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THE FAILURE OF THE LIBERAL NATIONALIST MOVEMENT IN IRAN, 1949-1979: AN ANALYSIS OF STRUCTURAL CONSTRAINTS AND POLITICAL CHOICES

The Ohio State University

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THE FAILURE OF THE LIBERAL NATIONALIST MOVEMENT IN IRAN, 1949-1979: AN ANALYSIS OF STRUCTURAL CONSTRAINTS AND POLITICAL CHOICES

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

Sussan Siavoshi, B.A., M.A.

* * * * *

The Ohio State University
1985

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Chapter I
INTRODUCTION

The 1979 Iranian revolution and its aftermath took the world by surprise. Surprise with respect not only to the intensity and rapidity of the revolution, but also to the leadership which emerged. Perhaps most of the Western intellectual community expected either a Marxist or a liberal nationalist type of leadership or, at least, a greater share of power for Marxists and liberals during and after the revolution. But as the events since the revolution have demonstrated, the adherents to these two tendencies did not acquire more power, and actually lost the formal influence (in the case of liberals) they seemed to enjoy in 1979. The liberal nationalists proved to be very weak. Their last National Front as a liberal organization was an elite without followers, relatively isolated and powerless, and it quickly disappeared in the shadow of the forceful and effective religious leadership.

The fact is that Iranian liberals had failed. They failed to fulfill the requirement demanded of a viable movement in a revolutionary and highly explosive situation.
The question is how and why did they fail? Why did the liberal nationalist leaders and the organization which symbolized the popular movement of the early 1950s go into such an eclipse? Why did they lose the effectiveness, credibility, and mass support they had once enjoyed?

This dissertation is designed to explain the dismal failure of the liberal nationalist movement in providing a viable alternative to the religious organization and leadership before and during the revolution. And in light of this explanation, to see whether or not there is any hope for any future liberal movement to become viable in the Iranian social context.

THE NATURE OF IRANIAN LIBERAL NATIONALISM I.E. MELLIGARA-I

The origin of the Melli movement (liberal nationalist movement) could be traced to the Constitutional revolution of 1905-1911. Since then, the Melli movement is defined, by its adherents, to have two overriding and interrelated goals: to destroy internal despotism, and, to establish an independent country. Therefore, by definition, the Melli movement was, from the very beginning, anti-despotic and anti-imperialist.

But the usage of the two concepts liberalism and nationalism, in referring to the Melliiun (the adherents of the Melli idea), has been criticized by the Melliiun them-

(1) Amir Pishdad and Homa Katouzian, Melli Kist va Nehzat-e
selves. (1) In their view labeling the Melli movement as liberal nationalist distorts the nature and intentions of the Melli movement. The objection, on the part of the Melli personalities, is understandable merely due to the confusion emanating from the variety of existing and competing definitions of the two above mentioned concepts. For that reason, it is necessary to clarify these two concepts, by providing specific definitions, in the context of this study. That in its turn will enable us to convey the relevant meaning of liberal nationalism in the historical context of the socio-political realities of Iran.

In Western Europe, in the Twentieth century and particularly during the inter-World Wars period, a particular brand of nationalism became dominant. The rise of Hitler in Germany, and Mussolini in Italy, symbolized the dominance of this ideology. The main value and behavioral components of the early and mid-Twentieth century Western Europe nationalism were: the supremacy of a particular race and a belligerent foreign policy. In Germany and in Italy, dictatorial regimes were set up in order to realize the goals of the "nationalists".

This brand of nationalism is certainly not similar to the values, identified as nationalistic, which were held by many intellectuals in the Third World, including the Irani-
an liberal nationalists. Third World nationalism in general, and in Iran in particular, was predominantly associated with liberation ideology. The main goal of this brand of nationalism was to free the Third World from the yoke of colonialism and later on of imperialism. The overriding concern in this ideology was independence of a nation from foreign dominance. To refer to Melljun, in the Iranian context, as nationalists, therefore, points to the desire (value) and efforts (behavior) of these people for an independent nation state. It is only in this sense that one can label the Melljun as nationalists.

The concept of liberalism is no less troublesome than that of nationalism. It is usually not clear what one means when one uses the word liberalism. Is one referring to classical economic liberalism or to political liberalism? Does one have in mind the Anglo-American notion of liberalism or certain other notions of liberalism?

This confusion did not exist, in an earlier time, when liberalism was first introduced in Western Europe. Liberalism was a systematic ideology, in which the political component easily fit in with the economic counterpart. It was a consistent doctrine of individual liberty. The political theories of James Mill smoothly fit the economic laissez-faire idea of Adam Smith.
This consistency was a product of the socio-economic and political characteristics of 18th and 19th century Western Europe. It is argued that the advent of liberalism was the result of the victorious struggle of the bourgeoisie, the well to do middle class of city dwellers, against the landed aristocracy and the absolutist state. It was a struggle on two grounds; first, on economic grounds (i.e. to free individuals from the rigid economic status which was based on a feudal social order); and second, on political grounds (i.e. to free individuals from the absolutist rule of the state).

But the dynamic of history brought about changes which ultimately created a crack in this consistency and necessitated a reevaluation of the concept of liberalism in the 20th century. Laissez-faire, the classical economic liberalism, in the 20th century became a conservative ideology which functioned as a legitimizing factor in preserving and perpetuating the status of a privileged class, the bourgeois capitalist. Therefore it became undemocratic, and as a result it contradicted the philosophical notion of individual freedom and equality of mankind. The economic inequality resulting from laissez-faire practices, with its implications for political equality, forced the political liberals to distance themselves from the advocates of laissez-faire. The result was a new concept of liberalism
which sanctions a certain degree of government involvement in economic life, by means of social legislation, to promote individual freedom. This change in the meaning and character of liberalism manifested itself most clearly in the ideology of people who are referred to as social democrats in Western Europe.

It is only with this distinction in mind, that one can refer to Melliiun as liberals. Liberalism in Iran attracted the Melliiun more with regard to its political dimension than its economic one. As a matter of fact, as will be discussed in later chapters, many of the most prominent Mellii personalities came from upper class backgrounds. Mossadeq came from the ranks of the landed aristocracy, as did Sanjabi, Bakhtiar and some others. Moreover, the Mellii movement, even among its leaders, had people (such as Khalil Maleki) who, in their economic outlooks, were sympathetic to Marxist and socialist ideas. Therefore, the Mellii movement as a whole did not reflect the interest or the opinion of any particular class but the interest or the opinion of the "oppressed nation" versus the "oppressive state". In that sense the liberalism of the Iranian Melliiun was basically not bourgeois but social democratic.
A BRIEF HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The Melli movement: 1949-53

In 1949 the Melli movement was expressed in the organization of the National Front. In that year a delegation of 19 leading personalities headed by Mohammed Mossadeg issued a public communique and declared the formation of the National Front. In a very short period of time the N.F. became an umbrella organization which included a variety of political and religious groups with left, right, and centrist ideologies.

Most of the elements within the N.F. never evolved into political parties in a formal sense. On the left wing the most organized group was the Toilers Party. This party was a coalition of Marxist, but anti-Stalinist, intellectuals and liberal socialist labor organizers. More toward the center was the Iran Party. Professional people such as doctors, lawyers, journalists and teachers constituted the majority of this party. These people were liberal and had mild socialist tendencies and were ideologically closest to Mossadeg.

In the center of the Front was Mossadeg himself and several prominent personalities like Doctor Fatemi and Mehdi Bazargan. At the right of the center, there were traditionalist religious organizations. The most important personality in that part of the spectrum was Abol Qasem Kasha-
ni. In addition to the religious groups, the right wing of the N.F. spectrum comprised of secular nationalist extremist groups. These groups attracted support chiefly from the middle and lower-middle classes.

What made such a broad coalition possible was the nationalistic feeling of all these groups. But the leadership was undoubtedly in the hands of the liberals particularly Mossadeq who within a short period of time became the charismatic prime minister of Iran.

The Melli Movement: 1960-1963
The popular government of Mossadeq was toppled by a successful coup in 1953. The coup which was directly backed by foreign powers put an end to the activity of the First National Front, and created the proper setting for the growing dictatorship of Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, the last Shah of Iran. But in 1960, a brief relaxation of the state control over the polity created a short enthusiastic interlude for the opposition. The National Front was revived. But this time Mossadeq was absent and the other leaders of the Front never acquired the enthusiastic support of the population. Some important Melli organizations were denied the right to participate in the activities of this Second National Front by the leaders of the Front. A combination of leadership, organizational and programatic issues soon paralyzed the Front. A return to dictatorial methods on the
part of the Shah's regime added to the problems with which the Front was confronted. In 1963 the life of the Second National Front came to an end.

The Melli Movement: 1977-79

The oppositional activities were triggered in 1977 by some of the Melli personalities. In late 1977 the National Front was once again revived. But this time the National Front did not lead the Melli movement as a whole. Some important Melli organizations such as the Freedom Movement never joined the National Front in 1977-79. In addition, many of the prominent personalities who were part of the National Front in earlier periods, never became part of the National Front again. This time the National Front became an organization with a few leaders and no viable rank and file. It soon disintegrated in the stormy first year of the Islamic republic of Iran.

THE RESEARCH APPROACH

The existing body of literature on democracy (with the exception of early modernization theories) basically excludes the Third World as an area of concern.

One reason which might help to explain this lack of concern has to do with the fact that an overwhelming part of this literature deals with the stability of democratic regimes. The logic behind the exclusion of the Third World
is that, in order to be able to explain the stability of a democratic regime, there must be a democratic regime in place. One can not talk about democratic stability without the existence of a democratic regime. Since democratic regimes are rare commodities in the Third World the logic would hold that there is not much to study.

Another reason, which helps to explain this lack of concern, lies in the very premises upon which the early modernization theories (that section of democratic theories which focus on the Third World) were built. The early modernization theorists such as Karl Deutsch, Seymour Lipset and Daniel Lerner talked about certain necessary preconditions for the establishment of liberal democracy in the Third World. (2) The first precondition is economic modernization. Economic modernization, they argue, will lead to urbanization, a higher rate of literacy, and an increase in mass media consumption. All these developments will be accompanied by an inclusion of new members into the "modern" sector of the society, through the gradual disappearance of traditionalism and local isolation. The inclusion of new members into the modern sector will create a "modern man" with a "modern mentality". The modern man will feel

the need for greater political participation, particularly after being exposed to national politics.

All these developments will create favorable conditions for the establishment of a democratic regime. Based on these theories, countries such as South Korea, Taiwan, and Iran which have experienced rapid economic modernization have fulfilled the most important precondition necessary for political development, i.e. liberal democracy.

To the dismay of these early modernization theorists, economic modernization with its social implications (i.e. growth in GNP, growth in urbanization, increase in mass media consumption, higher rate of literacy, etc...) were not followed by political liberalization.

The failure of economic modernization in bringing about political democracy led the later modernization theorists to shift their attention from democracy, as the main criterion for measuring political development, to stability. The prime example of such change in outlook and focus is reflected in the work of Samuel Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*. Implicit in this shift of focus is the idea of the improbability (if not the impossibility) of the establishment of liberal democratic regimes in the Third World. As a result, the study of democratic movements in the Third World became, more or less, out of fashion.
This dissertation is designed to challenge the idea of the impossibility of democracy in the Third World by addressing the case of Iran. Ironically enough, the challenge is not waged through focusing on the victory of a democratic movement but on its failure. Despite a brief victory between 1949-53, the democratic movement in Iran had failed. However, the important question is whether its defeat was inevitable, as the structural analysis of people such as Huntington implicitly suggest, or whether the Melli movement had a chance to viably survive.

In this dissertation I will attempt to demonstrate that the defeat of the Melli movement in Iran was a much more complex phenomenon than a structural approach would suggest. For one thing, the modernization theories focus only on the internal structure of the societies under study. Almost no attention has been given to the unequal global power relation and its probable or at least possible impact on the fate of genuinely democratic movements in the Third World. With regard to the Iranian case, this is a serious neglect. The role that big powers such as the U.S. or Britain, particularly during the time of Mossadegh, played had a substantial and determining impact on the fate of the liberal nationalist movement and on the overall political outcome of recent Iranian history.
Moreover, a structural approach certainly underesti­mates, if not totally neglects, the importance of such non-structural factors as leadership qualities (charisma, perception, and skills). In the Iranian case, I will argue that these qualities and the overall internal characteristics of the liberal nationalist movement played an important role in the rise and fall of the Melli movement.

A last, but certainly not least, weakness of the structural approach is its inherent inability to account for factors such as opportunities, immediate circumstances, choices and chance. After all we are living in a political world which can furnish us with surprising, as it furnishes us with predictable, outcomes, a world which can provide us with deviation, just as it provides us with regularities. In short, we are living in a world of human beings with complex psyches, not a world of pre-programmed machines. Opportunities gained and lost, choices and chances, many of which were created by interactions between human players, had their own impact on the failure of the liberal nationalists in Iran.

It is certain that one should not deny or underestimate the importance of the structural constraints. Indeed, the structural factors were quite important, particularly in the 1970s, in explaining the defeat of the liberal nationalists in Iran. However, the importance of factors such as
the foreign elements, coupled with the significance of non-structural factors such as opportunities, choices and chances, would seriously question the idea of the inevitability of the failure of the liberal nationalists.

In this study, I will argue that a complex interplay and interrelation between the two above mentioned sets of factors was responsible for the failure of the Melli movement.

THE METHODOLOGY

The first part of this study is essentially a macro study of economic, political, and socio-cultural characteristics of Iranian society. It is a developmental study which includes almost thirty years of Iranian political economy. In general, the socio-economic, political, and cultural characteristics and transformations of Iranian society have been the subject of much scholarly research. Therefore, in this part of this project, I rely heavily on data which were made available by these previous studies.

The second and more original part of this project concentrates on a specific political movement, namely liberal nationalism proper. In this part, which is basically a micro-level study, I proceed to study the specific characteristics of that movement. These characteristics include the institutions, the policies, and the leadership qualities of the movement. However, the core focus is the atti-
tudes and perceptions of the leadership, and their impacts on the leadership behavior and on the fate of the whole movement.

Since leaders normally constitute a small percentage of a whole movement, therefore, it is feasible, and certainly preferable, to conduct in-depth interviews (in contrast to survey research) to study leaders' perception. In the course of working on this project I was fortunate enough to be able to conduct in-depth interviews with as many as 21 (mostly at the leadership level) of the Melli personalities. The interviews were conducted in the course of nine months, from Spring to Fall 1983, in the United States, France, and Britain.

However, the reader must be warned in advance that the majority of the interviewees belonged to what I will refer to, in later chapters, as the younger generation of the Melli leaders. (3) That implies that there might be an unconscious and/or unwarranted bias against the other members of the Melli movement who were not interviewed. To remedy this weakness (only partially but by no means satisfactorily) I have tried to use other data as well. These latter data consist of biographies, autobiographies, and written materials by those leaders with whom I did not have the opportunity to conduct personal interviews.

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(3) Only three among my interviewees belonged to the older generation of leaders.
THE ORGANIZATION OF THE PROJECT

This project consists of eight chapters. The introductory chapter will be followed by three chapters which, respectively, will lay out the context, in terms of economic, political, and socio-cultural characteristics and transformations of Iranian society. In each of these three chapters, I will follow the same path. I will first trace the structural transformations of the Iranian society in one of the above mentioned aspects; secondly, I will try to connect these transformations to the radicalization of the populace; and thirdly, I will, very briefly, connect these transformations and their subsequent impact on the population to the activities of the oppositional groups including the National Front.

Chapters Five, Six, and Seven will, respectively, deal with the First, Second, and Fourth National Fronts. In these three chapters, I will first trace the formation/reformation of the National Fronts. After that, I will introduce, to the reader, some of the prominent leaders of the Fronts by focusing on their lives, ideas and behaviors. Each of these chapters includes a section on the organizational characteristics of the Fronts. In each of these chapters, an important section is devoted to an analysis of the Fronts' defeat.
The last chapter will be a comparative appraisal of the future of liberalism in Iran. In this chapter there will be a brief description of the three different cases of Spain, the Soviet Union, and China. The models offered by these cases and their similarities and differences with Iran will be a starting point through which I will proceed to appraise the fate of liberalism in a post-Khomeini Iran.
Chapter II

THE ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION OF IRANIAN SOCIETY.

Revolutions are complex phenomena and the Iranian revolution of 1977-79 is no exception. Why do people rebel? What are the causes of revolutions? We probably can not find a universal and ahistorical answer to these questions. In every revolution, a particular combination of different factors creates the revolutionary situation. However, one of the important factors which to some degree has contributed to the outbreak of all the revolutionary movements of modern times is the economic factor.

In Iran, the economic transformation of the past few decades contributed to the creation of an explosive situation, a situation in which the liberal nationalist movement proved to be ineffective.

The questions which are relevant to this study are first, how, in the short run, the economic policies of the Shah affected the Iranian society; second, how people perceived these policies; and third, how this perception created that radical and revolutionary atmosphere within which the liberals lost their credibility and influence.

- 18 -
AN OVERVIEW OF THE ECONOMIC POLICIES OF THE SHAH'S REGIME.

In a very general sense, the Iranian economy is comprised of three major sectors: agriculture, oil and industry. This section will attempt to discuss some of the important policies regarding these three sectors.

Agricultural Policies.

The most important agricultural reform policy was introduced by the reformist government of Ali Amini in 1962. This policy consisted of a comprehensive land distribution program. Prior to 1962 all attempts to reform the agricultural sector had failed. For example during the premiership of Mossadeq (1951-53) there were some efforts to put limits on landlord profits and to allocate the extra profit for the well being of the peasantry and the rural community. But the 1953 coup put an end to this mild agricultural reform. The landlord dominated Majlis (the Iranian parliament) was successful in maintaining the status quo ante for almost another decade. Due to the landlords' influence, even the very mild agricultural bill passed by the Majlis in 1960 was never implemented. However the passage of the 1960 agricultural reform bill was an indication of a confrontation between the landlords as a class and the state. Years of American aid to the Mohammed Reza Shah's regime, coupled with the increase in oil production started to shift the balance of power in favor of the state and
against the landlords. In the meantime John F. Kennedy, the newly elected President of the U.S., was perceived by the Shah as an advocate of political and economic reform in Third World countries. The Shah's dependence on the U.S. for financial and military support led him to appoint Ali Amini, a U.S. favored candidate, to premiership. Amini's government soon launched a series of reformist policies including a land reform program. However the Shah, in order to make himself the champion of this attractive program, soon after introduced a six-point program including a land reform policy.

In order to understand the specifics of land reform and its consequences, we will take a brief look at the economic structure of rural Iran prior to 1962. Prior to land reform, the tenurial system in Iran comprised three major kinds of landholdings: first, Crown and state owned land (Khaliseh); second, land owned by the religious establishment; and third, land owned by private individuals. Of all lands held in these categories about 24% belonged to the first two categories. (4) State ownership was quite large. In 1960, the state owned more than 1500 villages in whole or in part. (5) The percentage of land held as religious

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productive instruments; third, laborers with regular wages; and last casual laborers often hired at harvest seasons.

Regarding rural economic stratification, what is important is the fact that the rural community in itself contained a complex set of strata (including small shopkeepers, loan sharks, small artisans, etc...) and not just the simple dichotomy of big landlords and peasants. Now the question is how the land reform program affected the socio-economic structure of rural Iran.

Land reform started in 1962 and ended in the early 1970s. During this period three distinct phases of the program were introduced and implemented. The first phase consisted of a few major provisions. The primary target of this phase was the big landlords. This phase limited the ownership of agricultural land to one village or to some fraction of different villages. However, there were some exceptions to the rule. Based on these exceptions certain categories of land were exempted. Tea plantations, mechanized fields and orchards were among these latter categories. The first phase intended to divide up the land primarily among the sharecroppers. The laborers were practically excluded as beneficiaries of the land reform program.

