market power have set the prices for agricultural products. This, in turn, has limited the expansion of the national market into the countryside. Since peasants live in poverty and lack purchasing power, both the sale of manufactured goods and the process of industrialization are doomed to failure. Absorption of a large segment of the population in the agricultural sector deprives urban-based industry of both manpower and customers. The results have been urban political and economic control of the countryside through an absentee landlord phenomenon, and an orientation of economy toward consumption and importation of luxurious goods to be used by a minority of urban residents. This upper-class minority consumes a huge percentage of the national production, and is primarily responsible for the current high rate of inflation,¹ which itself widens the gap between the poor and the rich. Villages that remained self-sufficient, except for a few items, hardly felt the

¹The consumption share of families in Iran's lowest class--40 per cent of Iran's population--dropped from 13.9 per cent to 11.9 per cent while consumption share of Iran's richest families--20 per cent of Iran's population--rose from 51.8 per cent to 55.6 per cent between 1960 and 1974.
changes save for the burden of the unproductive consumption of the urban upper class. The case for land reform was strong.

The Peasantry

The life of peasants is greatly affected by the pattern of distribution of land and water. Before the Western imperialistic offensive against Iran in the middle of the nineteenth century, the land theoretically belonged to the sovereign, who, in turn assigned it to the nobility. The nobles held full control of their provinces due to the weakness of the central authority. The links between the provinces and the central government were both the taxes that were sent to the capital and the urban food needs. These were provided by taking taxes and tolls from the provinces in kind. The provinces also sent soldiers when the government was threatened from the outside. The political result of this process was the identification of the states interested in the pattern of land tenureship with the idea of relatively autonomous regions.² Political stability resulted from this link. In this type of political process, the peasants were exploited, because the main burden of taxes fell on their shoulders. Western

penetration of Iran's economy and its demand for particular agricultural products, such as cotton and opium, broke the self-sufficient status of the villages, and replaced a subsistence mode of production with straight commodity production. This meant that production was for the market rather than for local consumption.

In fact, the Western offensive integrated the Iranian countryside with the towns. This was not an economic or political integration; rather, an integrated trade system was enforced on a subsistence economic pattern of production. This superimposition is obvious in the sharecropping distribution of agricultural products in Iran that itself was based on a backward economy that persisted. Agricultural production became specialized and those lands that were excellent for the production of the demanded crops acquired a high value. Thus, the incomes of the cultivators of that land also increased, compared to that of other peasants, so that a stratified sub-class developed within the peasantry.

As lands increased in value, demand for the private ownership of land increased, and vast estates came under the control of local powers and national nobility. On the other hand, the sheer size of lands owned by particular landlords created a need for intermediators. New classes emerged between the peasants and the owners of land--e.g.,
the intermediators, money lenders, land renters, supervisors, et cetera. The cash transactions in the countryside grew, and moneylenders and merchants intruded into the peasants' life as well. Because the profitability of the land was so high, money was invested in land rather than in business enterprises. Implied in this state of affairs is the point that the peasants were exploited not only by the landlords but by a whole hierarchical system that was imposed on them. With Western economic penetration came national awareness; the Iranian nationalism that emerged in 1905 in the form of constitutional revolution alternately strengthened and declined. As noted in Chapter I, the movement was an urban-based and intellectual-led revolution to further the interests of the merchants, intellectuals, and the clergy, but not those of the peasants. This revolution finally led to the rise of Reza Shah's dictatorship, accompanied by rapid expansion of the state's authority.

Before proceeding to a discussion of the role of the state in the creation of feudalism, a discussion of the relations of production is in order.

Iran's land was divided basically among the landlords, the state, and the religious institutions, but the pattern of exploitation of the peasants was similar in all three of these holdings. Here were three kinds of peasant-landlord
relationships existing, with minor reservations based on the region or on the kind of crop involved.  

**Sharecropping**

Sharecropping reflects a backward agricultural sector, and it is based on a feudal mode of production. It prevailed in Iran until 1962, and it still exists in some parts of Iran. Its essence is based on five factors of production: (1) land, (2) water, (3) capital (mostly animals), (4) labor, (5) seed. Crops were divided according to the contribution of the individuals who provided them, the weight assigned to those contributions varying depending on the region and the crops. For example, in the south of Iran, there was a shortage of water, and water might therefore be assigned a higher weight. In most parts of Iran, because of the poverty of the peasants, the only factor the peasants could offer was their labor, so they received only a small fraction of the crop. The backwardness of the system and the primitive mode of production both highly limited the amount of land that peasants could cultivate, and more than one peasant usually worked on a plot. This meant the peasants' small share of the crop would be divided even further. In some parts of Iran, peasants received a fixed

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amount of crops regardless of the factors he provided. The share crop mode of distribution is the main obstacle to change and progress in Iran. It maintains the peasants in a state of permanent poverty, it kills the incentive for increasing production, and it bonds both the landlord and the peasants in a stable hierarchical system.

**Seasonal Agricultural Labor**

Seasonal laborers are the poorest part of the peasantry, hired temporarily in times of harvest or for whatever periods they are needed. They have no claim on crops and receive only small amounts of wage in kind. They are also the least secure peasants, because they do not have the protection of the landlords. They comprise roughly 40 per cent of the agricultural labor force.

**Renting Peasants**

These peasants rent land from the owner and pay him in kind or cash. Here peasants have more freedom in decision-making regarding the kind and amount of crop they produce. But, due to the poverty of the peasants, these are rare. Their membership comes from other classes, e.g. merchants, who rent land to make profit from it. In this case, peasants are more exploited, because renters of the land want quick and high profit.
In addition, some small properties belong to peasants. These lands are usually inferior or lie in regions where rainfall is sufficient, and they do not need too much capital. These peasants are also very poor because their land is not sufficient for subsistence of their family; thus, they are forced to work on lands belonging to the landlords. Their lot also depends on nature. In times of bad harvest they are likely to lose their land because they have no money to repay their loans to village money-lenders. Also, due to their lack of resource and sophistication in the face of competition with big landlords, these peasants are very insecure; their number was declining up to the 1960's. There are no statistics to show their specific numbers because Iran's governmental statistics in 1959 did not separate this sub-class from crop sharing peasants.\footnote{Salnameh Amari Iran, 1350 (Iran Statistical Yearly, 1970), p. 56.} Their total number with crop sharing peasants in 1959 was roughly 60 per cent of peasantry (1.9 million households), while seasonal labor was 40 per cent (1.3 million households).

The foregoing discussion has shown that peasants are deprived of the security of tenure, but sharecropping peasants have some right to cultivate land based on custom, not laws. The source of the peasant's insecurity comes
not only from landlords, but also from hostile nature, unstable agrarian markets, and government intervention. All of these factors contributed to the peasant's sense of powerlessness that has helped give rise to the conservatism of the Iranian countryside.