The government played the role of an intermediary in distributing the land. The state would buy the lands which
were eligible for distribution and resell them to the peasants. The landlord would receive compensation based on taxes the owner had paid on the distributed land up to 1962. The compensation was to take place within a period of 10 years (later extended to 15 years), and the new owners (the peasants) were to repay the state over the same period of time. In brief, these were the stated goals of the first phase. Based on Bank Markazi's (the Central Bank) data,(8) out of 76,682 villages and hamlets only 16,593 were distributed. This amounted to 21.6% of the country-wide total of arable lands. In terms of population covered by this phase, out of 3,200,000 peasant households 78,7000, meaning 24.6%, acquired land.

The second phase of land reform was supposed to cover the villages not affected by the first phase. In nature this phase was more conservative than the first one. In fact this phase was an attempt to regularize rather than to reform the existing land tenure system. It provided landlords with many options. The first option was that landlords could rent their land to the peasants on 30 year leases. The second option was to sell the land to the peasant based on a mutually agreed price. The third choice was to buy the land from the peasants. The last option was to set up a joint stock company with the peasant having shares

endowment (Waqf) was even larger than that of the state. The third category, the private owners who controlled or owned the rest of the remaining 76% of the land, consisted of two categories. The first category comprised a small number of large landlords including the Shah himself, the royal family, a few powerful families, high positioned governmental officials, and some prominent members of the clergy. According to Bharrier, about 70% of the fertile lands belonged to these large landlords. Usually big landlords owned between twenty to forty villages, with the exception of the Shah who owned more than a thousand villages before he distributed most of them among the peasants as a good-will gesture in the 1950s. The second category of private owners consisted of a large number of small landholders who owned the remaining 4% of the fertile lands. Except for the small land-owners, all the other categories were absentee landlords, and their lands were managed by their agents (mobashir).

On the other hand, there were people who did not own land but were in the business of land cultivation. Among this latter group were first, cultivators who paid fixed cash rentals; second, sharecroppers who possessed the traditional right of cultivation and who usually owned some


equal to his former share of the crop. As a whole, this phase was mainly a tenancy reform act.

The goal of the third phase of the land reform program was to change the tenancy arrangement of the previous phase into peasant ownership. The reason behind this policy was to increase productivity. The logic was that ownership would provide more incentive among the peasants and would encourage them to produce more. But more important than ownership for the peasantry, the third phase was concerned with the creation of larger scale farming as the best way to promote productivity. Therefore the government set up some large scale state-run farming corporations. In addition to these state-owned corporations, the government encouraged the creation of private Iranian or joint Iranian-foreign agricultural companies called agro-businesses. The objective was to modernize Iranian agriculture through applying capital-intensive techniques, mechanized production and specialized cultivation of cash crops. This policy led to the concentration of ownership and to the creation of absentee capitalist farmers as well as peasant wage laborers.

The implementation of the land reform program ended in the early 1970s. Now the question is how the implementation of this program affected the rural population. Even before 1962 there had been rumors of upcoming agricultural reform.
These rumors warned the landlords ahead of time of the possibility of state-sponsored land redistribution. Thus some of them, particularly the powerful and well connected landlords, in order to escape or at least to cushion the impact of radical land reform, took precautionary measures and transferred their lands to their wives, children and close relatives. Many others took advantage of the "exempted land" clause and by introducing a few tractors or by switching from crop production to orchards or pistachio production escaped the consequences of the land reform. These precautionary measures reduced the number of villages which would otherwise have been eligible for redistribution.

In 1962, the peasant population was at least 15.4 million. About half belonged to the lowest strata of the peasantry and owned no land. To be exact, in 1962 47.5% of the employed rural population owned nothing but their own labor. This stratum of the peasantry did not receive any land in either phase of the land reform. They either continued as laborers to those peasants who had newly acquired land or else migrated to the cities.

If the initial hope was that the peasantry as a whole would acquire land, it was certainly not realized. The percentage of peasant households which received land under the first phase was 24.6% or roughly one fourth of the total
households. The second stage of the land reform did not have a better record than the first one in terms of real distribution of land among the peasantry. Most landlords in this phase decided to keep their lands and to conclude tenancy agreements with the peasants. Among those peasants who were affected by the second phase, 1,371,500 families out of the total 1,652,400 reached tenancy agreements (9) rather than acquiring ownership of land. This means that less than 10% of the total number of peasant households acquired land in the second phase. As far as the third phase was concerned around 800,000 peasant households out of the 1.25 million who were eligible (those who had reached tenancy agreements under phase two) acquired land. (10) Even according to sympathizers of the regime, such as D.R. Denman who has studied the Iranian land reform, no more than two-thirds of the eligible peasants acquired any land in this phase. Some 7,381,119 received land through purchasing from landlords, and another 61,805 through division of land between landlords and tenants. (11)

If we add all the above figures we will realize that less than half of the peasant population became landholders. Now the question is whether or not these redistributed

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(9) A. Ashraf, op. cit., computed from data available in table 1, p. 34.

(10) Eric Hoogland, op. cit., p. 70.

lands were of good quality, and whether or not the size of the individual peasant's holding was large enough to support a family. Many peasants who got land did not receive it in viable amounts. Many of them ended up owning 4 or 5 hectares of land. The average minimum amount of land required to make an adequate living in most regions is almost seven hectares. According to one estimate almost 68% of peasants received plots under five hectares.\(^{(12)}\) Therefore, of all peasant families who owned land in 1972 only 600,000 units (no more than 17% of the rural population) owned viable farms ranging in size from ten to fifty hectares.\(^{(13)}\)

It was precisely this problem of non-viable lands which would ultimately reduce agricultural production, despite the fact that production was the major concern of the regime. As mentioned earlier, to eliminate the problem of productivity, the government designed state-run farms and facilitated the creation of agricultural farms by private citizens in partnership with foreign companies. In the process, many poor peasants were encouraged or actually forced by circumstances to join the state-run farms by exchanging their plots for paper shares in these corporations. By 1976 over 33,000 families had joined such corporations.


porations. As a result, the power to use the land, to make
decisions on what to produce, how much to produce and how
to produce passed into the hands of the state-appointed
managers.

In other areas where agro-businesses were set up, the
government bought out the peasants' lands and handed them
over to large private firms. By this time the originally
stated goal, the creation of an independent peasantry had
been conveniently forgotten. For that matter, no one in the
government used the egalitarian tone of the early 1960s
anymore.

In terms of performance, especially in economic terms,
the land reform had proven to be a failure. First of all,
the poorest section of the peasant population meaning
almost half of the total number of peasant households, did
not acquire any land. Of the rest, only 1/3 had enough land
to support themselves. So in terms of its social implica­
tions, the land reform was not successful in carrying out a
serious redistribution or levelling of the existing dispar­
ities between the different classes of peasantry.

Secondly, the land reform program, particularly in its
third stage created a "modern" sector of agriculture (farm
corporations and agro-businesses) versus the traditional
sector (independent small farmers). If we examine the per­
formance of the two sectors, we will realize that the mod-
ern sector despite huge amounts of state and private credit which were injected into it, performed very poorly. According to some economists, the modern sector did much worse than the traditional sector both in relative and in absolute terms.\(^{(14)}\) According to some other scholars, the modern sector did worse only in relative terms.\(^{(15)}\) But even if the modern sector did worse in relative terms, despite the much better facilities at its disposal, one might easily conclude that the agricultural policies of the regime failed.

The question of why the modern sector of agriculture failed is an important question in itself. However, it is not within the scope of this chapter to provide the answer to this question. What is important, here, is the impact of the modernist agricultural policies of the regime. The state ignored and therefore denied the traditional sector of agriculture and the small independent landholders (many of whom were struggling for survival) much needed help. It directed its almost exclusive attention towards the "modern" sector. It emphasized and promoted the usage of capital intensive rather than labor intensive methods. As a result rural unemployment increased rapidly. This unemplo-


ment, reinforced greatly by a high rate of rural population growth ultimately led to a high rate of migration to urban areas. It was this newly migrated peasantry which created a substantial portion of the urban poor and which furnished the revolution of 1977-79 with one of its valuable assets.

Oil

Black gold, this precious commodity was explored in Iran in 1908 by a man named William D'Arcy. In 1901 D'Arcy negotiated a 60-year concession with exclusive exploration, production and oil refining rights over the entire area of Iran with the exception of the five Northern provinces. According to this agreement, Iran would receive a 16% royalty on the company's net annual profits, an initial sum of 20,000 pounds in cash and another 20,000 pounds in paid-in shares of the company. During Reza Shah's (the founder of the Pahlavi Dynasty) reign, in 1933, the D'Arcy concession was revised and a new contract was signed. But this new contract was not much different from the old one and Iran's share of profit stayed very low.

In 1950 through the political efforts of Mohammed Mossadeq, the Iranian nationalist leader, the nationalization of the oil industry became a hot issue and was taken seriously into consideration. In early 1951, the Majlis passed the nationalization bill, and a couple of months later Mossadeq became prime minister. Except for the failed Mexican
attempt to control the flow of their oil, the Iranian nationalization effort was unprecedented, and encountered serious difficulties. British battleships replaced oil tankers at the southern port of Abadan and provided an effective blockade against the export of Iranian oil. The British oil blockade was compounded by the American refusal to grant financial aid to Mossadeq's government, and by the Soviet refusal to repay its wartime debts. As a result, Mossadeq's government was confronted with a very difficult financial situation. Moreover, opposition from the Shah, the landlords, the army and the communists made things more difficult. Finally, the CIA dealt the final blow to the nationalist struggle. In August of 1953, the CIA monitored coup d'état toppled Mossadeq's government and closed a nationalist chapter of Iranian political history.

In 1954, a year after the coup d'état which brought the Shah back to power, the Iranian government signed a new oil agreement. Although oil remained nominally nationalized, the real power and control went into the hands of an international consortium which replaced the British Petroleum Company. The international consortium exercised power through its control over both output and price of oil. The international consortium included seven important oil companies (the Seven Sisters) with British Petroleum as the major share holder of the Iranian oil industry.
revenues increased tremendously between 1970 and 1977. The following table demonstrates the increase of oil revenues in terms of both the actual amount and also the percentage of the GNP compared to the other sectors of the economy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Percentage of Oil in GNP Compared to Other Sectors</td>
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<td>(in Billion Rials)</td>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actual</td>
<td>% GNP</td>
<td>% GNP</td>
<td>Amount</td>
<td>Amount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
<td>88.8</td>
<td>339.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
<td>52.8</td>
<td>684.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>34.6%</td>
<td>119.6</td>
<td>1281.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>1284.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Katouzian, *Political Economy of Iran*, p.257

In the meantime, Iran started bilateral negotiations with the international consortium to revise the 1954 oil agreement. Through these negotiations Iran was able to take effective control over the output of the oil industry. The
Based on this new arrangement, the National Iranian Oil Company (a state owned company) became the sole distributor of oil within Iran. Another provision of this agreement concerned areas under the international consortium's control. Some areas previously under the control of British Petroleum were excluded in the 1954 deal. That gave the N.I.O.C. the freedom to invite other independent oil companies to produce oil under more favorable terms. But since these latter areas were not as rich in oil as the areas under the control of the consortium, they made little difference.

In 1960 the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries was established. Iran was one of its founders. For a decade OPEC was not a very significant organization. It was only in the early 1970s that OPEC manifested its strength and effectiveness. By 1970, the world demand for crude oil had increased and gradually put the oil producers in a seller's market. In February of 1971, the Shah himself presided over an OPEC conference which symbolized these changed circumstances. In this meeting, for the first time, the companies' control over prices was broken. From then on oil prices started to rise steadily. It was in 1973 that the largest price rise occurred, and Iran as one of the two most important OPEC members benefited greatly. Iranian oil

reason that Iran, in this period as opposed to Mossadeq's era, was successful was that most other oil producing countries were acting harmoniously. This time collective actions by these actors produced positive results.

The effective control over the oil industry and increase in prices of oil provided Iran with tremendous revenues. Oil revenues were in the nature of rent. The Iranian state became more and more a rentier state. Rentier states are defined as:

those countries that receive on a regular basis substantial amounts of external rents. External rents are in turn defined as rentals paid by foreign individuals, concerns or governments to individuals, concerns or governments of a given country. ... however one looks at them, the oil revenues received by the governments of the oil exporting countries have very little to do with the production processes of their domestic economies. The inputs from the local economies other than the raw materials are insignificant.(17)

This means that oil in itself has little developmental effect. An oil producing country might run the risk of staying economically underdeveloped despite the impression of prosperity and growth. Oil provides few backward or forward linkages. On the one hand, most of its product is exported and in this sense there are almost no forward linkages. On the other hand, it hires a very small percentage of the local labor force and acquires the needed tech-

nology and capital from abroad, therefore leaving no room for backward linkages. (18)

The most important impact of oil was that it provided the Iranian state with a substantial income. This income was enough to furnish the state with an unusual degree of autonomy and independence from both social classes and the productive forces of the society. The reason for this independence lies in the nature of oil revenues. Since these revenues do not constitute "taxpayers" money, the state may not be held accountable for spending it. By virtue of this logic, the state acquires a free hand in spending this revenue the way it sees fit. Oil revenues became a major determinant of the direction the Iranian economy took in 1960s and 70s.

Industry

The Iranian state during Mohammed Reza Shah's reign became heavily involved in industrial activities both as regulator and initiator. In the 19th century, as a result of large scale importation of cheaper manufactured products from abroad, the indigenous industry declined. It was only in the third decade of the 20th century that the first wave of industrialization started. But then, because of WWII and Iran's occupation by the Allied forces, the industrialization-

(18) The characteristics of a rentier state fit the case of Iran, probably better in the 1950s and early 60s then in the late 1960s and 1970s.
tion process halted. During Mossadeq's premiership (1951-1953), in order to neutralize the impact of the foreign exchange shortage, another wave of industrialization (mainly in the form of import substitution manufacturing) was initiated. But the oil crisis and the internal and external political problems had their impact on economic planning and the First Development Plan (1949-55) was halted. After the coup and the subsequent resumption of oil production the Second Development Plan (1955-62) was introduced. The emphasis, in this plan, was put on infrastructure. But the Second Development Plan had no apparent focus. Its goals were ambiguously stated, and its overall application encountered serious problems. (19)

Between 1960 and 1962 Iran experienced an economic recession which contributed to the revival of open political opposition, and ultimately led to a huge uprising in 1963. But suppression of the uprising and the government increased oil revenues enabled the regime to launch more ambitious economic plans in years to come. These development plans basically adopted an import-substitution strategy, stressed governmental investment in infrastructure, and had economic growth as their primary objective.

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The policy of import-substitution created many problems for the Iranian economy. After citing the relevant data concerning this policy, Looney characterizes the manufacturing sector as:

(1) becoming more heavily oriented toward the production of consumer goods; (2) one whose linkages within the sector and with other sectors, were not only weak but also were becoming weaker over time; (3) becoming more reliant on imports for sustaining production, and (4) a declining export capability. These patterns were undoubtedly an outgrowth of the incentives provided by the government. The lag in capital and intermediate goods production was clearly due to the lack of restrictions on the importation of these goods together with the high tariffs afforded consumer goods. The result was that, even to many sympathetic observers, Iran's industrialization strategy seemed lopsided, ill-conceived, and devoid of any long-run comparative advantage.(20)

All these problems arose in a context within which the state was assuming a more active role. According to the Annual Report and Balance Sheet of the Central Bank, 60% of all industrial investment in 1975 was made by the state, while the respective figure for 1968 to 1972 was only 38.8%. This means that the state gradually became the main agent of industrialization.(21)

In addition to the increase in oil revenues, the heavy involvement of the state in industrial activities can be explained by looking at the nature of the Iranian bourgeoisie—

(20) Ibid, p. 33.

(21) "The Annual Report and Balance Sheet of the Central Bank", different years, published by the Central Bank, Tehran, Iran.
A picture of Iranian industry would be a seriously incomplete one without including foreign firms as major actors. Foreign capital played an important role in industrial activities. This importance did not lie in the quantity of foreign investment but in its quality. As a matter of fact, in terms of the amount of capital invested, the share of foreign investors was not large, and was exclusively in joint ventures, with the state or the private sector in which the foreign investor held less than 50% of the shares.

What made foreign firms very important and gave them disproportional power was their almost exclusive monopoly over managerial and technological inputs. The state and the indigenous private investors had to rely and were heavily dependent on foreign expertise. So the foreign decisional input in terms of what to produce, how to produce and how much to produce had to be seriously taken into consideration. In practice foreign firms exercised a great amount of control over the Iranian economy.

Although some might argue that foreign investors had nothing against the development of genuine industry in Iran, it is safe to assume that they were not overly concerned about it either. Their main objective was to make, within the shortest period of time, the greatest amount of profit. Unfortunately, this objective can easily become an impediment to the development of a well balanced economy.
positive effect on domestic economic development. Actually the greatest jump in the government's expenditure was in the defense area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Defense Budget</th>
<th>% of Increase Over Previous Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>880</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>1065</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>1365</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>1525</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>3680</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>6325</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>8925</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>9400</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Fred Halliday, op.cit., p. 95.

Iran not only invested in weapons and other military production, but spent a great deal on importing the most up to date and sophisticated military equipment. The Nixon Doc-
Historically, the Iranian bourgeoisie was much more involved in trade than in industry. It was only in the 1960s that a small industrial bourgeoisie started to develop. The state, through providing funds, credits, tax exemptions, etc..., tried to foster this development.

In terms of class background, the new bourgeoisie was mainly composed of ex-landlords who had lost their lands during land reform and were compensated by the state, and the high-level civil servants and army officers who were allowed to enjoy the generosity of a wealthy government. The expansion of the state bureaucracy, accompanied by a high degree of corruption and bribery, made prominent civil servants and army officers even wealthier, and therefore, enabled them to enter the entrepreneurial world.

Another characteristic of the Iranian bourgeoisie was that it limited itself, mainly, to low risk entrepreneurial activities and light industry. Most of the high risk investment and heavy industrial activities were left in the hands of the state. Moreover, the private investors never broke their ties with the state and remained heavily dependent on it for protection and privileges. Therefore, the Iranian economy got into trouble when the state was unable to provide these privileges (to the extent that it used to) after the mid-1970s.
Despite the rare opportunity presented by oil revenues, Iranian industrialization encountered severe problems, and overall, could be considered unsuccessful. The reasons for its failure are complex and manifold. It is not within the scope of this study to engage in a detailed analysis of the outcome of Iranian industrialization. However, a brief summary would certainly be helpful in understanding part of the complex phenomena of the Iranian revolution and any related issue such as the failure of the liberal nationalist movement.

Several problems were associated with Iranian industrialization. First were those problems which accompanied widespread state involvement in economic activities, such as big bureaucracy, red tape and inertia. In addition, there was a lack of coherent planning, partly stemming from the complete subservience of the government to the Shah. The government's concern was to fulfill the Shah's wishes no matter how contradictory, ambitious or unpractical they were. The plans, as the Shah himself admitted, were designed to accomplish too much too quickly without setting priorities to channel the nation's energy properly.(22)

The second set of problems were those associated with non-productive activities. The government spent a great deal of money on military build up, most of which had no

(22) Keyhan International, Interview with the Shah, December 8, 1976.
trine, which underwrote Iran as the police of the region in 1972, justified the huge military spending both in the eyes of the Shah and in those of his Western allies. The above table indicates the substantial increase in military expenditures. From 1974 on, the defense budget constituted about 34% of the total governmental budget. This figure did not include those military related expenditures which were hidden under other headings.

Another part of the more or less non-productive activities was the ever growing service sector. The oil boom resulted in the expansion of the state service sector giving it the highest rate of growth, second only to that of oil revenues. In 1962-63, the amount of state services was 24.7 billion rials, which constituted around 7.6% of the respective year's GNP, while in 1977-78 this amount soared to 402.8 billion rials or 10.9% of the GNP in 1977-78.(23) This expansion absorbed a great amount of money and other resources such as expertise which could have been directed to sectors such as agriculture.

Another problem developed out of the unbalanced nature of economic growth in Iran. High priority was given to urban versus rural and to industrial versus agricultural development, which produced an ironic impact on the development of industry.

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(23) H. Katouzian, op. cit. p. 256-57.
Table 3
The % of Rural Share in Terms of Consumption, Population, and GDP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1963</th>
<th>1978</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consumption</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>24.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td>53.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Based on the World Employment Program Research various table.

As the above table demonstrates the position of the rural sector, both in terms of consumption and production, deteriorated. Therefore, by neglecting the interrelationship between the agricultural sector and the industrial sector, the starved agricultural sector was unable to perform its role, either as supplier or as consumer for industrial products.

The next problem can be attributed to the shortage of managerial and skilled labor. The educational system could not nearly satisfy the need for expertise in Iranian industry. This problem resulted in more and more inefficiency. It also led to a huge influx of imported skilled labor from abroad, which created its own cultural and social problems.
Corruption, waste (particularly in the form of overpayment for imports), and inadequate infrastructure were some of the other major problems which the Iranian economy encountered during this period.

All these specific factors led to two very acute problems which affected the Iranian population tangibly and directly. One was the inequity of income distribution and the other was inflation.

Income Distribution

Over all the economic strategies of the state encouraged huge profits for both domestic and foreign companies. But very little was done to channel some of the profit to the less fortunate sectors of the population. Part of the answer to why the regime had adopted such policies lies in the regime's own point of view about economic growth.

Economically speaking, despite many conflicting viewpoints regarding the issue of income distribution and its relation to economic growth, there are basically two positions. One position which can be traced back to Adam Smith, J.B. Say, and David Ricardo has people such as Milton Friedman and Arthur Laffer as its contemporary proponents. Implicit in this position is the irrelevancy or even the negative impact of a more equitable income distribution on economic growth. From a classical liberal economic point of

(24) R. Looney, op. cit., pp.?
view, unequal distribution of wealth provides incentives for economic growth. The logic behind this argument is that people with high incomes will save a large part of their income rather than consuming it. This saving can then be reinvested in productive economic activities, and therefore help promote economic growth.

The opposite position, which is more or less consistent with the Keynesian approach, puts the emphasis on the demand side of the economy. According to this argument, a more equal distribution stimulates growth because it increases the purchasing power of the whole population. The structure of demand is the focal point in this argument. As far as the economies of Third World countries are concerned, the theory is that high income recipients tend to consume luxury items which are usually imported from abroad. On the other hand, the poor masses do not have enough money to create an effective demand for more basic goods. Therefore, domestic capital either shifts toward producing luxury goods or, because of the lack of a sufficient market for basic goods at home, suffers losses. A more equal income distribution, the argument goes, would raise the purchasing power of the masses. As a result of the increased purchasing power of the lower strata, a mass internal market for basic goods, which could be produced locally, would be created. Since the existence of an inter-
nal mass market would, to a great extent, free the economy from the dependency on outside demand, a more equitable income distribution would be essential for establishing a self-sustaining economic development.

During Mohammed Reza Shah's reign, the Iranian state tended to prefer the first argument. A high rate of growth in GNP terms was the focus of attention. No serious attempt was made to redistribute wealth more equally. Therefore there was almost no balance between rural and urban areas, or between different regions of the country, or among different strata of the population. Urban areas became center of attention at the expense of rural areas. Some provinces, such as the Central Province, were given priority over other less fortunate provinces. For example 70% of Iran's personal wealth was concentrated in Tehran and the small areas around it. In terms of income distribution, the data (even the official data) show a great disparity between the lower 40% and highest on top 20 percent of the population. The above table demonstrates that the gap between rich and poor widened as time passed.

Unfortunately governmental policies aggravated the situation. In industry, for example, such policies regarding tariffs, subsidies, loans, tax holidays, etc..., favored large enterprises owned and run by wealthy Iranians and foreigners, while small enterprises and craftspeople, due
to lack of sufficient collateral, were starving for credit. These discriminatory policies frustrated part of the Iranian middle class, including many Bazaaris, who blamed the government for their state of affairs.

With regard to agriculture, the technocratic approach of the Iranian government (described earlier) created millions of landless and jobless peasants. The high rate of population growth in rural areas coupled with the state's attempt to set up capital intensive agricultural enterprises, forced millions of peasants to migrate to urban areas searching for jobs. These masses of rural migrants created or substantially added to the army of urban poor. Because of their geographical proximity, this human mass of "disinherited" soon learned about the unbridgable gap between
themselves and the wealthy few. Their absolute poverty coupled with the awareness of their relative poverty created the potential for rebellion against economic injustice, on their part.

**Inflation**

The large amount of money which was pumped into the economy after the increase in oil prices in the early 1970s, coupled with the global inflationary trend, created chronic inflation in Iran in the 1970s. (25) This inflation hurt both rich and poor, and particularly those with fixed incomes. It frustrated the rich not exactly because of the astronomical increase in the cost of living, but mainly due to one of the major reasons underlying inflation, i.e. the unavailability of those goods and services which attract the rich.

But the real victims of inflation were the vast majority of the Iranian population who constituted the lower middle and lower classes. These groups were hurt not necessarily because of the unavailability of certain goods and services, but because their incomes were not sufficient to pay for some of their very basic needs such as shelter and foodstuffs. (26)

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(25) Based on the data available in the Bank Markazi Annual Reports the rate of inflation for consumer goods averaged at 27%.

The monetary and fiscal measures taken by the state to contain inflation did not pay off. Therefore in 1975, the state decided to combat inflation directly. The policy adopted by the state was to wage an anti-profiteering war. The major target of this campaign was the Bazaar. According to the New York Times Magazine, during this campaign, more than 250,000 businesses were closed, 23,000 shopkeepers and merchants were banished to remote areas of the country, and more than 8,000 were sentenced to jail. (27) This direct state action did not result in containing inflation, but it raised the anger of the Bazaaris who were already disaffected by the Shah's modernist policies.

With the passage of time, the euphoria of the early 1970s had disappeared. Partly due to inflation, the reality of the economic situation no longer matched people's expectations, and as a result it disappointed and angered the population. It angered them to the extent that the economic factor, and inflation as a part of it, became a major cause of or contributor to the revolutionary movement of 1977-79.

THE ECONOMIC FACTOR AND THE OPPOSITION

It is difficult to measure the negative perceptions which people held concerning the economic policies of the Pahlavi regime prior to 1977. The difficulty lies in the repressive nature of the regime. Iran was a society in which no freedom of expression existed. It was a society in which the slightest criticism of the regime's policies bore the greatest risks. In such a society total conformity was expected and (through the use of terror) was enforced. Therefore, one should not be surprised that in such a context, despite the existence of a great amount of dissatisfaction, public silence prevailed. Under the Shah's reign people did not or could not use legal avenues (simply because there were no effective legal avenues) to express their opposition. They could not use the Majlis, because the Majlis was no more than a rubber stamp. They could not use the "legal" mass media such as newspapers, television, or radio, because these means were either owned by the state or were tightly monitored by it. They could not operate through unions, because here again, the right to unionize was either denied, or the state itself had created pseudo-unions with leaders who were totally subservient to the state.

Therefore the only feasible way to depict (to some extent but by no means satisfactorily) people's perception
is to turn to underground literature. The relevant literature in this case would be that of those groups and personalities who proved to have the closest ties with the people, both in terms of reflecting people's views, and more importantly, in terms of their ability to inject their own interpretation into people's minds.

Among different oppositional groups, as it was proved during and after the revolution, the religious opposition was most effective in both of the above-mentioned characteristics. Why that was the case needs a thorough analysis which is not within the design of this chapter. What is worth mentioning very briefly is the role religion played for a long period of time in the educational sphere. Until the second or third decade of the twentieth century, the religious establishment was in charge of educating the masses, and with the exception of a very few Western type educational institutions, the task of educating people was exclusively theirs. The existence of 80,000 mosques, spread all over the country, reinforced the ties between the religious establishment and the masses.

However the religious establishment was not a monolithic entity. Within it there existed three tendencies. The first tendency was presented by those who viewed politics as a dirty business. The adherents of this tendency focused their attention on preaching God's word, studying in iso-
lated seminaries, and training the future round of theologians.

The second tendency was neither totally apolitical nor radical. It was presented by prominent leaders such as Ayatollah Kazim Shariat-Madari. Although this group opposed the regime with regard to some of its policies, such as land reform, it did not advocate a radical restructuring of the state. In that sense, this group could be considered reformist and not revolutionary.

The third group, headed by the Ayatollah Khomeini, was the most radical. As the events of 1977-79 and afterwards manifested, this group was able to rally the support of a significant segment of the population. This group was revolutionary in the sense that, unlike the second group, its aim was not restoration of constitutionalism against the arbitrary rule of the Shah, but to establish a form of Islamic government run by pious leaders. From its point of view, the Pahlavi Dynasty was corrupt and had to be overthrown. This group, to a large extent due to the charismatic personality of Khomeini, enjoyed the greatest amount of support and popularity. Therefore what this group and particularly what Khomeini had to say about the economic policies of the Shah could reasonably be assumed as what people believed or came to believe as the truth.
On a theoretical level, it was the Ayatollah Mahmud Taleqani, the second most popular revolutionary leader, who attacked the Iranian economic system by focusing on Western capitalism in general. In his book, *Islam and Property in Comparison to The Western Economic Orders*, he states:

Although it is assumed that capitalism is based on individual liberty ... and that it cherishes individual freedom and interest, it is capitalism itself which restricts freedom. It restrict freedom to the extent that freedom becomes virtually non-existent. That means that the capitalists ... could exploit human forces, as much as they want to, they could decrease and increase wages and work hours to their own liking, they can hire and fire any group or anyone they choose to, and feel no responsibility towards them. ... A "just" society is the one in which laws and regulations guarantee the rights of the society as a whole.(28)

According to Taleqani, in such a society the rights of individuals will be inevitably protected. Such a society, Taleqani continues, will not exist until reciprocal responsibility becomes society's consciousness. One can conclude from his writings that this will not be achieved unless a radical restructuring of the system occurs.

There is no systematic interpretation of the economic policies of Iran by Khomeini. But there are some statements, made by him, concerning the state of the economy. The language by means of which Khomeini tried to communicate his message was simple and direct, and this probably had the greatest impact on the common people. The masses

could understand these statements, they could relate to them, and most of all they could be influenced by them. The Ayatollah Khomeini attacked the regime's policies on the basis of their exploitive nature. He attacked the waste and corruption which was associated with these policies. He says:

People are divided into two groups: the oppressors and the oppressed. On the one side, there are millions of hungry Moslems, deprived of health and culture. On the other side, there is a minority of wealthy individuals who have political power and who are hedonistic and corrupt. Our responsibility is to emancipate the oppressed from oppression. (29)

He accused the Shah of selling Iran to foreigners, particularly to American imperialism. He says:

The big circle of looters (the Shah and his allies) ... has devoured big assets. It is embezzling public property, our oil. It makes our country a market for expensive and unnecessary foreign goods. By committing this act, it takes people's money and puts it in its own and also in foreign capitalists' pockets. Our oil is explored by foreigners. Its fruit goes to them, and a trivial amount of it is given to the collaborating ruling elite. ... We, as religious Ulama, have to be pioneers in fighting against this looting. If today we do not have the power to do so, we have to strive to achieve this power. Once we have acquired power, we will not only correct the politics, the economy and the administration of the country, but we will also lash the liers and the looters. (30)

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(30) Ibid, pp.159-161.
In another passage, Khomeini talks about Islam as provider of the answer to the economic problems of Iranian society:

Nobody is concerned about this poor, barefooted nation. There is not even one hospital for every 100 to 200 villages. Nothing has been done for the poor and the hungry. Islam has solved the problem of poverty. (31) This problem has the highest priority in Islam. But they (the ruling elite) do not allow the solution, offered by Islam, to be implemented. The poor nation is hungry and the ruling elite who tax people use this money for their own lavish expenditure. They buy Fantom airplanes so that the Israeli army and its agents can be trained in our country. ... Our country has become their base. Our economy is also in their hands. If things stay the way they are, and if the Moslems remain passive, then the Moslem economy will eventually collapse. (32)

It is hard to measure the impact of these statements on the general public. It is even harder to isolate their effect on the radicalization of the population from that of statements made about the political, cultural, and social developments. But if the economic factor was indeed a contributor to the revolutionary mood, one can make certain safe assumptions. One such assumption concerns the relationship between the ability of a leader in exploiting the economic factor and his/her ability in attracting popular support.

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(31) For example, his proposed policy of taxation which limited the tax to Khoms (money paid to the religious establishment by the Moslems, the amount of which is determined by one's income. Most Moslems, particularly the wealthy Bazaaris pay their Khoms) would take away the burden of the additional tax imposed by the secular state. This policy was attractive to the poor as well as to the Bazaaris, because a big part of this money was supposed to be spent on poor people.

support. The more a leader is able to exploit the economic ills of a society and to offer remedies (other things being equal) the greater are his/her chances to attract public support. Among different oppositional groups within Iran, the liberal nationalist leaders were least successful in the above mentioned score. They failed to capitalize on economic problems as a major contributor to the revolution. Their first and foremost concern, as we will explore in later chapters, was to attack the regime on political grounds. Their lack of appreciation of or their inability to manipulate economic symbols deprived the liberal nationalist from attracting support on economic grounds.
Chapter III
THE POLITICAL TRANSFORMATION OF IRAN: THE
1941-1978 PERIOD

Extreme actions usually lead to extreme reactions. Social revolutions are extreme reactions caused by extreme actions or in some cases inactions. The 1979 Iranian Revolution illustrates this point. The extremist policies of the Shah's regime in almost all spheres of life triggered the 1979 Revolution. In the political realm, the policies pursued by the regime created a suffocating political atmosphere. The unbearable repression contributed to the radicalization of the population, and as a result made the revolutionary solutions presented by such oppositional leaders as Ayattollah Khomeini more viable than the reformist approach of the National Front leaders.

During the rule of Mohammed Reza Shah, the Iranian state continuously increased its control over Iranian society. The previous chapter was an attempt to trace this increase of control in the economic sphere. The present chapter will focus on the political aspect of this control.
The most obvious feature of the Shah's political regime was repression. This repression was very much tied up with the economic transformation of the Iranian society. The economic policies pursued by the Shah, the ambitious and hastily conceived plans, the pseudo-modernist nature of these policies, led to social dislocation, unbalanced growth, a tremendous amount of inflation and unequal income distribution. These problems inevitably created growing dissatisfaction and opposition toward the regime. The threat of a growing opposition necessitated a response from the state, a response which took the form of coercion and repression. In its turn, growing repression intensified oppositional activities and the vicious circle of growing repression-opposition continued up to 1978.

This chapter consists of five parts. The first part is a description of the Shah's regime at its most developed stage. The second, third, and fourth sections trace the political transformation which led to that stage. The final section is an attempt to relate the character of the Shah's regime to the failure of the National Front.

THE NATURE OF THE SHAH'S REGIME

The Iranian government during the reign of the Shah was dictatorial. It was a regime which relied heavily upon the instrument of coercion. However this dictatorship was not
built overnight, but it developed over a period of decades. What follows is an attempt to trace this process. For the sake of simplification the reign of Mohammed Reza Shah will be divided into three periods of 1941-53, 1953-63, and 1963-78. Although these periods differ from each other, each one is an outgrowth of the preceding period. But before looking at the history of the regime's development, we have to have some sense about the nature of the Shah's regime in its most developed stage.

The Shah's regime was neither a military dictatorship, nor a fascist dictatorship, and not even a traditional autocracy. It, however, shared some common features with all the above mentioned types. As is the case with most military dictatorships, the pillar of the Iranian regime was the army and the security organs. Moreover, the army officers and personnel were among the most privileged groups in Iranian society. But if an important feature of a military dictatorship is the existence of a military council or junta which exercises most or all executive and legislative powers, and that a military officer assumes the position of chief executive as chairman of the council, prime minister or president, this certainly was not the case in Iran. Mohammed Reza Shah was considered a monarch who was well above the military. Although he relied very

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much on the military, it was he who controlled the army and not the other way around.

Some classified the Shah's regime as being fascist. For years, that was the argument presented by most oppositional groups such as Fedayian or Mojahedin. It is true that the Shah's regime had some common features with the classical fascist regime such as Nazi Germany or Mussolini's Italy. Nonetheless, it should not have been considered a fascist regime as such.

It is easy to see why some would consider the Shah's regime to be a fascist one. Among the similarities, the most important one was the existence of repression and lack of political freedom, the existence of secret police and the important role which this organ played in the system. The other important common feature was the role which the state played in the economic field in terms of directing and controlling the economy.

However, despite the existence of these similarities, the Iranian regime was not a fascist regime. If, according to N. Kogan, the fundamental characteristic of a fascist state is the importance and centrality of the fascist party as the supreme decision maker,(34) this feature did not exist in Iran under the Shah. The Shah himself was the supreme decision maker and belonged to no party.

Then again if "like any revolutionary movement which aims at fundamental change, fascism had as its ultimate goal the creation of a new human being, a new fascist man, Homo Fascistus who "believe, obey, fight" for a cult, or a pseudo religion, the Iranian regime had no such doctrine to remold the Iranian masses or to consciously create a new Iranian Man. Actually, despite some sporadic attempt to mobilize the population behind some programs such as the White Revolution, the Shah, overall, tried to keep the population apolitical. Moreover, if fascism is characterized by a charismatic leader with a large base of mass support, the Iranian regime, under the Shah's rule, differed sharply from a fascist regime. The Shah was never a charismatic leader and was never able to create mass support for his regime.

At the same time, the Shah's regime was not a traditional autocracy. It was an absolute monarchical system, and in this sense had something in common with most traditional autocracies, such as Ethiopia under Haille Selassi. But in traditional autocracies, there is an attempt to conserve the traditional hierarchy, to discourage social mobility, and to refrain from presenting any social or economic programs that might threaten or upset the existing social or economic hierarchy. Iran during the Shah did not fit this description. In contrast, the Iranian regime had the modern
element of developmentalist-technocratic orientation. According to Herb Feith, the Iranian state resembled those "repressive developmentalist regimes" which:

are strong state regimes engaged in facilitating fast capitalist growth, some of it industrialization, in the era of the transnational corporation. Warmly hospitable to transnational business, and dependent on it in many ways, they nevertheless avoid becoming its compradore vassals. Their political form is characterized by a heavy weight of power and a strong drive to eliminate or subordinate all potential centers of countervailing power. Their characteristic ideological form has three elements, the developmentalist-technocratic, the nationalistic, and the militaristic. And they have a strong disposition to expand the capacities of their bureaucratic apparatus, using that expansion to facilitate school-based social mobility." (36)

So in this sense the Iranian regime was dynamic, whereas traditional autocracies are static.

Probably the best way to adequately depict the Iranian political regime, during the Shah's rule, is to focus on its despotic nature. Despotism, in this context, means the concentration of absolute power in the state, and the arbitrary use of this power by the Shah. All classes including the most economically powerful were objects of this arbitrary rule. (37) The State enjoyed a large degree of autonomy.

(35) Here the reader must be cautious not to take the nationalism, portrayed by the Shah's regime, as similar as that of the liberal nationalists. The regime's brand of nationalism bordered on chauvinism.

(36) Herb Feith, "Repressive Developmentalist Regimes in Asia", in International Affairs, Tokyo, April, 1980.

(37) Homa Katouzian, Political Economy of Modern Iran. The
omy and was able to free itself from being merely the executive committee of the ruling economic classes.