The Landlords

The landlord class of Iran has consisted of religious institutions (controlling 12 per cent of Iran's villages), the state and the crown (controlling 6 per cent of the rural settlements) and the private landlords.

The private landlords are further divided into big landlords (in authority over five villages), in control of 38 per cent of Iranian villages; small landlords (in authority over from one to five villages), in control of 14 per cent of the villages, and, finally, petty landlords (in authority over more than thirty hectares of land in villages), in control of 30 per cent of the villages. Although the statistics are not exact, they do roughly indicate the highly unequal pattern of land ownership in Iran.

These landlord classes have continuously been in control of land, but their composition and power have

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\[5\] Ibid., p. 57.

\[6\] Ibid.
changed since 1905. For example, the crown lands were expanded under Reza Shah, through the taking of land by force or through buying it.

The economic (e.g. capital, knowledge of market, economics of scale, et cetera) factors also tend to push small landlords either toward greater authority and control or toward the peasantry. The social value that had been assigned to the ownership of land in Iran has resulted from an emphasis on the quantity, not the quality, of land. Landlords have no incentives to improve agriculture because the labor of the peasants is so cheap and plentiful. Thus, why should a landlord bother himself to use a capital-intensive mood of production, with its social impact on peasants?

Landlords are correct in their assumptions that the social improvement of peasants, e.g. education and health, would either generate new demands or bring on rising productivity of agriculture which could result in the peasants gaining independent sources of income and thus becoming able to resist exploitation. The sharecropping system of tenureship and highly unequal distribution of land has placed peasants in a weak bargaining position vis-a-vis landlords, moneylenders, et cetera.7 Due to the lack of a communication network, knowledge of markets, and

7Lambton, pp. 379-380.
knowledge of resources, peasants are forced to sell their small share--after the deduction of their needs--in the nearest market when the price is lowest at the time of harvest--due to the increase of supply. Then they must rebuy in the winter, when the food in storage is exhausted and the price is highest. In winter, when the peasant wants to cultivate, he has to turn to the moneylender or the landlord for a loan for seeds. When prices are high, and he has to repay that loan at harvest time, or he can sell his crop in advance. This method of trade has maintained Iran's peasants in a state of permanent debt.

The State

The third most important factor in the agricultural pattern of Iran is the state. Lenin defined the state as the executive hand of the ruling clan.8 This definition is quite applicable in the case of Iran. The urban-based revolution of 1905 was the first challenge to the power of Iranian feudalism; but due to the prevailing feudal mode of production and to the landlords' slyness, these latter were able to regain much of their power. They influenced elections and thus influenced those in control of government machinery after the revolution. An

examination of the period from 1905 to 1921 reveals that the feudally-controlled Iranian parliament never submitted to Western pressure. This was the result of feudal self-sufficiency.

Reza Khan's Coup of 1925 was a blow to feudalism. By advocating nationalistic values and selective modernization, he successfully confused the nation as to his true intentions. From the very beginning when he came to power, and with at least the consent of Britain, he had the aim of creating an infrastructure that would enable Western "imperialism" to penetrate Iran in subsequent years. In other words, in 1925, the Western offensive was political rather than economic. Reza Shah's rule transferred Iran from a feudal society to a semi-colonial, semi-feudal society. He did this through tactical compromise with landlords and ruthless control of them at the same time.

From the very beginning, Reza Shah took anti-lower class stands, particularly anti-peasantry, although the peasants comprised the overwhelming majority of Iranian citizens. A brief look at the laws that were passed in his rubber-stamp parliaments proves this

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assertion. Reza Shah's regime systematically forced peasants to finance both his political intentions and his urban-oriented industrialization. Taxes were levied to finance railroad constructions on sugar and tea, both basic items of the peasantry's consumption. The government set up state agricultural monopolies on profitable items such as tea and cotton which entered into fierce competition with the landlords in the exploitation of the peasants. Superior, valuable land was expropriated by the state.

The reform of tax laws in 1920 aimed to shift the burden of taxation from the landlords onto the peasants' shoulders by converting the basis of taxation from land to crop. The forced registration of land in 1928-1929 resulted in loss of land by peasants in favor of big landlords, because the law recognized the basis of claim on land to be continuous control of it rather than cultivation of it. In this instance, only the landlords had the necessary knowledge of the law and the resources to influence an inefficient administration in their favor.

In 1937, the law provided for the sale of state land according to competitive bidding to finance industrial projects. This in turn deprived the peasants of any claim on state land. The original sources are difficult to find, however, Nikki R. Keddie, "Stratification, Social Control, and Capitalism in Iranian Villages Before and After Land Reform," in Richard Antoun and Iliya Harick (Rds.) Rural Politics and Social Change in the Middle East (Bloomington, Indiana, 1972), pp. 372-373. Gives secondary reference to these laws.
on the lands that they had cultivated for years, because they were never able to compete with powerful and wealthy nobility or governmental officials. The result of all of these laws was the destruction of both the small peasants' properties and of the peasants' security. The power of absentee landlords expanded. Peasants, who were afflicted both by rent to the landlords and taxes to the government, simply deserted the land, or sold it to the landlords.

Reza Shah's regime had two sides. The first was one of expansion and help for enterprises in cities; the second was one to support feudalism in the countryside, while at the same time depriving landlords of independent access to power. At the time of Reza Shah's reign, capitalism was young and unable to take over the economy alone, while feudalism had been well established. A concentration of economic power existed. To expand capitalism further, the regime had to make the interests of both the capitalists and landlords identical. Industrialization should not touch the countryside lest it cause feudal antagonism; the capitalists had to be feudal, too. After this Reza Shah's role became that of a final arbiter in the weak and tactical coalition of feudalism and capitalism. Through this coalition, the political stability of the regime was maintained. Reza Shah was careful to not break the feudal mode of production in the countryside, but he changed the composition of the
landlords. Powerful religious and tribal "Khan" landlords were purged, while government officials, army officers, and all those who owed their existence to the Pahlavi dynasty entered the rank of landlords. Moreover, feudalism lost its political power and became totally dependent on the state.

The tribes were forced to settle; this deprived them of the mobility that was the basis of their military strength. The members of the tribes thus entered into the ranks of the landless peasants. No attempt was made on the part of the regime to solve the tribal problems socially or economically. To suppress the peasants' discontent from time to time during Reza Shah's reign, landlords had to turn to the government for help. In other words, feudalism under the regime of Reza Shah was converted into "dependent feudalism," in that its very existence depended on the support of the central government. Here a word of caution is in order. Individual landlords were not purged in the manner that one would expect in a period of socio-economic transformation; rather, their sources of income were changed drastically. Their interests and income came closer and closer to the interests of the State, which were controlled by the bureaucratic or dependent Bourgeoisie.
The removal of Reza Shah from Iran's politics hardly changed the pattern of feudalism in the countryside. The post-World War II regime of Iran was obsessed with the threat from the outside; this, as argued in Chapter III, gave Iran's nationalism a xenophobic character with little attention to modernization. This was an urban-based nationalism. But Mossadagh's regime nevertheless recognized Iran's agrarian backwardness and perceived that the main source of this difficulty was a production problem at work rather than one involving the factors of production. Mossadagh was fully aware that the removal of the big landlords without the reconstruction of agrarian patterns of production would make matters in Iran worse. He required that 20 per cent of the landlords' income be returned to the villages for the welfare of the peasants. The inefficiency of government bureaucracy, the existence of verbal agreements between peasants and landlords, and the general political instability however, made enforcement of the law next to impossible. In a word, Iran's main obstacle in the way of modernization and industrialization centered around the existence of heavy taxes, land rent, and the debts imposed on the peasants. Any reform that failed to eliminate or at least moderate these conditions would not be viable.
The White Revolution

On January 26, 1963, a national referendum was held in Iran. The Shah presented the nation with a six-point program of reforms: (1) Land reform, (2) Nationalization of forests, (3) Sales of state-owned factories' shares to finance land reform, (4) Application of the profit-sharing principle for workers, (5) Reform of electoral laws, (6) Creation of an illiteracy corps. These points were approved by the nation overwhelmingly; thirteen more points were gradually added to these original six in subsequent years.11

Here it should be noted that the elements of "white" reform are highly interrelated and are supplemental to each other. To understand the root of these reforms, one should look at the post-Mossadagh era and impact of the Coup of 1953. The direct effect of the coup was the loss of a sense of legitimacy for the regime. The people regarded the Shah as the one who had destroyed Iran's challenge to Western powers, and had imposed on them a conservative and unpopular regime. To offset his lack of legitimacy, the

Shah moved on two fronts: (1) dictatorship and political indoctrination, and (2) modest socio-economical reform. When the Shah returned to Iran in 1953, the army was purged and thereafter the sole criterion for the appointment of top military generals was loyalty to the Shah. Two parallel security and repressive organizations were created: Branch II of the army and SAVAK (Secret Police), in addition to the police, et cetera. Both types of organizations were formed to deal with the security of the regime.\(^\text{12}\) To nullify the threat of a coup, not only were overlapping repressive organizations created, but the horizontal linkages between them was cut off; instead, they were connected on a vertical line with the Shah at the apex, their coordinator.

The heads of those organizations have always been loyal, but competitive generals. In other words, the stability of the regime was achieved through maintaining a constantly controlled tension between the army and the civilians and within them as well. By providing opportunity for corruption and by periodic exposure of the files of individuals in court-wide functions, at the top, governmental and military positions were shaped to maintain them as docile. Powers were assigned both to the army and to the

police that usually are functions of civilians. Those repressive institutions destroyed all meaningful opposition. They prevented the rise of any leadership with independent sources of power. This repression was supplemented by widespread political propaganda aimed to make the Iranian people believe that the Shah was a nationalistic modernist.

To divert attention from domestic problems, the Shah was presented to the people as a specialist in foreign policy, a man whom both East and West could count on. The political parties were created from the top, not by the people. Supposedly voluntary associations were forming not to further the interest of their members, but for purposes of political indoctrination. In 1957, two parties were created—the Mellion party (Nationalist Party) and the Mardom party (People's Party). The former was to act as the ruling party, and the latter was to carry out a loyal opposition. Both were headed by individuals close to the Shah.13 Even the names of the parties were as likely to confuse people as to stir them to action (Nationalist and People). Before 1960, the regime was firmly in control and felt secure. In international fields also, some changes occurred. Iran entered into

13Mellion (Nationalist) party was headed by Dr. Manucher Eqbal and Mardom (People) party by Amir Asodola Alam, both members of upper-class families.
the Baghdad Pact—later renamed CENTO—composed of Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, Britain, and the U. S. as an associate. CENTO boasted the Iranian regime's security in the face of any threat by the Soviet Union. The Coup of 1958, in neighboring Iraq, which abolished the monarchy in that country, proved that reliance on Western power was not enough for the survival of the regime. In the United States the Kennedy administration came to power with its liberal stand and urged the U. S. client states to carry out reform. He signalled the Iranian regime that the time of reform had come. Governmental control of the election to the Majlis became looser in 1960, and this was accompanied by a re-emergence of the National Front along with a teachers' strike. Some saw these events as indications of how the regime in Iran was hated and unable to move toward liberalization. Moreover, in the early 1960's, Iran's economy faced stagnation; this shocked the confidence of the regime. The regime perceived the need for reform to expand its base of support in the face of mounting opposition in cities and also as a way out of economic bankruptcy. The land reform of 1962-1963 was ill-defined and hastily implemented, and had political content without regard to its economic implication, its agricultural productivity, and the peasants' welfare. In fact, the third seven-year plan, which began in 1962, did not
mention land reform. The point can be elaborated if one were to examine the structure of land tenure and the impact of land reform on it as well as at the national balance of power before and after reform.

The structure of Iran's feudalism before land reform was as follows:

A. Non-Cultivators
   1. Absentee landlords, including state, crown, religious institutions, and private landlords.
   2. Large scale land renters (often absentee), including moneylenders, landlords, mediators, governmental officials, and merchants.
   3. Village officials, including village headmen and water officials.
   4. Non-cultivators—small owners, including petty landlords
   5. Non-cultivators—small land renters.
   6. Non-cultivators—renters of factor of production, usually animals and seed.
   7. Heads of work team, including supervisors of cultivation and harvest.

B. Cultivators
   1. Cultivating small owners, including small peasant properties.

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14 Hossein Mahdavy, "The Coming Crisis in Iran," Foreign Affairs, XLIV (October, 1965), 155.
2. Cultivators paying fixed rent in kind or cash to landlords.

3. Cultivators--head of work team.

4. Cultivating sharecroppers owning more than one factor of production.

5. Cultivating sharecroppers selling their labor with job security in the form of right to cultivate the landlord's land.

6. Wage agricultural labor.

7. Seasonal labor paid in kind or cash.\textsuperscript{15}

The Shah's "white revolution" aimed to destroy only the big landlords, while intentionally ignoring the different strata that existed between the landlords and the peasants, who were in cooperation with the landlords in the exploitation of peasants. A genuine and effective land reform in Iran should attack the whole hierarchical structure that exists over peasants, not replace one kind of ownership with another--removal of absentee landlords.