Now the question is how the Shah was able to create such a repressive, brutal and autonomous regime? To answer this question we have to travel back in time and look at the past forty years of Iranian history.

THE IRANIAN REGIME BETWEEN 1941-1953

Mohammed Reza Shah became the Shah of Iran in 1941. His father Reza Shah, due to his obvious sympathy towards Nazi Germany, was forced (by the Allied powers) to abdicate. In the meantime, Iran became once again divided into three parts. The Soviet Union occupied the northern provinces, the British took control of the southern part of Iran, and the central provinces, including Tehran, remained unoccupied. In the meanwhile the United States gradually became a key influence in Iran.

The occupation along with the Reza Shah abdication broke the dictatorship created by Reza Shah. The constitutional order which was ignored for years was restored again. The revival of a free press provided the opportunity for different groups or individuals to start publishing their own newspapers, and to express their ideas about social and economic changes. Along with the free press, several political parties emerged, most of which had very small follow-

ings. But most of these parties disappeared soon after. Only six of them remained active for several years and tried to acquire nation-wide support.

Among the most organized was the communist Tudeh (Masses) Party, with a pro-Soviet line seeking support from the intelligentsia and the urban working class. The other leftist party was the Comrades Party (Hizb-i Hamrahan). The two basic objectives of this party were political equality for all citizens and the nationalization of major means of production.

A third party was the Iran Party, a moderate secular organization seeking the support of the professional middle class and led by professionals itself. This party stressed antimilitarism, constitutionalism and political liberalism. Another next party was the Justice (Adalat) Party, which represented the older generation of intelligentsia. Unlike the Iran Party which advocated an independent foreign policy, the Justice Party wished to increase United States influence in Iran in order to counterbalance the British and Russians, but most of all the latter. With regard to internal affairs, this party favored some reforms regarding governmental institutions, expansion of educational facilities, and curbing the independent power of the army.

The fifth party was the National Union Party, a royalist party. In foreign affairs, like the Justice Party, the
National Union Party sought U.S. support and aid. But in the domestic domain this party was much more conservative than the Justice Party. It represented the interests of the landed aristocracy and was willing to compromise with the Shah on constitutional matters.

The last important party was the Fatherland (Vatan) Party, appealing to the traditional middle class (Bazaar retailers) and conservative sections of the religious leadership mainly because it advocated a return to the traditional Islamic customs. This party was anti-Soviet and pro-British. (38)

Political freedom was not the only product of the occupation and of Reza Shah's abdication. War and occupation brought along many economic and social disruptions. Inflation, speculation, hoarding and black market activities increased. Although some benefited from the occupation most people suffered. The economic and social problems contributed to the intensity of political activities and political crises which characterized the era of 1941-53. This period differed dramatically from the era of Reza Shah's dictatorship. Deep seated conflicts among different social forces became evident. Such conflicts are usually well hidden in societies with dictatorial regimes such as Iran under Reza Shah. Reza Shah, through the usage of the secret police, (38) For a more detailed information on these parties see: Ervand Abrahamian, Iran: Between Two Revolutions, Princeton Press, New Jersey, 1982, pp. 176-224.
censorship and forced conformity, was able to temporarily suppress these conflicts. But once the grip of dictatorship was loosened, the complexity of Iranian social forces along with the competition of different foreign powers and their meddling in Iranian politics, the problems created by war and occupation, and last but not least the twenty years of dictatorship (1921-41), led to the proliferation of many political groups and factions.

In such a context, the election for the fourteenth Majlis started. For the first time, in a very long time, the Shah did not have the power to send all his favorite people to the Majlis. The 14th Majlis was relatively competitive. Different social forces and political groups, some of which were protected by the dominant foreign powers, competed for seats. Despite some dishonesty in the electoral process, this Majlis represented different social forces more meaningfully than previous ones. Nonetheless, partly because of the dishonesty, the conservatives held the majority of seats in the parliament. The conservatives were not necessarily royalists. In fact at the beginning of the fourteenth Majlis, many of them sided with the more liberal and radical elements on constitutional issues, especially on issues dealing with the military. (39) Most deputies except the royalists agreed that the power of the military should be curbed and that the military should be

placed under civilian control and not under the Shah's control. The Shah should reign and not rule.

But a series of social events which started with a workers' upheaval changed the coalitions within the Majlis in favor of the royalists. The anti-royalist conservatives, realizing that their interests might be in grave danger, forgot about the constitutional principles and chose to back the Shah and the military. They passed an emergency bill to increase the budget allocated to the War Ministry. That was the first step toward strengthening the military and as a result the Shah who controlled that institution.

However the Shah's power was far from substantial for many years to come. For a long time, the real power was shifting from one center to another: from Majlis to the cabinet, to the Court, with some input from the general public and of course lots of input from foreign powers through their embassies. Each new crisis, such as the issue of autonomy for Azarbijan (an important and prosperous province bordering the Soviet Union) or the issue of granting oil concessions to the Soviet Union, created new alliances within the Majlis and gave more weight to one or the other center of power.

The most important and exciting years during this period were 1949-53, the era of Mossadeq. In the fall of 1949, Iran was preparing for the election for the seventeenth
Majlis. This election was dishonest. The man who controlled the election was the powerful Minister of Court, Abdol Hossein Hazhir. The election was conducted at a time when the Shah was planning a trip to the United States to seek aid, and there was a concern on his part that the U.S. might be reluctant to assist a corrupt government. Therefore when a group of people, headed by Mossadeg and many prominent personalities, decided to protest the elections and took sanctuary on the palace ground, the Shah gave in.(40) He ordered an investigation and promised a new election, if it was proved that the previous election was rigged. In the meanwhile, Hazhir was shot to death. His disappearance from the scene helped the investigation to be meaningful.

As a result, the Tehran election was declared invalid and a new election was held. The relative freedom of the second election made it possible for eight members of the National Front, including Mossadeg, to be elected to the Majlis. Despite the numerical insignificance of these deputies in a Majlis of more than 130 deputies, the real impact of their efforts, which were backed by a large percentage of the middle class and the politically aware section of the population, was indeed very significant. Between 1949 and 1953, Iranian political development with its economic implications not only shook the Shah, the Majlis and the

(40) It was then that 19 leading personalities, headed by Mossadeg, issued a public communiqué and declared the formation of the National Front.
whole country, but it also attracted the attention and concerns of the world's biggest powers.

From 1949 to 1951, the socio-economic and political issues caused the formation of several cabinets. Iran witnessed the coming and going of several prime ministers, none of whom was able to handle the heated problems. In 1950, the focus of attention gradually shifted from domestic issues such as the military budget, land reform, progressive taxes, to the issue of oil concessions. At this time, the government tried to pass a bill from the Majlis to make some adjustments regarding the 1933 oil agreement. Mossadeq and the National Front, backed by some other groups, denounced the whole deal as a sell out. They argued that the revisions would not change the unfair nature of the oil agreement and demanded the nationalization of the oil industry. Nationalization of oil and its implication for national independence soon became an issue which drew intense public attention. The growing middle class and politically aware segment of the population which were looking for a leader, found this leadership in the person of Mossadeg. In May 1951, Mossadeg accepted the offer of premiership from the Majlis and became prime minister. According to Richard Cottam, the author of "Nationalism in Iran":

From the time of his election to the sixteenth Majlis until his triumphant return from the United Nations in early 1952, Mossadeq was accepted
by an everexpanding public as an absolutely trustworthy leader who deserved their wholehearted and uncritical support. A large majority of the middle class came to this view in early 1951, and by January 1952 a significantly large and expanding percentage of the urban lower class and peasantry was beginning to share this opinion. Mossadeg was rapidly becoming the personification of the Iranian striving both for international independence and dignity and for the replacement of oligarchic control. (41)

In the meantime the Majlis, which was the center of attention for several years, faded in the shadow of a charismatic prime minister and a public which supported him. This shift started to be manifested in July 16, 1952, when Mossadeg tried to use his constitutional right as prime minister to choose the minister of war. The Shah challenged his choice and Mossadeg resigned in protest. But instead of voicing his protest by appealing to the Majlis deputies who were mostly royalists or pro-British conservatives, he went directly to the public and took the constitutional issue to them. This was unprecedented in Iranian history. The Majlis elected another prime minister, but the alert public, led by the National Front, the Tudeh Party and the religious leaders (such as Ayatollah Kashani who supported Mossadeg at the time) protested the election of the new prime minister and asked for the return of Mossadeg. At last after five days of mass demonstrations and bloodshed (due to army intervention), the Shah gave in and, as the public had

demanded, Mossadeq triumphantly resumed his position as prime minister.

From then on, it was clear who was in charge. Mossadeq himself became the acting minister of war. He cut the palace budget, sent princess Ashraf, the politically aggressive sister of the Shah to exile, and forbade the Shah to have direct communication with foreign embassies. He also engaged himself in some political house cleaning. He dismissed royalists from the cabinet, purged many military officers, put the military under the direct control of the government, and cut the defense and secret service budget sharply.

In addition, he managed to get emergency powers, for the duration of a year, from the Parliament and decreed reforms which attacked the interests of the aristocracy. One such act was to declare a land reform to increase the peasant's share of the annual production. In the area of foreign policy he followed his conviction about "negative equilibrium" (42) through nationalization of Iranian Oil, and through a direct control of the Caspian fisheries, which up to then, were administered by the Soviet Union.

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(42) The idea behind the concept of "negative equilibrium" was to cease granting major concessions to any foreign power, and to pursue an overall non-aligned course in foreign policy.
The social reforms which Mossadeq's Administration introduced and was determined to carry out divided the National Front into two broad camps. One was composed of the mostly traditional middle class (the Bazaaris) and their supporters among the clergy and the conservatives. They were opposed to policies such as giving the right to vote to women, or nationalization of some private entities. The other camp was mostly composed of what we can call the modern middle class, i.e. the professional, young western educated people. This latter group supported Mossadeq's policies.

Unfortunately, because of the nature of the coalition within the National Front, this split was inevitable. The N.F. to some extent resembled coalitions which exist in a revolutionary period. Different social forces with different ideologies and interests are able to coalesce against a dominant common enemy in a revolutionary situation. They can agree on strategies and tactics on how to totally eliminate or sharply reduce the dominance of that common enemy, but can not, necessarily, agree on what should follow. In other words it is relatively easier to reach an agreement on what to destroy (whether this be foreign dominance or a despotic regime) than to agree on what should replace that entity. When it comes to constructive programs (political, economic or social programs) a broad coalition of different
groups with different ideas, world views and interests could easily collapse. And that was what happened in 1952-53 in Iran. As long as the effort was to cut the influence of Britain and to curb the power of the old oligarchy headed by the Shah, through nationalizing the oil industry and limiting the power of the Court, the coalition within the N.F. was intact. Different social groupings (the clergy, the Bazaaris, the professionals), though not close to each other on the right-left economic spectrum, nor on the traditional-modern cultural spectrum, were able to keep their unity. But once oil was nationalized, once the power of the Court was curbed, once Mossadeg became the undeniable leader of the country, once it was time to come up with constructive programs, the differences between different forces in the N.F. surfaced.

In the meantime, outside the N.F., the Tudeh Party which until then was trying to undercut Mossadeg's effort by mercilessly criticizing and accusing him of being "a tool in the hands of Imperialist America", changed its attitude. The Tudeh accusation was based on Mossadeg's attempt to get American aid, and also on the earlier support which the American government gave to Mossadeg in his effort to nationalize the oil industry. But very shortly Americans withdrew their support, and refused to grant any aid to Mossadeg's government. The timing of American withdrawal of
support was very unfortunate for Mossadeq's government. It occurred when the Iranian government and British Petroleum failed to reach a settlement on the issue of the management of the oil industry. As a result British Petroleum successfully imposed a world-wide boycott of Iranian oil. The boycott of Iranian oil coupled with the American "no-aid" policy toward Iran put lots of pressure on Mossadeq's government. The lack of financial means to carry out the economic and social reforms and the high rate of inflation contributed to the difficulties with which the Mossadeq administration was faced.

So on the eve of the 1953 Coup D'etat the Iranian political situation was as follows. The split within the National Front was complete. Many of the founders and the leaders of the N.F., among which the most important was Ayatollah Kashani, had already left. Kashani's breaking with the National Front was critical because he had a strong base of support in the lower middle class. He was the one person who was most capable of bringing out the mob, as he did once to support Mossadeq and the National Front, and now to oppose them. However, according to Cottam, the response to his appeal came from different groups of people at different times: "Following the split, Kashani demonstrated his continuing ability to produce a mob, but it was the typical chaqu-keshan (knife wielders) mob rather
than the earlier Kashani-organized mob that had had an element of genuine nationalist fervor."(43)

The split within the National Front provided the opportunity for other conservative forces, including landlords and the Court, to seek alliance with people such as Kashani. In addition there were many army officers, headed by General Fazlollah Zahedi, who opposed the measures taken, by the Mossadeg administration, to limit the power of the military. These officers started to organize their activities against Mossadeg and openly declared their intention to oust Mossadeg.

The growing of the conservative opposition brought a reevaluation and a change of attitude towards Mossadeg, on the part of the Tudeh Party. Although Mossadeg refused to enter into a coalition with the Tudeh, his government became softer on the communist party. The government let the Tudeh Party enjoy a great deal of freedom in mid-1952, after the Tudeh Party collaborated with Mossadegists during the July 16-21, 1952 events. The relative rapprochement between Mossadeg and the Tudeh Party, in the context of the cold war era and the cold war mentality of the Eisenhower Administration, frightened the policy makers in Washington. More and more, the western media started to portray Mossadeg as a communist.

(43) Cottam, op. cit. p. 279.
In such a context, the idea of overthrowing Mossadeg received increasing support both from American and British policy makers. At this time the British Labor government was replaced by conservatives who were even more hostile to Mossadeg and the Iranian nationalists. Therefore a plan for a coup was made abroad. Kermit Roosevelt of the Central Intelligence Agency was sent to Iran to finance the coup. The original plan was to reassure the Shah about foreign backing in case of a showdown and to persuade him to dismiss Mossadeg. According to Roosevelt, because of a delay in sending the dismissal order, Mossadeg learned about it and quickly moved to stop it. There was much antiroyalist rioting and the Shah fled the country. The Tudeh party sponsored and organized many of these demonstrations. Fearing that the continuation of riots might alienate some supporters and threaten the regime's control, Mossadeg asked the military, which mainly consisted of his enemies, to put an end to the demonstrations. The outcome of this decision was the suppression of his base of support and the inevitable imposition of army control in the street.

On August 19, 1953, the military used the opportunity to act against Mossadeg, while the Tudeh Party did almost nothing to support him. On this day a crowd from south of

Tehran led by a man called Shaban Be-Mokh (literally means brainless), supported by Ayatollah Kashani and Behbahani (the leading Ayatollah of Tehran), joined the military forces and moved toward the premier's residence. Roosevelt stated that the crowd was mobilized by his Iranian agents who used American money to see to a successful coup. No doubt the help of key members of the military was most crucial. After the successful coup Mossadeq, who was left with no other option, escaped. But he soon gave himself up, and the Shah returned. In order to dismantle the National Front and the Tudeh Party, waves of massive arrests, jailings and executions started. With the success of the coup, the very exciting, emotional, liberal, democratic, popular and mass based politics of Mossadeq's era was over.

Whether the defeat of Mossadeq and his democratic government was inevitable is a matter of controversy. Some might argue that the political culture of most of the Third World countries and in this case Iran would not allow a democracy to survive. In their book: The Civic Culture Almond and Verba argue that until people of a country had developed a particular type of political culture (civic culture) the survival of a democratic regime in that country would be very much in doubt. According to Almond and Verba, a civic culture is a mixed political culture which includes both modern elements of rationality, involvement,
activism and information, and also the traditional element of parochial and subject orientation. This latter orientation modifies the intensity of the individual's political involvement and activity. (45) And since many of these elements especially the modern ones did not exist in Iran, therefore based on the above argument Mossadeg's government did not have that much chance to survive.

On the other hand some might argue that the economic characteristics of poor countries such as Iran (at that time) put lots of constraints on the stability of a liberal democratic system. Lipset for example argues that there is a high degree of correlation between stable democracies and the indices of "modernization" such as degree of industrialization, urbanization, literacy rates and educational patterns. (46) The low rates of these indices in "non-modern" societies such as Iran substantially reduces the chances for a stable democratic system. So, according to this argument, until Iran becomes modernized a government such as Mossadeg's will have a very slim chance to survive.

Some Marxists and advocates of the dependency theories such as Paul Baran or Andre Gundar Frank would probably argue that for an independent democratic regime such as Mossadeg's to survive, certain preconditions must exist.


There must be a fundamental change in class structure of the society, through which the previous political and economic elites, who had protected and furthered the interests of the international capital and the "core" countries would be neutralized. It is only via radical structural changes that dependency ties which exist between the periphery (the underdeveloped country) and the "core" (the developed countries and the international capital) will disappear. The elimination of these ties will provide the opportunity for the underdeveloped country to follow an independent course of actions, to be free, to control its own destiny and to be truly independent and democratic. (47) Therefore, according to this argument, Mossadeq was doomed to failure, because he never seriously tried to eliminate landlords, the court and the compradore bourgeoisie (or using dependency jargon the foreign dependent ruling elites) as powerful forces.

On the other hand some Iranian specialists would argue that the defeat of Mossadeq and his Mellian supporters was not inevitable. On theoretical grounds, Richard Cottam argues that if the politically articulate element of the population is small enough in relative numbers and weak enough in leadership it can respond to an offer of leadership from the liberal nationalist intelligentsia. Yet it

should be large enough in absolute numbers to be able to furnish the liberal nationalist leaders with the popular support necessary to fight the right wing authoritarian forces. He argues:

At this moment it seemed that if the liberal intellectuals rose to their historical opportunity and seized power, the chances would be good for a stable union of liberalism and nationalism. If the liberals consolidated this power, there was a possibility that they could control political and social developments in the difficult period ahead when the huge laboring and peasant mass began with an accelerating tempo to move into the ranks of the articulate. But should the liberal intelligentsia fail to secure leadership, there might well be no other opportunity. As the articulate base widened, the average of political sophistication was certain to fall and the opportunities for the demagogue or military dictator were certain to expand proportionately. The point would soon be reached at which the intellectual elite would have the greatest difficulty in gaining and maintaining leadership. The tragedy of the Mossadeg era is all the greater because the liberal intellectuals did rise to the occasion and assert their leadership, but they lacked the wisdom and good fortune to retain it.(48)

On a more concrete level Cottam argues that a series of misperceptions on the part of Mossadeg, where he overestimated both the power of the British government in influencing Iranian politics, and the power of the Court, coupled with Mossadeg's underestimation of his own personal power and popularity restrained him from choosing the right policies and tactics. This eventually led to his downfall.(49)

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(49) Ibid.
Whether the downfall of Mossadeq's government was inevitable or not is an issue which will be discussed in the fifth chapter. Here suffice it to say that the coup would not have happened without foreign intervention and initiation. The role that the U.S. and Britain played in overthrowing Mossadeq was most crucial. However, the success of the coup was very much dependent on the internal condition of the Iranian society. It is probably true that foreign powers try as much as they can to maintain and further their own interests and influence not just in Iran but all over the globe. However, it would be an oversimplification to blame, solely, the foreign powers for the success of the coup. In 1953, the internal alignment of different forces, the role that prominent religious leaders such as Kashani played, the hostility of the powerful military officers towards Mossadeq, the mistakes of Mossadeq himself in dealing with these forces, and the inexperience of the National Front as a viable organization made the success of the coup possible.