Different countries have carried out land reform from different purposes. Communists advocate it as a means of building an equal and classless society as well as of liberating peasants from the land in order to

modernize society, and eliminate differences between cities and villages.\textsuperscript{16}

Capitalist nations carry out land reform to increase agricultural production and expand capitalistic modes of production in their countrysides by creating independent and small landlords. Even in some third world nations, land reform has been achieved in nationalistic terms to break the alliance of landlords with foreign powers or to obtain a good reputation abroad. Because land reform involves politics as well as economics due to its impact on the relationship of power in nations, it must be carried out by revolutionary means rather than through traditional or democratic procedures, for peasants are apolitical and unarticulate and are so unable to utilize such procedures. On the contrary, land reform is a way to politicize peasantry, not the result of it.\textsuperscript{17}

The Iran of the 1960's, unlike the Iran of Reza Shah's period, saw the \textit{(comprador)} dependent bourgeoisie well established as a result of Reza Shah's selective modernization. Now, feudalism was an obstacle to further growth; since it prevented the dependent bourgeoisie's penetration

\textsuperscript{16}For years it has been a slogan of China's Communist Party to eliminate three big differences--that between cities and countryside, that between the manual and mental worker, and that between the rich and the poor.

of the countryside with its self-sufficiency, thereby binding peasants to the land.

If Iran were to be transformed from a semi-colonial, semi-feudal society, into an organic part of an international, hierarchical, imperialist structure, the peasant should become free from feudal chains. The "white revolution" was designed precisely for that purpose, to convert Iran into a dependent society. Moreover, feudalism was politically dangerous, because men were opposed to it. Intellectuals regarded it as reactionary, and foreigners, particularly American leaders, viewed it as an indication of the country's backwardness; Iran's ruling class wanted economic and military aid enough to try to please. A well publicized and propagandized reform would bring legitimacy for the Shah and disarm his opponents. Unfortunately, the regime's politically oriented land reform brought misery for Iranians.

Iran, which before 1960 was an exporter of agricultural products, in 1978 had to import large amounts of meat, rice, and grain from the United States, Australia, and Israel to feed its people. The assignment of a large portion of the G.N.P. to the importation of food is nothing more than transferring money from the pockets of Iran's poor peasants into the hands of farmers in advanced nations. Politically, Iran's dependence on imported food gave a strong leverage to foreign powers to impose their will on
Iranians, particularly with regard to oil. Domestically, since land reform took place, a mass exodus of peasants into the big cities occurred with all of its attendant socio-economic discomforts. The size of Iran's urban areas has grown rapidly; and more and more slums are visible in the southern sections of Tehran, Isfahan, Tabriz, and other major cities. The aim of Iran's land reform can be stated briefly as follows: (1) to provide and expand favorable ground for entrance of comprador and bureaucratic bourgeoisie's capital into the countryside; (2) to create a minority of well-off, peasant properties—the village bourgeoisie—to be used as a support base for the regime; (3) to provide cheap and unskilled laborers for industrial factories, which make consumer goods and are owned by multi-national corporations, or by the Iranian upper class (e.g., processing and assembly factories for automobiles, refrigerators, Mazola Oil, et cetera); (4) to expand the state's authority and control in the countryside by making peasants dependent on the government instead of on the landlord; (5) to break the countryside away from self-sufficiency and to increase money transactions in order to enable peasants to consume manufactured goods, although before 1960, they had been unfamiliar with them and unable to use them; (6) to expand commodity production in the countryside to meet
a Western market demand for particular crops. 18

Many apologist scholars of Shah's regime, in Western
countries and in Iran, have tried to present the Shah to
uninformed Western readers as a liberal, who selflessly
turned against his supporters—the feudals and he dis-
solved Majlis in 1961, allegedly to save his revolution in
the face of the feudal groups in parliament in an attempt
to help peasants 19—by appealing directly to the masses.
The apologists have portrayed the Shah as committed to
modernization of the nation and distributing his vast
estates to peasants. The only answer that can be given
to these scholars is that landlords, in fact, were not
effective supporters of the regime before reform; rather
there was an alliance of native comprador capitalists with
both their foreign partners and the bureaucratic upper
class. Feudalism lost political power in the Reza Shah

18 Sazman Cherikhi Fedayee Kalgh, Dar Bareh Eslahat
Arzi Va Nataige Mostaghim An: Serie Taughighat Roostahi
Sazman Cherikhi Fedayee Kalgh (Tehran, 1352) in Per-
sian, pp. 10-21; translated People's Fedayee Guerilla
Organization, Of the Land Reform and Its Direct Results:
Series of Rural Researches of the People's Fedayee Guerilla
Organization (Tehran, 1971), pp. 10-21; Mandavy, pp. 134-
146; Keddie, 1972, pp. 364-394.

19 In 1961 the Shah dissolved parliament but refused to
authorize a new election in three months as the constitu-
tion required. Instead, the country was ruled unconstitu-
tionally for two years. The Shah's claim that this was
intended to prevent the entrance of feudals into the Majlis
seems unlikely, because election always was controlled by
government. The Shah feared that, if the election were
carried out, members of the National Front or other oppo-
sition groups would enter the Majlis as they had in the
election of 1960.
coup, and was further weakened afterward. The "white revolution" was the completion of the Reza Shah coup, in that it put an end to remnants of feudal economic power. In 1960, land was neither a source of income nor of social prestige for its owner. The Shah himself was aware of this fact and sold his unprofitable land to peasants in 1958, to convert it into cash for investment in processing and assembly factories that were highly profitable. Those landlords who were smart enough followed the Shah's lead and converted their estates themselves. Fair readers, by analyzing the land reform laws, would perceive this. The first stage of land reform laws that were initiated in 1960, classified lands into five categories: (1) lands that are cultivated by mechanical means using tractors or other agrarian machinery, (2) lands that are cultivated by primitive tools and belong to private landlords, (3) religious lands (waqf), (4) state and crown lands, (5) lands that belong to small landlords. The lands that came under the jurisdiction of the first stage of land reform laws were those unmechanized lands belonging to big landlords. Although there are no reliable statistics about those lands, roughly 38 per cent of Iranian villages belonged to those landlords who owned more than five villages.\textsuperscript{20} Even in this regard, laws allowed landlords to retain one entire village or selected land in different villages totalling not more than one village for themselves.

\textsuperscript{20}Salnameh Amari Iran, 1350 (Iran's Statistical Yearly, 1970), p. 57.
This land, obviously, would be that in the best village, because the law allowed selection of villages by the landlords.

Avenues of evasion were not closed to the landlords, because the law recognized as owners of land those who had the title of land; therefore many landlords who were working with government officials or perceived the trend when the Shah distributed his land, transferred the title of their village to their relatives. Surprisingly, the measurement of the villages was the Dong, which is not an exact measurement. Six Dongs constitute an entire village or land; regardless of the size of the estate; thus for example, a village with five thousand households can be a six Dong as well as a village with two peasants.21 This system of measurement enabled landlords to regain the largest village or to present two or more villages as a one six-Dong village by bribing officials of the land reform ministry. In some places, land reform officials faced more mechanized land claims than one could reasonably expect. Landlords were cashing in on the corruption of government officials, by buying show tractors

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21 The Dong is a measurement of estate and does not have a Western equivalent. The Dong is not an exact measurement but customarily constitutes a total estate regardless of size.
to show officials how easily the lands can be mechanized, making them exempt from reform! They even forced ignorant peasants to sign statements that they were wage agricultural labor rather than sharecrop peasants. Even if one assumes that the law had been enforced honestly, it would distribute only 38 per cent of villages and automatically would exclude at least 40 per cent of peasants, the seasonal agricultural laborers. The agricultural and seasonal laborers were deprived of any claim on land, because the law provided that land be distributed only to those peasants who cultivated land according to sharecrop principle. The rest of the peasants were left without any protection or security. No statistics were available regarding the quality and amount of land that was distributed to the peasants, but it is very likely that most of the land that was distributed was not sufficient or fertile enough to enable the peasants to subsist on it. Moreover, the word for "distribution of land" does not indicate the fact that the land actually was bought from landlords by the government, who were compensated by shares in state-owned factories or were to be repaid over a fifteen-year period. It was an easy way to convert landlords into capitalists. The government then resold these lands to the peasants, requiring them to pay for it over a period of fifteen years plus a 10 per cent
administrative cost levy. From that moment, the peasant was in debt to the government, dependent on the government for at least fifteen years. The peasants who received the land were required to become members of the government-sponsored agricultural cooperatives that were created to help peasants to raise production. In fact, before land reform peasants had to turn to landlords for seed or capital; after reform they were dependent on agricultural cooperatives. The peasant, repaying the government's loan, was forced to borrow from the moneylenders, causing an increase of moneylenders in the countryside. The members of cooperatives were to be selected democratically by elections. In 1978, the agricultural cooperatives were no more than creditors and customers of peasants' crops, who even bought the harvest in advance, and who sold manufactured goods to the peasants. At the time of harvest, the same cooperatives forced the peasants to repay their loans. They acted like the landlords of the pre-reform era; moreover, they functioned as an organization for political indoctrination for the regime. In a word, only small fractions of land were sold to a minority of the peasants, with a high degree of government regulation and control.

A second stage of land reform laws was introduced in 1963-1964, to deal with privately-owned and unmechanized

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lands that were not distributed by the first phase of land reform laws. This new law allowed landlords to retain from thirty to 150 hectares of land, depending on the region and on the crop raised. The remaining lands were distributed according to five options:

(1) Rental of the land to peasants who cultivate it based on precedent three years income of land and for thirty years.

(2) Sale of the lands through mutual agreement with peasants;

(3) Division of land with peasants, according to share-crop basis;

(4) Use of the land with peasants through joint management, while share of each from crop is based on share-crop principles; and

(5) Sale of the land to the government for resale to peasants like the first phase of laws of land reform.

The laws speak for themselves. The second stage of land reform was a compromise between the regime and the landlords. It provided more options and ways of evasion for them. It provided wide freedom of action for government officials in assessing lands, and promoted corruption. What was missing in the laws was any realistic solution for the basic agrarian problems of Iran--the indebtedness of the peasants and the structure of land
tenureship. In the case of lands that were owned by religious institutions, the law provided a lease of them to peasants for ninety-nine years, causing problems similar to those which arose for privately-owned lands. In fact, the first and second phases of the land reform laws were aimed to break down the power of big landlords by destroying their economic base of income rather than genuinely restructuring the land tenureship system.

The third phase of land reform laws was begun in 1967-1969. It abolished joint management of land by both peasants and landlords as well as the rental of lands to peasants. Instead, it provided for the sale or distribution of land among peasants and encouraged big agricultural corporations. Under this system, the peasants could place his land into a corporation and receive a share in that corporation in return. The profit of the company would then be divided according to the share of its members. If the peasant, in addition to giving his land to a corporation, contributes to it in other ways, e.g. labor, he also receives a wage. Although establishment of large agricultural corporations is efficient economically, due to the fact that only large lands with sufficient capital can utilize modern agricultural equipment and provide market-oriented production, it is politically dangerous. In other words, since peasants have
no managerial control over land because they each have such a small share, they become powerless regarding their needs, and they are again deprived of the feeling of ownership of land.

In January 1967, the Iranian government announced that the land reform program had been completed; no new laws regarding land would be passed in parliament. The inefficient land reform laws and the manner in which they were implemented created a duality in countryside; now modern agricultural corporations coexisted with primitive methods of agriculture.

The peasantry as a class was no longer a monolithic class; it was rapidly divided between a minority of well-off peasants and a majority of landless and insecure peasants, or unskilled workers. The feudal mode of production still existed in some parts of Iran, particularly the South, hand-in-hand with the capitalistic mode of production. The land reform as the backbone of what was called the "Shah and nation revolution" was completed with other points such as the literacy corps. The members of the literacy corps were elected among youth who were about to begin two years of military service. Since 1963, the literacy corps has performed valuable functions in the

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23 Sazman Cherikhi Fedayee Kalgh, Barrasi Sakht Eghtesadi Roostahie Taleh Kerman (Tehran, 1356), pp. 4-10, translated (People's Fedayee Guerilla Organization, Research on Economic Structure of Villages of Kerman) (Tehran, 1975), pp. 4-10.
countryside through educating peasants, as well as some social function. But the corps also has been a means of political propaganda and control for the regime. Each morning the village boy has to honor the Iranian flag and express his allegiance to the Shah. Moreover, if peasants are going to be propagandized and then converted into unskilled factory workers, they must at least know how to read and write to be able to work with industrial machinery as well as to read newspapers and the regime's documents.

Reform of electoral laws provided for the political participation of women. But, here again, those cultural and economic bonds that limit Iranian women's participation in affairs on their own remain intact, although the industrialization of the country would have affected women's destiny as well. The Iranian woman's misery is rooted both in economic and cultural factors. She is exploited with her brothers in the farm and in the factories, and again in the family through her husband and children. Any program aimed at improving women's conditions should attack both the cultural and economic obstacles in the way of women's emancipation simultaneously.

The Results of Land Reform

The changes in the Iranian countryside eventually are related to changes in urban areas. The Shah, by carrying out land reform and the political emancipation
of women, was in fact playing a highly dangerous game. The direct impact of land reform was the widening of inequality within the peasantry. Those peasants who were not sharecropping and who numbered over 40 per cent of the peasantry, became unemployed, as well as those peasants who received insufficient lands; all of these peasants fled to the cities to find their fortune in factories or in those jobs that economists term "underemployment." The entrance of mass-media communications into the countryside, coupled with strong pro-regime propaganda about the well-being of peasants, created new demands for them and showed them what a peasant's life should be. The property relationship was no longer God-given in the eyes of peasants, for they saw during the implementation of the land reform that government changed ownership by force. The regime fully knew that land reform would generate new demands, and their fears of losing control in the process of reform and of the peasants taking initiative in this process, intentionally made land reform laws take effect gradually—from 1960 to 1967—and caused delays in its implementation in the same period. The removal of landlords from villages destroyed a buffer that had existed between the regime and the peasants. Since the 1960's

Underemployment here refers to unproductive jobs.
Iran's peasants have been faced with the government directly, and any deficiency in the peasant's life would be blamed on the regime rather than on the landlords. The entrance of government-sponsored agro-industrial corporations with their foreign technicians into the countryside also awakened the peasants' nationalism. For years Iranian peasants as well as women were politically inarticulate, and they were a source of political stability in Iran and of political freedom for the ruling class. But this is no longer the case, for the peasants and women have been politicized so much that even their sheer numbers could cause heavy pressures on any political system. The regime was not likely to be able to respond to such pressures due to its high centralization and personalization of power, and its lack of legitimacy. If those new political forces were to be heard, the power had to be diffused, but the regime was unlikely to do this. The Shah's awareness of the political articulation of both the peasants and women needed time to be converted into effective support, and this forced him to rely on repressive organization in the meantime.