THE 1953-1963 PERIOD

The 1953 Coup did not immediately lead to the creation of a despotic regime. It did, however, establish a conservative and authoritarian regime in which power was shared between the Shah, on the one hand, and powerful landlords,
big merchants and other conservatives, on the other hand. Liberties which other forces and as a whole the Iranian society enjoyed during Mossadegh's tenure were gone. The election to the eighteenth Majlis, not surprisingly, was controlled by the state. None of Mossadegh's supporters, let alone the Tudeh party, was permitted to run. Therefore the composition of this Majlis was conservative, dominated mainly by influential landlords. But there was a difference between this Majlis, and also the 19th Majlis, with the later Majlis'. The deputies to the former two Majlis' felt powerful enough to pursue their own personal and class interests. They were not powerless figures who had to carry out the orders of the Shah.

Nor did the Shah have total control over the executive branch. The prime minister in 1953, General Zahedi, was not an unconditional servant to the Shah. He was a powerful army officer who could not be regarded just as a lackey of the Shah. That was enough reason for the Shah to dismiss him in 1955. Zahedi was dismissed because the Shah perceived him as being an obstacle in his quest for more personal power. It was only after the banishment of Zahedi, that the Shah became able to gradually concentrate power in his own hands. Several factors contributed to his success in that direction.
First of all the Shah had the support of the United States. After the coup, the U.S. became the unrivaled dominant foreign power in Iran. In 1954, an agreement was reached between the Iranian government and an international consortium over the Iranian oil industry. According to this agreement, 40% of the shares belonged to U.S. oil companies. This broke the up to then British monopoly over Iranian oil. The United States also increased its share of military supplies and advisers in Iran, it became involved in civilian and governmental programs, and it increased its economic investments in Iran. Realizing that all these opportunities were made possible by the Shah and that he, unlike Mossadegh, was an arch-enemy of the communists, the U.S. administration showed its appreciation by generous financial aid.

American aid along with the conclusion of a new oil agreement helped the normalization of the political economy. The pacifying strategy, through the dual policies of political repression and economic normalization, seemed to be a workable solution, both from the point of view of the Iranian regime and its foreign supporter. This support did not diminish when, from 1953 on, wholesale arrests, jailings and executions of Mossadeqists and Tudeh members and sympathizers started. Those Iranians who hoped that the U.S. would only support democratic governments came to a
painful realization that that was not the case. They real-
ized that if the interests of the U.S., or for that matter
of any other superpower,(50) were at stake, liberty, free-
dom, and democracy became fancy words, nuisances, irrele-
vant principles, which people of a powerless country such
as Iran in 1953 could do without.

After the success of the coup, Mossadeg, his cabinet
members, and many of his supporters in the Majlis were
arrested and imprisoned. His foreign minister Dr. Hossain
Fatemi was sentenced to death and was executed. In the
meanwhile many Tudeh Party members were arrested. Some of
its top leaders had already escaped to Eastern Europe, and
many of those who remained in Iran, cooperated with the
regime. But the rank and file of the party received harsh
treatment. Some of them converted and joined the regime,
but many did not. They were tortured, executed or were sen-
tenced to long term imprisonment. Later by discovering the
party's powerful organization within the military, the
regime virtually destroyed the Tudeh party as a viable
force.

U.S. financial support and the resumption of oil produc-
tion were two factors in the normalization of the political
economy. Moreover, political repression led to the concen-
tration of power in the Shah's hands. In a very short peri-

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(50) Years later the Soviet Union made a deal with the Shah
through which it betrayed many of the Tudeh members.
od of time, the repressive apparatus became the most important guarantor of the regime's survival. In 1957 the notorious secret police or SAVAK (Sazman-i Etalaat va Amniat-Keshvar) the National Information and Security Organization was set up. U.S. advisers helped the Iranian regime both in organizing the apparatus and in training the personnel. U.S. help added to the effectiveness and efficiency of this organization. It also added to the resentment which the Iranian public felt toward the U.S.. The Savak became the most important security instrument after the 1963 uprising. Before that, the army and its own security organs performed the most important role in securing order and gathering information about the opposition.

In 1956, the Shah appointed Doctor Manuchehr Eqbal as the head of a new government. By this appointment the Shah made sure that this time he would have a subservient executive branch. Dr. Eqbal, who publicly declared himself time and again as nothing more than "the house-born slave of His Majesty", was a physician born in a middle class family. He owed his position not to his family prestige, but to his own ability and proven loyalty to the Shah. Eqbal's qualities made him a perfect choice from the point of view of the Shah, who resented power sharing. But, as previously stated, the eighteenth and nineteenth Majlis deputies retained some personal power. Until 1960, the legislative
branch kept some real influence, independent of the Shah. This influence, mostly on the part of landlords, forced the Shah to avoid policies which could alienate this powerful class. Therefore, the agricultural reforms which were introduced by Mossadeg were shelved.

At the same time the Shah tried to be cautious with the Bazaaris and the religious leaders. The two groups which the Shah truly controlled in these early post-coup years were the intelligentsia (modern middle class) and the urban working class. The Shah achieved this control through a combination of carrot and stick tactics. He acquired the acquiescence of part of the middle class through economic rewards. He also used his security apparatus, which had expanded its network, to screen individuals who wanted to enter the civil service, universities and factories.

In the meanwhile, to give his regime the face of a modern, Western like system, the Shah created a two party system within the parliament. Dr. Eqbal headed the National (Melliun) party. The other party, the People's (Mardom) Party, was headed by a childhood friend of the Shah named Assadollah Alam, who became prime minister in later years and who remained one of the closest advisers to the Shah until his death in early 1970's. But not surprisingly these two parties had no support among the population. Very

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(51) This party had no connection with the Melli movement or the Melliun which are the subjects of this studies.
few people really believed that these parties were even remotely similar to a genuine political party.

Moreover, through constitutional amendments, a mechanism was set up which reduced the threat of any future opposition within the Majlis. First of all the size of the quorum required to pass legislation was lowered. In addition the size of the Majlis was increased from 136 to 200 seats, the sessions were extended from two to four years, and last but not least the Shah acquired the veto power over financial legislation. Along with these measures, the Shah used the urban and rural police to tightly control the parliamentary election. Therefore, step by step the Shah tightened his grip over the Majlis, the cabinet and the society. An indicator of the Shah's increasing control over society was the number of major industrial strikes. While in 1953 this number was 79, in 1955 the number of major industrial strikes fell to only 3.(52) But, as stated above, between 1953 and 1960, the Shah avoided policies which might have alienated the landlords, the Bazaaris and the religious community.

In 1960 things changed. After the boom period of the late 1950's, Iran in early 1960 witnessed a serious economic crisis. Inflation, growing corruption and escalation of the military budget were some of the signs of this crisis. Iran was badly in need of foreign aid and loans. In the

(52) Abrahamian, op cit, p. 420.
meantime, the liberal administration of John Kennedy came into office in Washington. At the time, the belief on the part of the Kennedy administration was that the best way to fight communism in the Third World, was through adoption of liberal reforms. The Shah promised Kennedy to take some liberal steps, such as bringing some of the oppositional personalities into the cabinet.

The economic crisis and the Majlis election in 1960 brought forth some of the oppositional forces. Members of the National Front and people outside the Front began to criticize the government of Eqbal. The criticism escalated when the Eqbal government was accused, justifiably, of being involved in the rigged election to the twentieth Majlis. The Shah, trying to disassociate himself from Eqbal's cabinet, criticized the way the election was conducted and urged the deputies to resign. The deputies resigned and the Shah appointed Jaafar Sharif Emami as his new prime minister. Emami was the same person who was later appointed as prime minister during the 1978 crisis.

After the appointment of Emami, another election was held, which was relatively more meaningful. As a result some Independent deputies, including one N.F. leader, were elected. But as a general rule, there was much pressure against the candidacy of Mossadeqists in the election. In the meanwhile there were opposition voices outside the Par-
liament. In 1960, Iran and especially Tehran was the scene of several demonstrations and strikes. The situation got serious and the Shah after vacillating between different options decided to enter into negotiations with liberal leaders. His first choice was Allahyar Saleh who did not accept his terms. Therefore the Shah chose Ali Amini as his prime minister. Amini was the former ambassador to the U.S. and was considered an acceptable choice from the U.S. point of view.

Amini, upon resuming the office of prime minister, made some risky decisions. He dissolved the twentieth Majlis. He tried to cut the military budget. He gave three posts in his cabinet to some of the critics of the regime, including Hassan Arsanjani, the strategist and initiator of the land reform program. Amini also tried to negotiate with the N.F.. The Shah fought Amini particularly over the army defense budget, and the United States once again sided with the Shah. The Amini government lasted only 14 months, and was replaced by Alam's government.

During Alam's time, the land reform policies of Arsanjani were watered down and as described in the previous chapter, a conservative approach was taken which emptied the land reform program of its initial radical content. In the meanwhile, the Shah tried to take credit for land reform by including this program in a six point policy called "the
White Revolution" later on known as "the Shah-People's Revolution". Part of the reason for launching "the White Revolution" was political. To get rid of landlords' influence the Shah tried to create another base of support among peasants and the working class.(53) But the popular uprising of 1963 showed that the Shah was not successful in creating mass support for himself.

Historically, the Iranian peasantry was relatively apolitical. Despite some initial enthusiasm in the beginning of the land reform on the part of the peasantry, the Shah never succeeded in achieving the active support of the peasant class. The only thing which the Shah accomplished was to acquire the passive support or the acquiescence of this class. And as the events in 1963 and later in 1978 proved, in a crisis period passive support did not count for very much.

The 1963 crisis was triggered by an army attack on a religious school in Qom, where Khomeini was preaching against the Shah's regime. As a result of this attack many people were killed and Khomeini was arrested. He was released shortly after and resumed his attack on the U.S. control of Iran, the dictatorship of the Shah, the corruption in the government, and the unconstitutional practices of the regime. He was arrested once again on the next day,

(53) One of the points of the White Revolution was the principle of profit-sharing for industrial workers.
the anniversary of the martyrdom of Imam Hossain the grandson of the prophet Mohammed. Hossain, by declaring a holy war against a despotic usurper, symbolized the rebellion of the right against the wrong, the faithful against the infidel. On this day, people usually pour into the street and mourn. But in that particular year, the mourning procession turned into a huge demonstration first in Tehran and then spread to other big cities such as Mashhad and Shiraz. Troops interfered, and after several days and several hundreds if not thousands dead, the demonstrations were finally suppressed.

The 1963 crisis was probably a lesson for the Shah. Realizing that he did not have popular support, possibly understanding that the legitimacy of his regime would always be questioned (because of the 1953 C.I.A. backed coup d'état), the Shah began to rely more and more on the security apparatus and coercive organs to stabilize his regime. The liberalization policy of 1961-63 was a test for his regime, a test for the legitimacy of his regime, the result of which was disappointing and probably embarrassing for the Shah.
The Opposition: 1953-63

What happened to the opposition in this period? The Tudeh Party, partly because of the regime's harsh treatment of its rank and file and partly because of its leadership weaknesses and opportunism, disintegrated. As a result this party became basically an organization which concentrated its activities outside the country. It lost its ties with the masses, and did not play an effective role during the 1961-63 period.

The 1953 coup was a more obvious defeat for the National Front than for the Tudeh simply because, before the coup, Mossadeq and his followers enjoyed a greater share of power than the Tudeh. Mossadeq and the leaders of the Front had the advantage of using governmental tribunals and other political facilities opened only to them. This advantage made up for their lack of proper organization and made it possible for the Front to have broad and effective communication with the people. But after the coup, all these advantages were taken away. It was only then that the organizational weaknesses of the Front proved to be a serious liability. The National Front leaders not only lost their connections with the masses, but they even had a hard time keeping in touch with their own limited members. Therefore it is not surprising that after the coup the National Front was not able to seriously and effectively oppose the regime.
Nonetheless in 1960, when the "liberalization" era started, a group of the Front leaders hastily gathered together and announced the formation of the Second National Front. In the beginning, they attracted some support from the population. But the Second N.F. became ineffective very soon after.

The inability of the N.F. and the Tudeh Party to effectively oppose the Shah's programs in 1960-63 made the religious community the most important challenger to the regime. A part of the religious community (the more traditional conservative faction) attacked the Shah's White Revolution on two apparently progressive points i.e. land reform and "women's rights". However, within the religious community there was more than one faction. Besides the traditional conservative tendency which attacked the Shah's policies on the above mentioned points, there were two more factions. One was preoccupied with the threat of growing dictatorship and the return of despotism. The other was a more progressive faction, identifying itself with Mossadegh's ideas, which had opposed the Shah even before 1960.

Despite the view, which was held by many Iranians and Westerners alike, that the 1963 Uprising was stirred up by opponents of land reform and women's rights (no doubt these opponents constituted a force) it is inaccurate and misleading to attribute the whole uprising to them. There were
many grievances, generated from economic and political injustices which had nothing to do with either religion or tradition, but which were expressed through religious language. As A.K.S. Lambton puts it: "... unless there had been a feeling that injustice (Zulm) had passed all reasonable bounds, it is unlikely that the protest would have taken the form it did... . What is interesting is the extent to which political opposition still tends to manifest itself in religious guise." (54)

The uprising was neither purely religious, nor completely conservative, nor wholly progressive. It had a touch of each. But it was quite evident that the leaders of this movement came from the religious community. One reason for the emergence of clergy as the leaders of the 1963 uprising was the weakness of the secular groups such as the National Front and the Tudeh Party. The other reason, as H. Katouzian puts it, lay in: "... the traditional role and significance of Shiism and its leaders as a powerful autonomous social force; ... the clarity of mind of religious leaders and the faithful regarding the nature of the events, a clarity that was in total contrast to the confusion of the National Front leaders (and the Tudeh Party leadership); and the historical, moral and physical courage of leading religious figures, most notably Ayatallah Khomeini's." (55)

(54) Quoted in H. Katouzian, op. cit. p. 228.
(55) Ibid.
1963-1978 PERIOD:

The 1953-63 period differed from 1941-53 in some major respects. The most important one was related to the power of the Shah over Iranian society. During the first period, the Shah was a relatively weak monarch, competing with different centers of power. There existed a relative freedom of expression, election, and, association. Compared to the post coup period, Iran during 1941-53 was governed more or less on the basis of constitutional principles. The Shah was more reigning than ruling, and Iranians enjoyed a kind of political freedom which was unprecedented since the early years of the Constitutional Revolution.

The 1953-63 period was an era of growing dictatorship. The Shah tried and succeeded in concentrating power in his own hands. But his regime, in this period, was not yet despotic. Although the number of people who were allowed to share power was shrinking, the concept of power-sharing still had some application. The landlords were powerful and to some extent independent. The religious community was strong enough to keep the Shah cautious. In a sense the Shah's control over the society was not complete for at least a decade. As mentioned above, through land reform, he got rid of the landlords as a class, and through coercion he quieted down the oppositional forces (notably the powerful religious community). By mid 1963, when the crisis was
over, the Shah was ready to take the steps which ultimately made him a despot.

As the year 1963 drew to a close, the Shah was successful in accomplishing some very important tasks. Besides eliminating the power of the landlords, he effectively defeated the National Front, suppressed the people's rebellion of 1963, got rid of some powerful figures within his own entourage (such as General Bakhtiar, the powerful head of Savak) and was able to completely control the 1963 Majlis election. As a result the composition of this Majlis was totally satisfactory to the Shah. There was no independently powerful figure in the Majlis, and the process had insured that all of the deputies were loyal servants to the person of the Shah.

At the same time, the Iranian economy started to recover. Partly due to rapidly increasing oil revenues, a period of boom started. The state expanded its power further and assumed a greater role in economic activity. In the midst of all these the military apparatus was the greatest winner of all. The Shah increased the size of the military from 200,000 men in 1963 to 410,000 in 1977. He also increased the annual military budget from $293 million in 1963 to $1.8 billion in 1973 and to $7.3 billion in 1977. Moreover, the military officers became one of the most

(56) Abrahamian, op. cit. p. 435.
(57) Ibid.
privileged groups in Iran. They enjoyed handsome salaries and benefited from all sorts of facilities such as good housing, low priced special stores, and modern medical facilities.

The military also became heavily involved in social and economic activities. Because of the Shah's ambition to make Iran militarily powerful, several production and assembly plants specializing in military production were set up. All these plants were controlled and run by the army. The military was also involved in agricultural production in some villages, and the literacy corps (one of the six original points of the White Revolution) was supervised by the military.

Therefore the role which the military started to play in the socio-political and economic life of the society was quite substantial. The reason for this heavy involvement should be sought in the character of the regime. As mentioned earlier, the Shah was successful in destroying all independent sources of power, and in the process he concentrated all power in himself. But to keep his dominance over the society, he needed to rely on the military. At the same time, despite his reliance on the army, he also succeeded in controlling and depoliticizing this institution. The depoliticization of the army eliminated one of the biggest threats to his position as an absolute ruler.
The answer to how he succeeded in doing so should be sought in the methods he used. The mechanisms of the Shah's control were quite effective. First of all he purged all the strong-minded powerful generals such as Zahedi, Bakhtiar and Gharani (head of the military intelligence who was accused of plotting against the Shah and was dismissed), and replaced them by people who were merely there to serve him. Secondly, through regular meeting with heads of the military, he kept himself informed about the army. Thirdly he set up an institution called the Supreme Commander's Council filled with his own staff. It was only through this institution that heads of different branches of the military were allowed to communicate with each other. This method enabled the Shah to eliminate the possibility of any independent communication between different branches. He also shuffled the top officers very frequently so that they would not be able to create their own base of power. He kept tabs on the officer corps and through all these and more, he succeeded in keeping the key military figures totally dependent on him. He proved that reliance, in this case, did not necessarily breed a fragile position for him and did not necessarily force him to share his power.

The Shah's special attention to the army was caused by two factors. One was his dream about a powerful Iran, and the other was the necessity of using the military as an
instrument of repression. Lacking legitimacy in the eyes of the public, coupled with his desire for independent and supreme power, left him no other choice but to make the instruments of repression, including the army, the main pillar of his regime. However, the army was not the sole agent of repression. Actually it was the Savak, supposedly a civilian organization under the supervision of the office of the prime minister, which came to be identified as the most important instrument of coercion in recent Iranian history.

Savak was established in the late 1950's, and acquired its special place after 1963. Savak was considered a part of the prime minister's office. Its head was appointed by the Shah and had the rank of deputy prime minister. According to the law, Savak's main functions included: gathering information which was essential for the maintenance of the national security; counter espionage activities; and dealing with "political criminals" who were related to unlawful activities such as armed opposition or spreading collectivist ideologies.

These were the official functions of Savak. But in reality, Savak had a much broader range of responsibilities. Its main task was not merely to preserve the constitutional monarchy and national security, but to safeguard the dictatorship of the Shah. To accomplish that task, it used dif-
ferent methods, the most infamous of which was torture. But Savak's methods were not limited to mere coercion. In the words of Fred Halliday "In any such society where free expression is banned the regime has to promote the appearance of at least some freedom and has to gather information on popular sentiments through the secret police. Thus, Savak is the agent of censorship in Iran, but it also publishes books and magazines, and even uses some of its ex-opposition members to promote certain kinds of confusionist "opposition" thinking. Savak also runs the 600 odd government trade unions and Savak officials had offices in some factories; again, they do not just repress strikes, but also mediate between workers and owners, and try to mobilize support among the workers for the regime and for increased output."

But no matter how diverse the Savak's methods were, still the dominant one was torture. According to the Amnesty International Annual Report of 1974-75, Iran had the worst record in human rights among the community of nations. From the late 1960's torture became a common exercise during the interrogation and detention of the political prisoners.

Torture was used for two purposes. One was to obtain as much information as possible about other oppositional political activists not yet known (or known but not yet located) to Savak. The other purpose, especially the continuation of torture after the trial, was to intimidate the prisoners and make them confess publicly, and therefore, to demoralize younger and less experienced political activists. How successful Savak was with regard to this last purpose is not known. But it was certainly true that Savak was quite successful in creating an atmosphere of distrust and panic among ordinary people. The agency's intimidating presence was always felt, so much that individuals were hesitant to discuss the most trivial political matters with others, not to mention their reluctance to participate in more serious political activities. And there lay the real effectiveness of Savak.