The indirect effect of land reform can be found in the cities. Those unskilled or underemployed workers who were former peasants have been unable to cut their roots with their villages, and they are under heavy pressure of
urban life. The result is psychological disintegration, the loss of identity. In every walk of life, the converted peasant is faced with the question of "Who am I?" Unable to find the answer, he turns to available devices to forget himself. Now, he is ready for every kind of manipulation by the government or the market place. These peasants are potentially a revolutionary force, and are highly radical; and if they find their leadership they can shake the essence of any regime. Their natural allies are the workers. The villages, after land reform, are no longer an isolated island. They have become an organic part of whole comprador regime. So one may expect that, unlike the revolution of 1953, the countryside would not remain idle in any future upheaval.

The land reform was a device to solve the regime's contradiction, the inherent contradiction of feudalism with comprador bourgeoisie. Reza Shah's coup provided a temporary solution by taking over political power from feudalism and converting Iran to a semi-colonial, semi-feudal society. The "white revolution" destroyed the economic base of feudalism in favor of dependent capitalism. It enabled the regime again to control and it regained its cohesiveness, that had been weakened in 1959-1960 due to economic crises of those years. After 1960, the Shah emerged as the undisputed leader of Iran's political
system while bureaucratic and dependent capitalism began
their unprecedented growth. The profit exported from Iran
through these dependent capitalists would be huge, given
cheap Iranian labor, the government tax policies regarding
multi-national corporations, and the high price of consumer
goods in Iran's market. Thus foreign-controlled capital
has weakened the growth of national capitalism. In other
words, the revolution is similar to that of 1953, in that
it is unlikely to occur again, because the national bour-
geoisie is weakened and feudalism is gone. Both powers are
unable to exert leadership. The present Iranian revolu-
tion is quite different; it is an alliance of the lower
class and lower ranks of government officials joined by
workers against dependent and bureaucratic capitalism.
Not only the peasantry was affected by land reform; other
classes were hit as well. The emergence of a powerful
comprador and bureaucratic capitalism with the Shah at
the apex as coordinator and arbitrator divided the middle
class. Those classes whose support was necessary for de-
pendent capitalism grew rapidly, e.g., the technocrats.

After the 1960's Iran's higher education facilities
grew. Tens of thousands of middle- and upper-class chil-
dren entered universities either in Iran or in Western
countries. After graduation they earned high salaries--
compared to other classes--and in the private or public
sectors of the Iranian economy. On the other hand, the traditional middle class was weakened, e.g., the bazaari and mullas. The regime has gained little support even from the well-to-do middle class. The authoritarian rule of the Shah and the terrorization of Iran's society was and is in conflict with an educated middle-class demand for political participation and economic rationality.

The analysis of recent political developments in Iran is incomplete without adequate attention to the oil industry. Since the return of the Shah in 1953, oil has been the backbone of Iran's economic development. The reforms of 1960 that drew away Iran's economy from agriculture toward a consuming society were impossible without oil income. The creation of OPEC in 1960 and then the Arab oil embargo of 1973 caused an injection of huge amounts of petro-dollars into Iran's economy. Like land reform, oil income generated fears and hope—inequality and high expectation. The uneconomical and irrational use of oil income caused further inequality and social dislocation. A high percentage of oil income was consumed in unproductive sectors of the economy.

Since 1970, Iran has spent billions of dollars for military hardware. Since 1970 25 to 30 per cent of the

25 "Fumbling the Crisis?" Newsweek, January 29, 1979, p. 44.
national budget has gone to the military in addition to widespread corruption and waste, the latter particularly at top governmental levels. The oil wealth accelerated the growth of comprador and bureaucratic capitalism. This involved heavy pressure on the lower middle class, who lost their purchasing power because of the high rate of inflation. The oil income in Iran, unlike the countries that had a classical growth of capitalism, also caused the petty bourgeoisie to grow and expand as industrialization proceeded. In societies that have a classical mode of industrialization the petty bourgeoisie and other lower middle classes would move toward proletarization. Iran's economy, based on oil, rather than its industrial products, yielded a lower middle class that persists. In such a change, conditions are receptive for a rise of radical ideologies and of a guerilla movement. The process of struggle began in 1970, with an armed seizure of a gendarmerie garrison in Siahkal, in the north of Iran. The movement continued from that time. The regime's answer was violence as a massive police force was mobilized


to combat guerillas. The incident eventually affected the whole of Iranian society. The regime was forced to abandon its pose of liberalism with its laws and democratic procedures. All institutions and organizations that could be used as recruiting centers for the guerilla movement came under constant police surveillance, particularly the universities and factories. The guerilla movement not only neutralized the regime's propaganda that it was indispensable, but also broke the people's image of themselves as powerless individuals before the force of a well-armed regime. The regime failed to comprehend that military might not solve Iran's socio-economical problems.

Socio-economical solutions are next to impossible without first restructuring the political apparatus. The regime in the process of land reform also failed to understand the power of Iran's religious institutions. Those institutions, as presented in Chapter III, are analogous to nationwide political parties in that the allegiance of their members is not based exclusively on interest, but rather on belief. Religion has played an important progressive role in Iran's revolutions since 1905. Religious