Although it mattered how effective Savak really was, what mattered even more was how people perceived the agency's capabilities and how this perception affected their willingness to get involved in meaningful political activities. And it was the case that, for a long time, Savak was most successful in holding on to the image of a most competent, efficient and notorious secret police organization.

But no regime can survive solely by relying on mere repression. There must be people who benefit from a
repressive system in order to make it work, and during the Shah there existed such a clientele. The oil revenue, particularly after the 1973 quadrupling of oil prices, provided the state with tremendous income and as a result made it possible for the Shah to enlarge his clientele. Besides the military officers who enjoyed generous salaries and other fringe benefits, many state employees, professionals and technocrats were included among the beneficiaries of the new wealth and had a stake in preserving the system. In the private sector too, due to state subsidies given to the business community (especially to big businesses and businesses which had close link to the international capital) the Shah succeeded in attracting some support. But then again neither of these social groups were allowed to share political power with the Shah. Considering the despotic character of the Shah's regime in the 1970's, even the economic position of these groups was precarious.

As Homa Katouzian states: "... despotism destroys any functional distinction between the social classes, even though these classes do exist in the empirical sense of differences in wealth, income, and the like. It turns everyone into a subject - or rather object- regardless of his station, if only because his station itself is either owing to the state, or the state can change it for better or worse at a moment's notice. Exploitation, even private
exploitation, can and does go on, but the private exploiters themselves can be exploited by the state; and more important, they have no right to exploit, but merely a privilege for exploiting; and this privilege may be passed on to anyone else at the state's pleasure."(59)

The rise in the price of oil in early 1973 not only enabled the state to enlarge the size and to increase the satisfaction of its clientele but it also enabled it to become more and more independent of social classes. The Shah tried to picture Iran as a classless society within which there was no unresolvable conflict. He also tried to establish himself as a father figure who stood above and protected the society. To accomplish this, he abandoned the charade of the two party system and declared his own creation, the Rastakhiz Party.

The Rastakhiz party was established to complete the control which the state exerted over the society. It recruited over five million people. It set up workers, women, youth and farmers organizations. It penetrated into all ministries. It got involved in welfare, health, art, culture, science and mass media organizations. It published several newspapers and got heavily involved in propaganda and mass indoctrination. The party also launched several attacks on the religious establishment. In the meanwhile by the Shah's wish the Islamic calendar was removed and was replaced by a

royalist calendar, referring to 2500 years of monarchical history. This action was taken to down play the importance of the Islamic tradition in Iran.

All these actions created a reaction from different groups, and resulted in widespread arrests of religious leaders, prominent writers and thinkers. They argued that the Rastakhiz Party had destroyed liberties, constitutional rights and had undermined Islamic values. So if the intention was to create conformity, through Rastakhiz, that did not happen. What happened was quite the opposite. Opposition grew, and within two years the Shah was forced to abolish the party.

Abolition of the Rastakhiz Party occurred at a time when the bad economic situation (especially a very high rate of inflation) put the Shah in a precarious situation. In a short period of time, the stability of the whole regime was in serious question. To a major extent due to this circumstance and to some extent due to President Carter's Human Rights policy, the Shah decided to take some "liberalization" steps in 1977. By then the Shah's regime had already reached its highest degree of despotism. Excessive repression inherent in this despotic regime created so much resentment that it left very little chance for any political reform to be successful. Extreme actions leaves not much room for anything but extreme reactions. The idea of
piecemeal reforms providing valves to release pressures failed. The only alternative to a despotic regime seemed to be the complete destruction of that regime through a revolution.

The Opposition and the Failure of the National Front.

A despotic regime which is based on repression, arbitrariness and illegal use of power, eliminates the ordinary and legal channels for expressing dissatisfaction and opposition. It might also reduce (at least for a while) the number of people who have a tendency to get involved in political activities in a more tolerant context. But it certainly intensifies and radicalizes activities of those who are still willing to risk everything by continuing their active opposition to the regime.

The history of oppositional activities in Iran after 1963 supports the above assertions. Growing repression closed the legal avenues to the political opposition. The events of May 1963 convinced some people, particularly the younger generation of activists, that the reformist methods of the traditional opposition (the National Front which will be discussed in later chapters) belonged to the past. In their view, the nature of the regime at that point required a completely different approach.

Such a view of reality shifted the attention of a younger generation of activists to the theories of guerrilla
warfare. The works of Che Guevara, Mao, Regis Debray and others became sources of inspiration for this younger generation of activists. The post 1963 era witnessed the emergence of different guerrilla groups, the most important of which were the Sazman-i Mojahedin-i Khalgh-i Iran (the Organization of the Iranian People's Freedom Fighters) and the Sazman-i Cherikhay-i Fada-i Khalgh-i Iran (the Organization of the Iranian Peoples' Guerrilla Freedom Fighters). These two groups were very different in their philosophical outlook. The first group was Islamic and evolved predominantly from the Freedom Movement, while the second group was Marxist and originated mainly from the Tudeh Party.

Despite their differences in world view both resorted to the same methods of struggle. Both rejected the traditional methods of oppositional activities. Both adopted organizational clandestinism and carried out armed struggle against the regime. They both attracted supporters from the younger generation, basically the students.

They argued that the reasons behind the failure of the traditional oppositional groups lay in 1) a lack of determined and capable leadership; 2) the contradiction between the naive approach of the intellectual elite on the one hand and the rapidly changing social and political conditions on the other hand and therefore the inappropriateness of the forms and methods of their political struggle in the
context of Iranian society; 3) the past oppositional forces (mainly at the leadership level) were not professional revolutionaries; and 4) the past opposition lacked ideological vigor. (60)

What was needed to be done, they argued, was: 1. to carry out armed struggle, to mount an assault on the enemy in order to show people that the regime is not indestructible; 2. to emphasize on the necessity of organization (revolutionary organization); and 3. to ideologize the struggle against the corrupt system. (61)

It was in such a context that Ayatollah Khomeini became an extremely popular figure. While other clerical groups were either apolitical or reformist, Khomeini's radical approach attracted more and more support from the population. Regarding this fact, one might have more reason to accept the initial assertions of this chapter, that in a repressive atmosphere, radical alternatives are more popular. The popularity of Khomeini was not entirely based on his religious status. On purely religious grounds some religious personalities, such as Ayatollah Shariat-Madari, were more prominent than Ayatollah Khomeini. A major part of Khomeini's popularity lay in his radicalism and courage.

(60) "Sharhe Tasis va Tarikhcheh-e Sazman-e Mojahedin-e Khalq-e Iran" (The Establishment and The History of The Organization of The Mojahedin-e Khalq-e Iran), Published by the Mojahedin.

(61) Ibid.
What made radicalism attractive and effective was the despotic nature of the Shah's regime. By the same token, what made the reformist approach of the Mellian ineffective, as we will see in later chapters, was to a major extent, the repressive character of the Shah's regime. The political transformations of Iranian society, between 1953-77, which led to the creation of a fully despotic regime produced great odds against the victory of the reformist liberal nationalist movement.
Chapter IV
THE SOCIO-CULTURAL TRANSFORMATIONS OF IRAN

The drastic economic transformation of the 1960s and 1970s brought along inevitable changes in the social structure of Iranian society. Along with the relative increase or decrease in the political significance of already existing classes, the entrance of new classes into the political arena had a profound impact on the course of political events, on the revolution of 1979, and on the leadership which emerged. The new Iranian social setting predetermined to some extent losers and winners of the recent revolution. The destiny of the losers, the Liberal Nationalists in general and the National Front in particular, was predicted by at least one scholar long before it became an objective reality in 1979. Richard Cottam in his book, Nationalism in Iran, points out: "Saddest of all, history is unlikely to grant a liberal democratic Iranian leader another opportunity so favorable as that given Mossadeq. ... The day of liberal intellectual leadership of Iranian nationalism may already have passed."(62) Cottam's prediction was based on

his analysis of the politicization (resulting from rapid socio-economic transformation) of some sectors of Iranian society. He writes: "The steady movement to the cities from the villages which is accompanying the economic growth will cause a growing awareness of Iran as a nation. ...These newly awakened Iranians are unlikely to look to the liberal intellectual nationalists for leadership and they will prefer the demagogues, who will appeal to their aspirations, frustrations and hatreds." (63)

The purposes of this chapter are first to trace the social transformations which have occurred since 1950s, second to explain the cultural impacts which resulted from the above mentioned transformation, and third to connect these socio-cultural changes to the 1979 Revolution and the defeat of the liberal nationalists.

THE IRANIAN SOCIAL STRUCTURE.

Twentieth century Iran witnessed the emergence and growth of two new classes: the salaried middle class and the industrial working class. In addition to the growth of these two modern classes, Iran also experienced the growth of a rapidly increasing mass of urban poor, particularly after the White Revolution of 1963. The birth of these new forces created challenges to both the previously existing traditional social setting and the traditional power struc-
ture. To understand the nature of these challenges, we first turn our attention to the traditional social setting of Iranian society.

The Traditional Social Structure.

In a very general sense, one can divide the traditional Iranian society into three broad social groupings: the ruling, the middle and the lower classes. In his book, The Politics of Iran: Groups, Classes and Modernization, James Bill broke the ruling class into six analytical categories: the Shah, the royal family, the tribal nobility, the native landlords, the system supporting high religious figures, and the military elite. In addition to these groups, Bill has included the foreign element (foreign businessmen and investors) and the wealthy landless rentier elite as parts of this ruling class.

Although we refer to these groups in aggregate as the ruling classes, the reader must be warned not to read too much into the concept "ruling" when he or she refers to the different elements included in this group. The reason for this cautious approach lies in the position of the Shah. The Shah clearly was always above and separate from the others. Using Homa Katouzian's terminology, one might

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(64) James Bill, *The Politics of Iran: Groups, Classes and Modernization*, Charles E. Merrill publishing Co., Columbus, Ohio, 1972, p.9.

refer to the other elements of these ruling classes as privileged groups. Though economically privileged, these latter (with the exception of foreigners and some individual tribal leaders) were at the Shah's mercy. Normally they enjoyed no independent political power. Furthermore, preservation of their privileged economic status (as individuals) was very much a function of the Shah's arbitrary decision making. But despite this lack of independence, these groups, which constituted a very small percentage of the population,(66) held power over other social classes and, by virtue of this power, ruled over the country.

The traditional middle strata consisted of a commercial bourgeoisie, a bureaucratic sector and clerics. These traditional middle strata have existed for centuries. Merchants and traders who centered their activity around the Bazaar constituted the commercial bourgeoisie.(67) Their Economic resources enabled them to hold a certain amount of political power. This political power manifested itself quite strongly during crisis situations such as the Constitutional Revolution, the oil nationalization era and the 1979 Revolution. At these periods, primarily through their financial contribution, the Bazaaris played important and

(66) J. Bill, p. 9.

(67) For a study of the development of the traditional bourgeois class see A. Ashraf, The Historical Obstacles to the Growth of Capitalism in Iran. Zamineh Publication, Tehran, 1980.
sometimes determining roles.

The traditional bureaucratic sector or the patrimonial staff ran the machinery of state. (68) Through staffing and controlling the administration, this stratum was also able to hold a certain amount of power. But unlike the commercial bourgeoisie, the bureaucratic middle class was made more subservient to the ruling class and its interest by the mere fact that their positions (both economically and politically) were very much dependent on the decisions made by the ruling elite. (69)

The clerical status group owed its power, partly, to its control of the educational system. This stratum, through educating the bureaucratic stratum, was closely related to it. Moreover some of the members of the clerical group were directly involved in governmental institutions, particularly in the area of justice and law. So, by virtue of this connection, the clerics had some access to the ruling elite. But the importance of this class in terms of political clout stemmed primarily from its influence on the masses. As educators and preachers, they had easy access to the masses and were able to mobilize them. (70) Again, like

(68) The traditional bureaucrats can be distinguished from the modern salaried class basically on the ground of the type of education they received. The traditional bureaucrats were products of the traditional educational system controlled and administered by clerics.

(69) J. Bill, p.10-11.

(70) Through a network of Madresseh (religious schools) and
the commercial bourgeoisie (the merchants), the clerics (or at least an important part of them) participated in the Constitutional Revolution, the oil nationalization movement and, most important of all, in the 1979 Revolution.

The lower strata consisted of peasantry, urban workers and nomads. Together, these groups have constituted an overwhelming majority of the Iranian population for centuries. Despite their numerical significance, these strata held no political power. Historically the Iranian peasantry have been passive. Although they made up the majority of both the lower classes and the Iranian population itself, their role in and their contribution to the three above mentioned historical movements was negligible, if existent at all. The same could be said about the tribal masses. The basically docile attitude of the huge masses of peasants and tribesmen made it easy for the tiny ruling class, landlords included, to hold on to its position of power. These masses not only did not create a serious political problem for the ruling class, but on many occasions such as election to the seventeenth Majlis unwittingly sided with the ruling elite and perpetuated their own exploitation. (71)

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mosques, the clerics were organizationally more equipped than any other class to function as mass mobilizers.

(71) Ordinarily, during the Majlis election the obedient peasant used to cast his vote for a candidate who was prefered by the landlord.
Iranian society. One of the major areas attacked by his programs was the traditional educational system. By a rapid increase in the educational budget, Reza Shah was able to create a strong, rival institution to compete with and soon to surpass the traditional religious educational establishment. In 1925, there were 648 modern primary schools with 55,960 students. By the time of his abdication in 1941, this number had already jumped to 2,331 schools with an enrollment of 287,245.(72)

Impressive increases in modern secondary schools accompanied the changes in primary schools. Concurrently, the importance of Maktab-Khaneh (schools run by the clergy), particularly in terms of enrollment, declined sharply. Lots of emphasis was also given to higher education. In 1925, only six institutions of higher modern education, with an overall enrollment of 600 students, existed in Iran. In a span of almost fifteen years the number of students in eleven different colleges increased to 3,300.(73) Besides that, at the beginning of Reza Shah's reign, a law was passed through the Majlis providing scholarships for 100 high school graduates to be sent abroad each year to receive higher education.

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(72) "The Statistical Expression of The Economic and Social Transformations of Iran During the Glorious Era of The Pahlavi dynasty", a publication by the Plan and Budget Organization, 1976, pp. 38, 40.

(73) Ibid.
The overwhelming majority of the traditional working strata consisted of non-industrial workers. Many of them were unskilled laborers, functioning as domestic servants, unskilled help for shopkeepers, and manual laborers. Many of them were newly arrived from the rural areas. Despite changes in their geographical surroundings and type of jobs, they were basically an extension of the peasantry and, at least in terms of attitude, were still a rural phenomenon. But unlike the peasantry which was politically passive and therefore non-threatening to the ruling elite, the urban workers could be easily mobilized by different and competing forces such as Bazaar merchants, religious leaders, and sometimes even by popular, pro-regime figures. As a consequence of the ease with which they could be mobilized, the urban workers emerged as an important malleable element in the political arena.

The Emergence of New and The Decline of Old Social Classes.

The creation of a modern centralized state in Iran was a twentieth century phenomenon. This attempt was made by Reza Shah, the founder of the Pahlavi Dynasty, after the 1921 Coup d'Etat. Reza Shah, who crowned himself in 1925, started to consolidate his power by creating and strengthening a centralized army and modern governmental administration.

Along with the administrative transformation, Reza Shah launched a series of socio-economic programs to modernize
Changes in the educational system provided some young Iranians with the opportunity to be employed by the rapidly expanding state institutions, leading to the creation and expansion of a new salaried middle class. Referring to the members of this class as the professional bureaucratic intelligentsia, James Bill characterizes it as "... a new class composed of individuals who rest their power position upon employment utilizing those skills and talents which they possess thanks to a modern education. This is a non-bourgeois middle class many of whose members relate themselves to the other classes and the system through function, performance and service rather than through material wealth, family ties or property. The members of this class are engaged in professional, technical, cultural, intellectual, and administrative occupation and are by and large a salaried middle class."(74) Although it was during Reza Shah that the seed of the salaried middle class was planted, its true importance as an expanded social force emerged only after Reza Shah.

As a part of his Westernization policies, Reza Shah attempted to industrialize Iran. Since the industrial bourgeoisie was extremely weak, it was the state which took upon itself the launching of industrial programs. Whether Reza Shah was genuinely interested in modernizing Iran or whether his state sponsored industrial programs were

(74) J. Bill, Politics ... p.54.
another method through which he wanted to consolidate his power does not concern the subject matter of this chapter. The issue of interest here is that the expansion of state activity fostered not only the development of a salaried middle class but also that of an industrial working class. According to the General Statistics published by the Ministry of the Interior in 1941, 170,000 workers were employed by large and small industrial plants. In contrast to a few thousand, the comparable figure in 1925, this increase was very substantial, and heralded the emergence of a new force in Iranian society.

The above pages have been an introduction to the social forces which were present or evolved in the first half of the twentieth century. It is against this background that we examine the growth and decline of these social forces and its implications under Mohammed Reza Shah.

The period of 1941 to 1953 not only brought about a numerical increase in the two new social forces but, due to relative political freedom, it also witnessed the growth of political activity organized by these two classes. A number of labor unions, professional associations and political parties representing the two modern classes were formed. The increasing importance of the communist Tudeh Party and the National Front was proof of the changes in the power relations in Iran. But the coup of 1953 put an end to the
ascendancy of these two classes in terms of political power. However the numerical growth of these classes continued at an impressive rate in the years ahead.

As argued in previous chapters, during Mohammed Reza Shah's reign, Iran experienced considerable economic transformation particularly after the White Revolution, and basically because of increasing oil revenues. Between 1953 and 1977, the number of the salaried middle class, including teachers, engineers, professors, civil servants etc..., soared from 324,000 to 630,000.(75) In addition to this absolute increase, the salaried middle class also grew in relative terms. In 1953, this class constituted 5.4 percent of the total labor force of 5.8 million, while in 1977 the percentage rose to 6.7 of a labor force of 9.4 million.(76) In addition to the members of the salaried class who were already employed, there was an impressive increase in the number of university students, secondary school students and students who were studying abroad. These future members of the salaried middle class, excluding the students who were studying abroad, totalled around one and a half million.(77) With regard to the number of people constituting the working class, there is no accurate data available. But the size of employment in different non-agricultural and

(75) MERIP Report, No. 87, May 1980, p. 22.
(76) Ibid.
(77) Plan and Budget publication, opt cit, pp. 41, 43.
industrial sectors indicates the rapid growth of the working class. In comparison to the oil industry in which employment did not really increase, in the manufacturing and construction sector employment trebled between 1956 and 1977.\(^{(78)}\) Included in this increase in employment in the industrial sector is an increase in the number of self-employed workers and salaried white collar workers. However, the figure represents primarily an increase in the number of blue collar wage earners. According to the 1976 publication of the Plan and Budget Organization, in 1972 more than 865,700 people were employed by modern industry as blue collar wage earners.\(^{(79)}\)

The economic policies of the Shah not only increased the size of the salaried middle class and the industrial working class, but also increased the size of a sector of the society referred to as migrant urban poor. The importance of this sector as a major participant in the 1979 Revolution, which was basically an urban phenomenon, demands special attention. Partly as a result of land reform policies, the migrant urban poor in the course of two decades became an important social force with which to reckon.\(^{(80)}\)


\(^{(79)}\) Opt cit, p. 131. The above figure does not include the workers in the oil industry.