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28 In 1970, a band of guerillas took over the gendarmerie garrison, to break the image of the regime as all-powerful and to show the people that the only way to bring about liberation was armed struggle. All of the guerillas were killed in combat with police or later executed. See: Sazman Cherikhi Fedayee Kalgh, Nabard Kalgh (Tehran, 1353), pp. 3-12, translated (People's Fedayee Guerilla Organization, People's War).
agencies are able to mobilize tens of thousands of their followers. The "white revolution" turned against them in the hope of curtailing their power. Its peak was in a bloody riot in June 1963, directed by Ayatollah Khomeini. He later was exiled from Iran, but even then he maintained an uncompromising stand toward the regime. He successfully gained the respect of a wide section of society, each for reasons of its own. The Shah's dictatorial role, unable to tolerate even the slightest opposition, destroyed the emergence of a genuine leadership within the country in both the civilian and military spheres. In 1963, Khomeini had already gained wide popularity and had the backing of powerful and well-rooted religious institutions; he was able to speak out against the regime openly, and he exerted his leadership on the lower middle class and middle class of Iran from outside. The suppression of leadership ability within the army, coupled with politicization of its cadres by drawing it into the streets to kill their fellow countrymen, prevented the army from being an effective supporter of the Shah in 1978. The dimension and depth of the revolution in 1978-1979 eventually radicalized the people so that they would not settle for less than structural change, not only in the political system, but in the economical and social world as well. The "white revolution" from the top, unlike the expectations of its designers, generated revolution from the bottom up after the
illusions of land reform disappeared and the people faced reality. Professor Huntington's expectations concerning the rising power of alienated and unsettled populations can be fit to this experience as a set of predictive indicators.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Iran's political development since 1905 has been characterized by sudden and disruptive changes rather than by a smooth process of political stability and adaptation. Professor Huntington's theories on political development always return to the same point: when modernization begins, disintegration springs forward to take its place as a feature that cannot be ignored.

The sources of this instability are varied and may be classified under a broad heading of duality and contradiction, between modernization and tradition between an efficient dictatorial system and democratic values, between economic progress and cultural purity. From the constitutional revolution of 1905 until 1979, Iran has been forced to solve its problems and to determine its own destiny. The revolution of 1978-1979 was not provided from without; it was a continuation of the nation's struggle to achieve real independence, democracy, and, to a lesser extent, economic well-being.

In 1905, this struggle was reflected in the constitutional movement; in 1953 it emerged in a revival of nationalism, and at present it is seen garbed in Islamic values.
Although the target of those revolutions always was the "unholy" coalition of foreign powers and their internal allies, the structural changes both within Iran and at the international level changed the content and dimension of each revolution. Since 1905, Iran's economy has changed from a feudal system to a semi-feudal, semi-colonial one, and finally became an organic part of the international capitalist system of production and distribution.¹ The feudal system implies political stability as it was before 1905, but contradictions emerge in any semi-feudal, semi-colonial system, between the emerging comprador bourgeoisie on one hand and national bourgeoisie and feudal remnants on the other. In what may be called a colonial system, the struggle has centered between the ruling comprador bourgeoisie and the nation at large, as the former tried to exploit both Iran's urban areas and the countryside. The semi-feudal, semi-colonial system and the comprador system are not stable, their growth has been unclassical, and both are imported and imposed on the Iranian people by Western countries.² 


²In a semi-feudal, semi-colonial system, although the basic pattern of production and distribution is feudal, the feudal lords do not control political power. In other words, feudalism is converted into dependence feudalism. Now, feudalism depends on the state for its survival;
nationalist character, e.g. the revolutions of 1953 and 1978. Surprisingly enough, Iran never lost its formal independence during those years; unlike countries in which direct colonial rule had been applied, she never fought an all-out liberation war.

In other words, the structure of political power remained intact over the years, and the political system failed to respond to the economic factors. This created a lag on the part of political development, at the time that new classes emerged and the composition of old classes underwent change and the political articulation of the masses increased. Constitutional revolution was a response to an inherent inability of the political system to adapt itself to change. Prevailing feudal modes of production prevented the countryside from participating in the revolution, since it limited its impact on a few urban areas. Leaders of the movement, too, failed to keep their momentum in the face of the illiteracy and the apoliticality of the masses, who were bound by a chain of feudal relations. The early movements soon degenerated without the active support of the people. The Majlis was given a wide freedom of action but was converted to a center for

members of the ruling class to meet to compromise with each other. This, coupled with extensive Anglo-Russian interventions in Iran's domestic affairs brought the downfall of constitutional governments. The extension of World War I into Iran was the final blow to inefficient constitutional governments and contributed to the rise of Reza Shah's dictatorship in 1921. Reza Shah's regime was accompanied by rapid industrialization. The workers and the lower-class populations were increased and state authority expanded. Reza Shah's regime was a compromise between feudalism and capitalism. Educational reform created a bureaucratic middle class. The army, too, emerged as a decisive factor for solution of political conflicts. In a word, new and modern classes emerged who had new aspirations and, unlike the peasants, were able to understand Western ideas. But the selective nature of the Shah's reform did not attack the countryside's problems. It widened the gap between urban and rural areas, and within cities inequality increased.

The importation of Western values into Iran and their imposition on the traditional masses created wide dissatisfactions and weakened the legitimacy of the monarchy. The

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democratic institutions experienced a massive setback. The only institutions outside the government bureaucracy left relatively free from government control were the religious institutions, which successfully symbolized the grievances of the people. So, when the Anglo-Russian troops occupied Iran and deposed Reza Shah in World War II, in the absence of strong political institutions, religious institutions filled the vacuum.

The defeat of Iran's army in World War II prevented it from becoming a political force, for a time. Although a period of freedom came with removal of the Shah, Iran's national pride was hurt. The defeat contributed to a rise of both nationalism and xenophobia flourishing in 1953. The popular rejection of the Soviet Republic's puppets in northern Iran signaled that Iran's nationalism was strong. The victory of Iran's army over the puppets rehabilitated the army and brought about its return to political life.

A variety of political parties was established, and these were based on charisma rather than on organization. The increase in the numbers of the middle class, particularly the bureaucratic middle class, provided objective conditions for nationalism. Mossadagh's rise to power was an indication of the political power of Iran's middle class. He successfully reconciled the religiously-oriented masses with the Western-educated middle class. This enabled him
to mobilize the masses and to utilize the talent of the middle class. He shared a massive hatred of foreign powers with the Iranian people, and he became a national hero. The broad ideology of nationalism was used not only to mobilize people, but to maintain the unity of the nation. Nationalism became a balance between tradition and modernity.

Communism in the post-World War II era of Iran revived. The Tudeh party was the only organized and disciplined party. It was a party of the middle class as well as a party of workers, but its connection with the Soviet Union damaged its prestige. Moreover, the high popularity of Mossadagh limited the Tudeh party's field of activities, even among workers.

The Shah's coup of 1953 brought back the Shah and was a nightmare to Iranians. The movement's failure to mobilize the countryside, its failure to understand the nature of the United States' foreign policy, and its reluctance to attack a channel of imperialist penetration of Iran were responsible for its defeat. The return of the Shah, accompanied by a rule of repressive organization, created widespread despair and apoliticality on the part of the masses. The stability of the regime after 1953 was based on the apoliticality of the people and a rule of terror toward those not accepting the regime. The events of June, 1963, and of early 1978 show that the regime has always been
insecure and illegitimate as far as Iranians are concerned. The land reform of 1963 was an illusion, but it created hope for a while. The Shah's intention was to break Iran's agricultural self-sufficiency and to create a consuming society, as in fact it did. The creation of small landed peasantry was only a temporary solution, for this system was not self-sustaining. The creation of a capitalistic mode of production in the countryside widened the inequality and smashed the small landed peasantry.

The politically reformed, politicized peasantry transmitted urban values into the villages, creating a new and local lower class in the cities and in the countryside. The injection of the huge oil income into Iran's economy not only prevented the lower class from being converted into factor workers, but even widened the gap between the rich and the poor. It also expanded the power of the comprador bourgeoisie into the countryside and the middle class was weakened. This may explain, in turn, the shift in the leadership of the opposition movements from secular nationalists--middle class--to spiritual nationalists--lower and lower-middle class. The latter is a highly religious and conservative group as was argued in Chapter III. The rapid politicization and radicalization of demonstrations in Iran can be traced to the active participation of the lower classes in the movements of 1978, and to the isolation of the comprador bourgeoisie from society.
Islam as a socio-political phenomenon has paid its due to Iran's revolutions in 1905, 1953, and 1978. Without Iran's powerful religious institutions, these revolutions would not have been possible. The illiterate masses, even though they are politically vocal, are not sophisticated. They trust the clergy and turn to them for cues. The secular nationalist or Communist appeal does not go beyond the middle class and university walls. The clergy has leadership as a result of its direct connection with the masses and its emotional appeal to them. Religious institutions function as a strong political party that claims loyalty based on belief rather than on a particular interest group. The clergy's claims of leadership of the lower classes prevented representatives of the working class from assuming the leadership of the opposition.

Islam not only has been a justifying force for change of the status quo, but has brought a sense of morality and high value to the political struggles. The religious mixture along with Iran's nationalism has broadened the nationalist appeal both to the middle class and downward to the lower-classes. It also has functioned as an integrative force within Iran's society. In other words, the mosque is as much a symbol of Iran's independence as is the Majlis. In the face of any Western cultural offensive in Iran, Islam has helped psychologically disintegrated
people to turn to themselves and to maintain their identity. Paradoxically, religion mixed with Iran's nationalism has been a source of contradiction because the former is spiritual and the latter secular. Even the political development of Iran may be interpreted in terms of continuous conflict between the secular and spiritual wings of Iran's nationalism. The clergy itself is not a monolithic class. Those of its members with an urban base of support are more radical than those with rural bases of support. Iran's nationalism is an uneasy coalition of clergy and modernists. The religious may successfully destroy the status quo by mobilizing huge numbers of unsophisticated masses, but it cannot rule alone. To construct an economically powerful and politically free Iran the cooperation of both the educated Iranians and the bureaucratic middle class is necessary, rather than the emotion of the masses, no matter how minor they are. The educated Iranian is not religiously oriented. Religious institutions are ready-made infrastructures upon which secular political parties can be based. Islam's inherent democratic values can guarantee individual and social liberty. Religious institutions also can control political leadership due to their command of the masses, but they should not take over political power itself. Exclusive adherence to Islamic values and their application for a solution of socio-economic problems
limits Iran's ability to attack its economic backwardness and limits its foreign policy.

Iran as an Islamic country has been connected to the affairs of nearby regions through religion. Iran's neighbors are bound to Iran by religion, but they are different from Iran culturally and economically. An Islamic regime in Iran would transmit the political instability of the Arab Middle Eastern countries into Iran.

Ethnic groups' loyalty since 1905 has also been an obstacle to Iran's integration. The process is accelerated due to the residence of these groups in Iran's periphery and their close connection with their fellows on the other side of the borders. A democratic political system by acceptance of a minority's rights to have its own culture and centralized economic planning to promote development of those regions can integrate the various ethnic groups in Iran with Persians. Exclusive reliance on Islam or Persian nationalism would alienate them and even cause a further split within Iran's national fabric.

As far as Communism is concerned, some Iranians think it can make important contributions to Iran's political development. Communism's emphasis on class conflict and their neglect of ethnicity or of religiously-based differences

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could integrate the nation. The communist program of rapid industrialization through centralized planning could be utilized to distribute national resources more equally, and to prevent the waste of resources. Moreover, Communism's uncompromising stand against imperialist action has wide sympathy in Iran, particularly among the bureaucratic middle class and among the students. In a word, Communism is a modernist movement, similar to other nationalist movements and regimes.\

At the time of the writing of this thesis, Iran's revolution that began in 1978 has succeeded, at least on the political front. Monarchy has been abolished and with it an important contradiction of Iran's political system, the monarchical claim of political legitimacy based on the pre-Islamic era with Islamic claims of loyalty. The success of this revolution in dealing with socio-economic issues remains to be seen. The present leader of Iran is a member of the clergy, the Ayatollah Khomeini, who has been chosen by men of the street, through political demonstrations and by armed struggle. Although Khomeini is a member of the clergy, he is a national leader, too.

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The Shah's repressive and corrupt regime, which did not share the people's values, created such a hatred that the movement attracted all sections of society, each for reasons of its own. The political left, Democrats, and the clergy all fought the Shah, under the banner of God. This was commendable, but it does not mean that the motive of all of these groups are the same. Khomeini's regime, which is now in power, should change its programs and strategy compared with the time of the struggle that toppled the Shah. The revolutionary regime now is faced with the task of building a new social order and carrying out the economic developments upon which its very survival depends.

On April 1, 1979, Iran officially became an Islamic republic with the approval of an overwhelming majority of Iranians. The year-long struggle of the people against the Shah has radicalized the movement, and people are unlikely to settle for less than major structural changes. The present problems of Iran are rooted in the rule of the comprador bourgeoisie; the Shah's dictatorship was only one political aspect of that system. The economic power of this group must be destroyed, if the independence of the nation was to be maintained. All governmental institutions which were at service of the regime must undergo drastic change, especially the army.
Our examination of Iran through the Huntington lens comes to a close. The experience of Iran in 1953 and the experience of Chile in 1973, as well as those of Bangladesh and later, Iraq, remind us that wherever people have not taken control of their destiny, a revolution is at danger. The economy and governmental bureaucracy which affect the lives of the people may be managed undemocratically in a so-called Western democracy. Democracy for Iran must be applied to all aspects of organized life, and this can be done through a popular democracy. In factories, farms, government bureaucratic ranks, in the army and the like—for a limited time—the managers and officers should be elected democratically. Planning can be utilized to assist in distributing the national income more equitably and efficiently than under the Shah.

The government must achieve the active cooperation of the people, and it must represent all major forces of society rather than a few particular viewpoints. Political institutions must be strengthened to express and represent all sections of the Iranian society.

In Iran, this can be done only by accepting the country's realities, by accepting the cultural and socio-political characteristics of Iranians. The task of the new regime of Iran is difficult, but that does not mean that it cannot be accomplished. The people of Iran who initiated their
revolution are ready to maintain it. In a word, the creation of a socialist infra-structure and the maintenance of individual and social freedoms within the context of Iran's nationalism seems the best general course for the future.
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