\(^{(80)}\) The land reform program has been discussed in previous chapters. However, for a more detailed analysis of land reform and its results, see Eric Hoogland, *Land
The land reform program as a redistributive policy left out the most underprivileged of the rural population, the agricultural laborers who had no cultivating rights. In addition to these discriminatory redistribution policies, the mechanization of agriculture and the formation of large, modern agrobusinesses further deteriorated the lot of wage laborers. The capital intensive character of modern agriculture reduced the need for labor. Consequently the villagers found themselves in a more difficult job situation than before. (81)

This economic hardship was the deciding factor for many jobless peasants, compelling them to immigrate to big cities, particularly to Tehran. More than 70% of the migrants to the cities stated that the principal reason for their migration was to seek jobs. (82) This migration accelerated as new and more conservative provisions were added to the original land reform program. According to Kazemi, "In the 1966-1976 decade, ... about 2,111,000 villagers left their rural homes to settle in the urban centers. This amounted to 8% of the total rural population." (81) For the data on rural unemployment see Farhad Kazemi, Poverty and Revolution in Iran: the Migrant Poor, Urban Marginality and Politics. N.Y. University Press, 1980.

to over 35% of the increase in Iran's total urban population during this period."(83) Although part of this massive army of migrant peasants found jobs as regular wage earners, a vast part of it remained without any secure job. Over 1,120,000 of them were either unemployed or underemployed, making a living as temporary construction workers, peddlers, menial workers or sometimes even as beggars.(84)

The economic transformation of Iranian society not only was responsible for fostering new social forces, but was also instrumental in the decline of some traditional forces. The creation of a strong centralized state had an impact on one of the elements within the traditional ruling class, the tribal leaders. Reza Shah's attempts to eliminate the semi-independent power positions of the tribal groups, through military force and other tactics,(85) eliminated to a great extent the threat of tribal resistance, and therefore, reduced substantially the influence of the tribal leaders in national politics. Like his father, Mohammed Reza Shah wanted to see the end of tribal groups as power holders and tribal life as a style of living. So he too persecuted many tribal leaders (though not as ruth-

(83) Ibid, p.262.

(84) E. Abrahamian, Iran Between Two Revolutions, pp. 434-435.

(85) For a brief description of Reza Shah's methods in dealing with tribes, see R. Cottam, Nationalism in Iran, chapter 4.
lessly as his father) and pushed the policy of sedentarization. In the 1970s the nomads constituted less than 5% of the Iranian population, a drastic decrease for a country in which 1/4 of its population had been nomads at the turn of the century. (86) As a result, the nomads and their tribal leaders experienced, respectively, a decline as a social force and as independent power holders.

Besides the tribal leaders, there was another group which suffered not just a decline but an almost total elimination as a class, the landlords. Again, the decline of this class started with Reza Shah. Through land expropriation, Reza Shah reduced the power of many individual landlords, and made the Pahlavi family the biggest landholder of all. But landlords as a class existed and were far from being annihilated when Reza Shah abdicated in 1941. Actually this class remained the most powerful conservative social force for the next two decades. But through land reform programs Mohammed Reza Shah, who until then had recognized landlords as a part of the ruling class, waged war against landlords and succeeded in abolishing them as a social force. (87)


(87) This did not mean that individual landlords were stripped of their economic power. Many of them were compensated through the state and joined the new privileged class of upper proprietors in cities.
The land reform affected the religious establishment as well as landlords. A vast amount of land belonged to the religious establishment and was supervised by powerful ulama. The land redistribution policy made no exception regarding these lands and, as a result, the economic power of the ulama decreased substantially. But since the religious establishment, unlike landlords, was not exclusively dependent on land for either economic(88) or political(89) power, it survived the blow of land reform. The only important impact of land reform was to increase the Ulama's resentment toward the Pahlavi Dynasty.

In the 1970s, the "modern" Iranian society like its traditional counterpart could be broadly divided into three general social strata. First is the ruling elite, which this time is composed of the following groups: the Shah and his family; the military-bureaucratic elite, which was greatly expanded; the few system-supporting high religious figures such as Tehran's Imam Jomeh (Friday Prayer Leader); and a tiny group of extremely wealthy entrepreneurs(90) who were involved in banking, trading, industry, contracting, ---------------

(88) A great deal of religious income was derived from religious taxation from wealthy Bazaaris and also other religious groups.

(89) Their political power was basically derived from their control over the masses and not due to land ownership.

(90) According to Fred Halliday, 45 families controlled 85% of all the firms with a turnover of more than ten million rials. See Iran: Dictatorship and Development, p.151.
and land speculation and who had close business ties with the royal family, the influential bureaucrats, and the multi-national corporations. The ruling class comprised a fraction of a percent of the total population. (91)

Second, the middle strata, which encompassed around one million families, consisted of well to do Bazaar merchants, entrepreneurs outside the Bazaar, the salaried middle class and those aspiring to join it, and finally the middle and lower middle class clerics, estimated at 90,000 religious leaders of both high and low rank. (92) The third category, the lower classes, included the traditional urban working class, the modern industrial working class and the migrant urban poor, for a total of 2,400,000. Of course, in addition to this urban sector, the lower classes included the bulk of the rural population, rural wage earners and even some independent farmers who owned less than viable amounts of land.

In comparison to pre-1950s figures, among the lower classes there was both a relative and absolute increase in the ranks of the industrial working class and of the urban poor. The real decrease, in terms of the percentage of the population, occurred in the ranks of rural lower classes. This transformation had a very important political implication. As mentioned before, the apolitical nature of the

(91) E. Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, p. 433.
(92) Ibid.
peasantry had excluded this major part of the population from politics for centuries. The decrease in the size of the peasant population increased the ranks of the urban lower classes substantially, and, subsequently, rapidly increased the percentage of the politically aware population. It was this newly awakened but underprivileged section of the population which played a very significant role in the 1979 Revolution.

The Nature of The Contemporary Social Structure: An Analysis.

The changes in the social structure of the society created the expectation in many people, particularly the modernization theorists, that the most serious challenges to the old socio-political order would come from the modern forces. James Bill's book, The Politics of Iran, could be cited as one example. It is true that part of the challenge did indeed come from these modern forces. However, it did not occur exactly in the way anticipated by modernization theorists, either in terms of the substance of these challenges or of the manner in which they were presented. Economic transformations and their inevitable social implication, especially the proliferation of new social forces, created a more complex social setting, but they did not lead to political pluralism or to a liberal democratic order. Instead they sparked a revolution led by a non-
modern authoritarian religious leadership, with a heavy traditional cultural overtone. How can one explain such a largely unanticipated trend? The explanation must be a multi-faceted one. However, the goal of this particular chapter is to tackle the socio-cultural aspect of the above question.

To solve the puzzle presented by this unanticipated trend, we have to break its socio-cultural aspect into two parts. First, we need to examine how big a force these modern classes were, particularly in contrast to the traditional classes, and, second how "modern" they were. To answer the first question, one could refer to the data provided above. It is true that the process of "modernization" expanded the size of the modern classes. At the same time this process reduced the percentage of the peasant population. On the surface, this seems to indicate that the modern classes both in absolute and in relative terms increased. But we have overlooked here the increase in one very important non-modern social force, namely the migrant urban poor. Ironically the process of modernization increased the size of the urban poor more than that of any other class.

Though significant, this numerical increase does not fully explain the relative weight of modern versus non-modern forces. The explanation must address the qualitative
difference, in terms of political significance, between the ascending population of urban poor and the descending peasantry. In evaluating the political importance of a social force, the relative apolitical nature of the Iranian peasantry rendered the numerical increase or decrease of this class an insignificant factor. In contrast, the numerical increase or decrease of the urban poor, who had become politically aware, by virtue of urban life and direct experience with the national government,(93) was a serious development. In terms of its political implications, increase in the urban poor population represented the creation of a new social force with traditional characteristics (with potential political power) accompanied by a reduction in another traditional class i.e. the peasantry who were never considered a political force in Iranian society. Seen in the context of modern versus non-modern social forces, this development actually served to weaken the relative position of modern forces as compared to the Mossadeq era, when the urban poor were not a significant force.

To answer the second question, we should first explain what we mean by the term "modern" either as an individual or as a class. The notion of "modern man" is a multifaceted one. In measuring the modernity of human beings,

(93) See F. Kazemi, Poverty and Revolution in Iran for an analysis of urban poor confrontation with the government.
the Western social scientists have employed not only objec-
tive factors, such as level of formal education, or occupa-
tion, but also a set of subjective criteria, such as atti-
tudes, world views and values. Alex Inkeles, for example,
in his study of psychological impact of modernization, has
attributed nine attitudinal and behavioral characteristics
to the "modern man". (94) Joseph Kahl and Leonard Doob are
also among those who have done studies on these subjective
aspects. Based on their description, a "modern man" has the
following attitudes: faith in science and technology; a
sense of efficacy, or capability to control his environ-
ment; (95) individualism; preference to live in an urban
setting; sensitivity to mass media; (96) a belief in the
legitimacy of the current government; a feeling of optimism
about the future; and an approval of the nation's political
leaders. (97)

(94) Alex Inkeles, "The Modernization of Man," in Myron
Weiner, ed., Modernization: The Dynamics of Growth,

(95) Ibid.

of Values in Brazil and in Mexico, Austin: University
of Texas Press, Latin American Monographs No. 12,
1968.

(97) Leonard W. Doob, "Scales for Assaying Psychological
Modernization in Africa", Public Opinion Quarterly
XXXI, 3.
In general the "modern man", as defined by Western social scientists, is a portrayal of "Western man", a man who is a product of general historical, socio-economic, technological, political and cultural characteristics and transformations of the Western world. It would be a grave mistake to assume that the existence of some objective criteria, in a person or in a group of people who constitute a social class, should logically be accompanied or followed by a cluster of specific subjective elements. As will be discussed in this chapter, this was not the case in Iran.

The expectation (or the hope) on the part of the Western social scientists was not realized, precisely because of their lack of appreciation of the context within which modernization was going to be applied. The differences in historical experiences, and the socio-economic, political and cultural characteristics between Western and non-Western societies were underestimated by Western social scientists. The implantation of modern Western institutions was not followed, at least not in Iran, by expected attitudinal change a la the West. And the reason was not that institutional modernization was occurring too much-too rapid. The reason was that the mindless imitation of the West was an attempt to uproot not only the indigenous institutions, but also many of the indigenous values, beliefs and principles which were not necessarily regressive.
In Iran, in the name of modernization, one civilization was challenging another. The ascending, aggressive Western civilization, confident of its technological supremacy, entered into a life and death clash with the descending, but once glorious, Irano-Islamic civilization. As the concept of civilization, by itself, must convey, this clash was not limited to economic and technological domains, but included cultural, artistic and philosophical aspects as well. As a part of the modernization crusade, the modernist regime of the Shah challenged the world views, values, principles and attitudes of not just religious "fundamentalists" but those of many of the well informed, well educated and progressive elements of the intelligentsia (a "modern" class). The process of modernization in Iran, particularly during the last several years of the Shah's rule, was not meant to accommodate the "old" with the "new", or tradition with modernity. It moved in a direction that aimed at total annihilation of tradition. It is against this very general philosophical background, that I will proceed, in the pages ahead, to explain the attitude of the "modern" Iranian social classes.

At an objective level, the "modern" classes seemed to fulfill the requirement demanded by modernity. They had modern education, technical expertise, and, to a reasonable

(98) From this point on the analysis of the modern classes will be limited to the modern middle class and does not include the industrial working class.
degree were able to run the modern institutions. But at a subjective level, it would be a mistake to perceive the intelligentsia of the 1970s as similar to its Western counterpart. This is a mistake that had been made by some students of Iranian politics and Iranian society. For example in 1972 James Bill characterized the Iranian intelligentsia in the following manner: "The Iranian intelligentsia has very decidedly discarded old values and value systems.... That which was sacred to the traditional middle class is either ignored or attacked by the new class which is little impressed by either history or prophets. It is perhaps natural that the secularization of the educational process would result in a different view of Shii Islam. The result has been a sharp move away from this most basic of value systems which organized all phases of a Moslem's life,... Within the intelligentsia in general, there is a deep sense that Islam represents an alien intrusion forced upon Iranians by foreign invaders. It is often stated that the social problems of Iran stem from the Islamic intrusion."(99)

Ironically, this view was more true of the older generation of intelligentsia than of the intelligentsia in the 1970s. In general the new generation of intelligentsia was more religious or at least less foreign oriented than its older counterpart. There are several reasons for this.

(99) J. Bill, Politics of Iran. p. 61.
change in attitude, of which two are relevant to the topic of this chapter. First is the intelligentsia’s disillusionment with both communist (specifically the Soviet brand) and Western alternatives. Second are the sociological characteristics of the new modern middle class.

As far as communism was concerned several developments disillusioned many members of the Iranian intelligentsia with the Soviet Union. First was the reluctance of the latter to withdraw its troops from Iranian soil after WWII. Second was the Soviet oriented Tudeh Party’s role in the oil nationalization era and the less than courageous behavior of its leadership after the 1953 coup. Third, for those who still looked to the Soviet Union as a model for a just and humane society, the partial revealing of Stalin’s cruel methods by the new Soviet leadership after his demise came as a shock. Finally the more or less cooperative attitude towards the Shah displayed by the new Soviet leadership in the 1970s made the matter, this ill-feeling toward communism, even worse.

As far as the Western alternative was concerned, the experience for many Iranians was no less bitter than the communist one. Many Iranians felt that they had already been exposed to the best the West had to offer through the person of the Shah and his policies. No doubt there were some members of the intelligentsia, the technocrats and the
bureaucrats in particular, who were coopted by the regime and were happy with their improved economic status. These groups basically stayed out of national politics.

But for many others, especially those who were socially and politically conscious, economic growth was not the only important impact of the regime's modernization policies. More important than questionable economic prosperity (since it only benefited a minority and was basically a result of increasing oil revenues rather than of real economic development) was the impact of these policies on the whole fabric of the society and its culture.

By the 1970s, the intensification of Westernism in Iran, supported by a Westernist political and cultural elite which was striving to reshape the Iranian society through complete destruction of everything indigenous, had created the need for those who felt culturally, socially and psychologically threatened to turn to the opposite direction. The nature of this new cultural force which tried to dominate the society will be examined later in this chapter. Here, suffice it to say that the reaction to this dominance came both from the clearly traditional sectors of the society and also from a large number of the modern middle class who, as Iranians, felt humiliated and angered by this arrogant attempt on the part of the Westernist elite to destroy the Iranian identity. (100)

(100) The writing of the most popular Iranian writers,
In addition to the ideological disillusionment with Western and communist alternatives, one should also look at the sociological characteristics of new modern versus old middle class in order to explain the change in attitude of the contemporary Iranian intelligentsia. The older generation of intelligentsia was basically brought up in upper or upper middle class families. These families, though not necessarily very secular or Westernized, were more familiar with the modern and Western ideas and style of life when compared to the lower classes. Many of them were admirers of liberal democratic ideals. Some actually fought for these ideals during the Constitutional Revolution. Their children, the intelligentsia of the 1940s and 1950s who had these families as their primary agents of socialization, were provided with the background and, therefore, the opportunity to become not just objectively but to some extent subjectively a "modern" class.

In addition to this privileged family background, a significant number of them had travelled and some had received their higher education abroad. This direct exposure to modern society had an influence, and in many respects a positive one, on their orientation toward modernity. The Iranian situation at the time also helped to fos-

thinkers and poets such as Ali Shariati, Samad Behranghi, Jalal Al-e Ahmad and others testify to the mood of the socially conscious intelligentsia in late 60s and in 70s.
ter this positive attitude. Modernization a la the West had not been tested, at least not fully, at the time, and was still considered a viable option. It was only later, especially during the late 1960s and 1970s, that the effects of this approach became evident to many members of the Iranian intelligentsia.

In terms of family background, the new generation of intelligentsia differed from the old. Because of the expansion of educational facilities, many of them supported by the state, the number of students with lower or lower middle class backgrounds enrolled in modern educational institutions increased sharply after the 1950s. Enrollment increased even more sharply in the 1970s. The parents of many of this new generation of the intelligentsia were of village origins. Some had migrated to the cities (or sent their children to the cities to study) and were basically illiterate. Those who had some education had received it through the religious teachers in religious schools. Therefore, compared to the family background of the older intelligentsia, the new generation came from a more traditional and religious background.

If one agrees with the assumption that pre-adulthood, especially early childhood, socialization has a profound and long lasting influence in shaping people's attitudes on life, one can understand the apparent irony in the more

traditional orientation of the new generation of intelligentsia as compared to the old one. To reinforce this seemingly ironical trend were the "reaction begging" effects of the Shah's modernization policies which, as argued before, disillusioned many of the new intelligentsia with what they perceived as modernity.

In summary the answers to the two questions posed above are as follows: first, the modern classes were not the biggest social force in the 1970s and were relatively even weaker than in the 1950s; and second, the modern classes were not very "modern" after all, particularly if one includes the subjective dimension in measuring modernity in a class or an individual.

As indicated at the beginning of this chapter, the purpose of the first section was to trace the social transformation of Iranian society. We have addressed the decrease and increase of different social classes in terms of number, the emergence of modern classes, the emergence of the newly-aware urban poor as a political force, the decline of the peasantry, and the qualitative importance of these changes, particularly in terms of the relative weight of traditional versus modern forces in the context of the regime's modernization policies. Having argued that Iranian society (especially those forces within it which were politically aware) was less "modern" than it was thought to
be, it is important here, to examine the cultural impact of the modernization process, and the role it played in the 1979 Revolution.

**CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION**

**The Emergence of a "Modern" Culture.**

Modernization, as an all encompassing process, affects not only the economic aspect of a society, but every other aspect, including the cultural, as well. The Westernization policies of the Pahlavi era, particularly those of Mohammed Reza Shah, created a new elite. This new elite differed sharply from the masses and the traditional elite. The difference between the traditional elite and the masses was primarily economic in nature. But the gap between the contemporary privileged group and the masses spanned not only differences in economic wealth, but also sharp cultural differences.

The new elite, particularly the high-level bureaucrats and the nouveaux riches who benefited from the regime's Westernization policies, had developed a taste for things Western. Thanks to their newly acquired wealth and modern means of transportation and communication, they travelled abroad very frequently and were able to enjoy the "best" money could buy and that the West could offer. Their thirst for luxury consumption surpassed even that of their Western
counterparts. This thirst was not limited to material products made in the West but included its cultural products as well. In other words, the imitation of the West did not stop at the economic level. For them, all aspects of society had to be transformed into an "advanced",(102) Western like society. To many of them, most aspects of Iranian culture were backward and cause for embarrassment, and therefore, had to be uprooted. Through its control of the means of spreading the new, alien cultural norms, the regime launched its extensive reorientation programs.


Among the socialization agents at the disposal of the regime and its cultural elite, of particular importance were the educational institutions and the mass media, especially radio and television.

With regard to the educational system, and with respect to the above-mentioned cultural perspective, two goals had been given the highest priority. First was training a new

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(102) Unfortunately for many members of this elite (or at least the way people understood this elite), a culturally "advanced" society was basically equated with one in which a person was able to enjoy one's self without any restriction. To some of them the culture of swap parties, pornography, mini-skirt and unrestricted sexual freedom was what an advanced Western culture was all about. A survey of important weekly magazines such as Zan Rouz (Today's Woman), or Java-nan (The Youth) would demonstrates this trend quite clearly.
group of teachers who could employ the most up to date methods in educating the new generation. Second was to train the new generation itself, by using the most relevant type of education in order to create a Western like cultural identity. For this end, several training institutions in Iran's biggest cities were set up to train the new cadres of teachers. Most or in some cases all of the substantive materials used in training courses were supplied by translating Western, and particularly American, educational and psychological research. Needless to say, the overwhelming majority of this research, both in its analysis and its prescriptions, was based on and aimed at the problems faced by economically advanced societies, with their particular set of cultural norms.

One of the best analyses of the functions and impact of these institutions was done by a socially-conscious Iranian thinker, Samad Behrangi.(103) Behrangi, himself a student of one of these schools, in his book Kand-o Kay Dar Massel Tarbiyati-e Iran (Investigating Educational Problems of Iran) has dealt with the shortcoming of this type of training. He writes: "The problem is that we have either forgotten our own educational and cultural difficulties, or we are not aware of them. We try to address the problems which

(103) Behrangi, a political activist who was also a teacher, taught many years in remote villages in Azarbijan. He was an outspoken critic of the previous regime and was mysteriously drowned in the Aras River.
are "difficulties" only for advanced and faultless educational environments. It is not necessary for us to deal with these problems. We have more immediate tasks and more serious difficulties to address,... Educational and psychological problems are not identical for every environment, and the results which are based on the experience of one particular environment and one particular set of children may not be applicable to another context. If one wants to write a book on child psychology, for Iranian teachers and educators, one should base his book on a study of Iranian children—from the capital city to the villages—".(104)

In another passage Behrang describes the content of these training materials. He says: "... (Mr Federston) in his book talks about the problems of obesity. I, on the other hand, am always worried about whether my student, who walks to school from a distant village in the piercing cold of winter, had a bite of bread and cheese to eat for breakfast or not. Many times I have witnessed a student of mine fainting in the middle of the class room because he had not had dinner the night before and had not had breakfast that morning. Now the question is, how does Mr. X's book solve the problems that confront my students and me.".(105)

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(105) Ibid, p. 10.
ing cards, eating with a knife, fork and spoon, of baseball, picnics or football. When they come across these concepts in their textbooks, they can't comprehend them. They just stare at their teachers with open mouths." (106) But the cultural elite, most of whom had never visited the shanty towns ten or twenty kilometers away from their own beautiful homes in Northern Tehran let alone the remote villages, proudly continued their educational crusade against backwardness.

Mass media, particularly television and radio, were another effective means for transmitting the new culture. Radio was introduced to Iran in 1940. In the span of a decade (1965-1974), the number of radio receivers jumped from 2 million units to 6 million. By 1977, 8 million radio units were being used by the Iranian population. (107) The first television transmitter in Iran was set up in 1958. By the mid 1960s the newly formed National Iranian Radio and Television (NIRT) acquired a monopoly over both radio and television broadcasting. Along with the expansion of broadcasting hours, the number of T.V. receivers increased substantially. The number of receivers in 1972 was estimated at 450,000. (108) This number expanded rapidly, so much so


that in 1974, Tehran alone was said to have 450,000 T.V.
sets. (109) Since each T.V. set was usually used by more
than one person, by the whole family and sometimes even by
neighbors, one can imagine the extent of viewership of T.V.
programs, particularly in Tehran and the big cities. Inter­
estingly enough, the upper and middle classes were not the
only T.V. watchers in Iran. The lower classes including the
urban poor, especially in Tehran, were also exposed to
T.V. (110)

There were three radio channels operating in Tehran. Two
of them were under the control of NIRT. The other was an
American-owned channel which broadcast exclusively in Eng­
lish. Of the two other channels, one catered exclusively to
the taste of a very small minority, devoting the majority
of its broadcasting time to Western rock, jazz and classi­
cal music. A similar pattern describes T.V. channels.
There was one American channel and two other channels (lat­
er on an educational channel with limited broadcasting
hours was added) which were owned by the government.
According to a Unesco sponsored research project in 1973,
the number of hours spent by each owner family watching

(109) J. Green, p.

(110) There were a number of tea houses in poor sections of
the cities which owned T.V. sets and were open to the
poor public. Besides, an observer who visited the
very poor sections of Tehran would be amazed at the
number of T.V. antennas installed on half ruined or
tin can dwelling units.
T.V. was between four and a half to five hours per day on average. (111)

Considering the number of T.V. sets, the number of T.V. viewers and the amount of time spent watching T.V., one can realize the potential power of those who controlled this attractive medium in transmitting their values, habits, world views and overall cultural preferences to the masses. As J. Green indicates: "Radio and television were perceived (by the ruling elite) as tools of social mobilization, valuable national resources through which increasingly large segments of Iranian society could be included as members of the changing, wider society around them. This goal of national integration,... was not aimed solely at Iran's ethnic and cultural minority groups but also at Persians who had to be mobilized and socialized into the new social entity being created for them by their king." (112)

For that purpose, in addition to the programs which were exclusively political and aimed at strengthening the regime and legitimizing the Shah's rule, there was a broad variety of programs to promote the new tastes and life styles. The prime T.V. hours were almost entirely devoted to Western, basically American, soap operas, thrillers, detective shows, or Western-imitating local productions of the same calibre. The local shows were particularly interesting.

(111) D. Behnam, "Cultural Policy in Iran", p. 37.
(112) J. Green, P. 23.
because they revealed how the cultural elite perceived the ideal life style of a modern Iranian. This life style was an admixture of some supposedly traditional aspects of Iranian life with basically Western ones. Although this attempt might have attracted the already Westernized section of the middle and upper middle class, it most probably did not have the same impact on the urban poor. The life style portrayed on many shows was culturally alien to the poorer section of the population. In addition, since these shows portrayed economically comfortable people, they were also out of tune with the lower classes' financial abilities. Therefore if the intention was to create a culturally homogeneous society, modelled after the economically advanced Western communities, the result was quite the opposite.

Another factor which intensified the cultural alienation was that, in practice, the cultural elite kept itself quite distant from the rest of the population. There was very little, if any, interpersonal, face to face interaction between the elite and the masses. In the past, the traditional elite, though economically quite separate from the poor, was not as distant from the latter in terms of cultural identity. Many rich used to live in the same geographical zone as the poor. Consequently there existed a great deal of personal interaction between the two. The
lines of communication were relatively open and reciprocal responsibility (one might call it feudalistic social relations) was taken more seriously. But the last decades of the Shah's rule changed all that. In Tehran, a very rapid movement towards the northern part of the city on the part of wealthy people took place. The state's free grants of lands to high civilian and army officials eased this process. In a matter of two decades, there was a definite and sharp geographical distance between the rich, who became residents of the beautiful and luxurious northern part of the city, and the poor, who crowded the rapidly deteriorating southern part of Tehran.

This geographical segmentation facilitated the breakdown of the traditional social contact between different classes. The severing of contact between different classes not only added to the sense of alienation of the underprivileged, but also greatly undermined the ability of the elite to realize the extent of this alienation and its probable implications. Though they remained in their own limited social circles and were generally ignorant of the basic problems of the nation, the elite perceived themselves as being capable of handling the social problems of the whole society. Therefore it should not come as a surprise that most of the solutions they proposed were at best irrelevant. In an apparently funny but fundamentally saddening
statement revealing the extent of the elite's alienation from the masses, Prince Qolam Reza Pahlavi, the Shah's younger brother, said: "If people don't like traffic jams, why don't they fly their own private planes."(113)

What Is To Be Done? Toward Revolution.

The Middle Class Response.

The cultural arrogance of the elite not only created a negative attitude on the part of the traditional and poor classes toward the former but also outraged part of the modern middle class. Once the modern middle class, which in the 1940s and 1950s was accepting of things Western, felt that the cultural trend was not aimed at mixing the new with the old and at preserving the essence of Iranian identity, it started to disassociate itself from this trend. A survey of Persian literary works, basically a product of the middle class, will substantiate the above assertions.

The modernist trend in Persian literature started to develop early in the 20th century. Both in style and content, the modernist trend was a reaction against its traditional counterpart. Many of the modern literary works were, from the very beginning, engage as well. Although modern Iranian literature represented a trend which was indicative of a continuity, there were basic differences among liter-

(113) Quoted by Majid Tehranian in, "Communication and Revolution: the Passing of a Paradigm", Iranian Studies, Vol. XIII
ary works created in different periods. Prior to the 1950s, though engage, the writers were more concerned about the threat of internal political dictatorship. To most of the socially conscious writers, Western civilization offered solutions. With regard to culture, the criticisms offered by these earlier writers basically pointed to the worn out traditional customs. Perceiving the religious establishment as the guardian of these harmful customs and institutions, they directed their attacks primarily towards the religious Ulama. Outstanding among these writers, some of them leftist in their politics, were Jamalzadeh, Sadeq Hedayat, and Bozorg Alavi.

The secular, anti-clerical trend continued to dominate the writing of the majority of Iranian writers even in the 1960s. But gradually other elements became of serious concern for Iranian intellectuals in the 1960s. These were the problems associated with blind imitation of Western ways. Foremost among the writers concerned with Western cultural imperialism were Samad Behrangi and Jalal Al-e Ahmad.

Jalal Al-e Ahmad, in his most popular work Gharbzadegi (translated as Westoxication, Westafflicted or Weststruckness), analyzes the harmful consequences of Western domination, including cultural domination. He tackles the problem at two levels. First, that machine civilization has victimized Western societies themselves. To him, machinism
is the "... killer of beauty, poetry, humanity, the future, and the sky." (114) Secondly, Al-Ahmad feels that as much as Western civilization itself is in danger, the situation is even worse for non-Western societies in which Westernism has become an obsession. The "Westernstruck" elite resembles a suspended particle of dust which not only has no ties with the core of its own society, its culture and tradition, (115) but has no comprehension of the principles of Western philosophy either. (116) Once the decision making process becomes the prerogative of this Westernstruck elite, which is fascinated with Western technology, and which will try to implant it indiscriminately in a totally different setting, a whole new series of disruptions will occur. As a result, the indigenous way of life will come under deadly attacks. Because of the inevitable impact on people whose sanity and identity is very much tied to their indigenous way of life, this mindless implantation of alien ways is dangerous.

For Al-e Ahmad, as for Behrang, one can learn, and ultimately benefit, from Western ideas, principles and experience, if one can be aware of and, therefore, avoid the temptation of choosing the easiest way out; i.e., imi-

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(116) Ibid, p. 121.
tating the West. For Al-e Ahmad there is much to be learned from the traditional Iranian values and customs, whether religious or secular. Islam, as a way of life and not as a series of dogmas, could provide the alternative to the threatening flood of Western cultural products which accompanied the trend toward more machinization of the society.

At the same time, Al-e Ahmad is very critical of the religious establishment. He says: "The religious establishment, on the other hand, with all its institutions and customs, leans on superstition as much as it can. It seeks refuge in times long past and old outdated ceremonies, is satisfied to be the gatekeeper at the graveyard, and in the twentieth century thinks according to the criteria of the Middle Ages. These days, as the secular government hangs on to the coat tails of Europe and the West in an effort to stabilize itself, the domestic religious shadow (sic) government stands in the ranks of the opposition, and regresses more and more as it tries to hold its grounds."(117) Al-e Ahmad's and Behrangi's works are important because they symbolized the conscience of the new generation of Iranian intellectuals, a generation which had turned its back on the West.

The 1963 uprising, which could be considered a turning point in oppositional activities both in style and in ideology, indicated the rise of the Ulama to positions of

(117) Ibid, p. 84.
oppositional leadership, and the rise of Islam as a useful ideological weapon against the secular, Westernist regime. This development from secular western oriented to indigenous religiously oriented political ideology was accompanied by the same development in the cultural sphere. The Iranian thinkers, many inspired by the 1963 uprising, found new hope in religion. What makes this trend much more important than it otherwise would have been was that the part of the Iranian intellectual community which remained secular presented no effective alternative. These not-so-impressed-with-religious-solutions intellectuals showed more and more signs of desperation and resignation. They saw no hope for the future and as a result became apolitical. The lack or the ineffectiveness of a secular engage literary movement provided the opportunity for the religiously oriented thinkers to greatly influence the younger generation of the Iranian population, particularly the students.

Ali Shariati, referred to as the ideologue of the 1979 Revolution, was the most influential thinker of the last years of Pahlavi rule. His famous series of speeches in Hoseynieh Ershad, a religious institution, attracted large audiences, and his speeches were quickly mimeographed and distributed in universities and high schools. Ali Shariati, born in 1933, into a religious family, was a sociologist by
education. He received his higher education in Paris, and was greatly influenced by the highly renowned Islamic scholar Louis Massignon and the anti-imperialist Algerian thinker Frantz Fanon. As a political thinker, he was searching for an ideology which could give dynamism and direction to liberation struggles in the Third World. Disillusioned with liberal democracy and Marxist ideologies, and actually perceiving the former as part of the lingering problem of cultural imperialism, Shariati found the answer in Islam. For Shariati, the Islam of Mohammed and Ali, and not the distorted and deformed official Islam of contemporary Islamic societies, could provide the oppressed masses of Islamic nations with the ideological weapon to fight both imperialism and the repressive and corrupt regimes at home.

To Shariati religion could be divided into two separate historical manifestations. The first manifestation is a religion which can be employed as an ideology. What Shariati means by religion as an ideology is a set of values which are consciously chosen by an individual, group or a social class to fulfill their ideals in a specific context with its particular problems and needs. The second manifestation is a religion which takes the form of indige-

(118) Ali is the son-in-law of Mohammed and the First Imam in the Shi'i sect.

(119) See Ali Shariati Ideology, Distributed by the Islamic Students Association in America and Canada, no.d.
nous social norms and customs, and no longer functions as an ideology. All the great religions started as ideologies and were employed by prophets to start movements to remedy the ills of their societies. All the initial adherents of these religious movements made conscious decisions to join them. In later periods religions became established as institutions, and thus were no longer dynamic movements. In these later historical periods, people were identified as Moslem, Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, even in some cases materialist and socialist, by birth. Religion then became a matter of inheritance, not a consciously chosen ideology.

Having expressed the view that Islam can be employed as an ideology to provide solutions for the ills of Islamic societies, Shariati then turns to the issue of intellectual responsibility. (120) The first responsibility of an intellectual is to get out of his ivory tower, and go to the core of the society. Intellectual isolation from the society is the most serious danger, and from Shariati's point of view, the typical contemporary Iranian intellectual is guilty of this isolation. For Shariati, it is the responsibility of the intellectual to reach out to the people, to understand their views, habits, style of life and their expectations, not the other way around. Once the intellectual is able to understand the masses and to establish

(120) See Ali Shariati The Responsibility of Intellectuals for Building the Society. Published by Moslem Student Association, no. d.
channels of communication, he will be capable of giving the society a consciousness which will enable it to rebel against injustice and oppression. In Shariati's opinion, the typical Iranian intellectual has failed to fulfill this responsibility. Like the Westernstruck cultural elite, the engage intellectuals are ignorant of and, therefore, alienated from the society. Their analysis of the problems and their prescriptions are based on nineteenth- and twentieth-century European experience.

To Shariati, the Iranian society is still a thirteenth-century society in terms of social relations. The classical Iranian bourgeoisie, the Bazaaris, is a traditionally and religiously oriented class, and with respect to culture has very little in common with the secular nineteenth-century European bourgeoisie. As far as the working class is concerned, the bulk of the Iranian working class is a rural-peasant oriented class and, therefore, can not be taken as similar to the industrial working class of Western societies. In such a context an intellectual, whose ideas are based on nineteenth and twentieth-century Europe and whose works and words are full of quotations from Marx or Sartre, can not find an audience.

To Shariati this is precisely the problem of the Iranian intellectual community, their blind imitation of Western thinkers. This does not mean that Shariati denied that ben-
enefit can be derived from studying European thinkers, as he himself had. The point is, Shariati argues, that to derive benefit one has to understand what era of European history and what group of European thinkers are more relevant to the specific characteristics of Iranian society. To him, the ideas of Calvin and Luther, who succeeded in transforming religion from a stifling factor to a dynamic force, and who subsequently initiated the "right" frame of mind for European progress, are much more relevant to the Iranian context than the ideas of Marx and Sartre. Perceiving Iranian society as comparable to thirteenth century Europe in which religion played a determining and powerful role, Shariati urges Iranian intellectuals to turn to religion. A reformed Islam as an ideology will be the most and probably the only effective weapon to fight the destructive approach of the modernist regime in Iran.

Shariati's ideas were most appealing to the educated youth and the Bazaaris who found comfort in a reformed Islamic response to the challenges of a modern world. To the educated younger generation, Shariati's Islam was progressive and revolutionary, and therefore, differed from the stifling, static official religion. To these educated young, who due to the modernist trend had become bewildered and confused, Shariati offered an alternative which could give them back their dignity, their lost sense of identity
and, above all, the prospect of a hopeful future. It was Shariati who became the spiritual leader for one of the most important oppositional activist groups, the Mojahedeen Khalq-e Iran, which was basically composed of university and high school students.

The Masses' Response.

Although Shariati became the conscience of the educated young generation, his impact on the masses was minimal. History had already provided the masses with the choice. The traditional ties between the masses and the mullahs made it very natural for them to turn to these traditional religious teachers for guidance. In the absence of a radical religious figure in the critical period of the 1970s, one could perceive a better chance for a revolutionary intellectual, such as Shariati, to become the conscience not only of the educated middle class Moslems but also of the masses. But the masses were already provided with a radical religious leader to whom they identified much more readily. That religious figure was Ayatollah Khomeini.

Khomeini, who was able to talk to the masses in their own language much better, even, than Shariati, easily captured their attention. His impeccable record of opposition to the regime and his courageous role in the 1963 uprising made him quite attractive to the traditional lower classes. As a religious leader, a great part of his criticism
against the regime focused on cultural and ethical issues. Above all he attacked the regime for its moral corruption. One of the main themes, in his major book, "Islamic Government", is the perverted nature of Western ideologies and their dangerous impact on Moslem societies. He skillfully, but in simple language, related the corruption of public life to the influence of imperialist Western powers. From the point of view of many people, he not only succeeded in addressing their grievances and analyzing the roots of their problems but also devised a definite alternative: an Islamic government run by Islamic jurists, who would employ the traditional Islamic laws and principles. Through the application of these laws and principles, people could protect their Islamic identity and achieve happiness and perfection. For these culturally alienated lower classes who felt threatened and in some cases disgusted with the perceived immorality and decadence of the Westernized elite, Khomeini was a God-sent savior. Although physically absent from Iran for many years, Khomeini very easily became the conscience of the masses, a leader to whom they entrusted their lives and hopes for a better and a more decent future.

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THE SOCIO-CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION AND THE LIBERAL NATIONALISTS.

As argued above, the social transformation of the Iranian society and the cultural implications of modernization policies of the previous regime contributed to the radicalization of the population. This radicalization culminated in a mass revolution in 1979 which had clear cultural overtones. The general question throughout this dissertation is why the liberal nationalists failed to capture the position of leadership during the revolution. In this chapter, we will tackle this question in its socio-cultural dimension.

Based on the above discussion it must be clear how the majority of Iranians perceived the Shah's Westernization policies. To the masses, the West became the personification of everything evil, corrupt and aggressive. To the more educated people, Western solutions were at best irrelevant. Therefore, to a growing number of people, Western ways and style of life whether evil or irrelevant had to be remedied by employing indigenous alternatives. In such a context, an examination of the socio-cultural characteristics of the prominent liberal nationalists, particularly the National Front leaders, will enable us to explain some of the reasons behind their defeat. A more detailed analysis will be provided in later chapters. Here, a brief discussion of a few points will suffice.
First, with respect to social background most of the National Front leaders came from upper or upper middle class families. This in itself was a factor separating them from the masses. Second, with respect to cultural orientation, again the liberal leaders were quite distant from the masses. In terms of lifestyle, type of entertainment and habits, these leaders had more in common with the Westernized elite than with the common people. Third, with respect to age, the leaders of the National Front at the time of the revolution were part of the older generation in Iran. In 1977, more than half of the Iranian population was under twenty years of age. This younger generation had no memory of the liberal nationalist struggle of Mossadeq's era, the struggle which the liberals were still trying to capitalize on in 1977-79. The younger generation were socialized in an era which was quite different from that of the National Front leaders. Therefore the former's perceptions of the problems of their society and the solutions which could remedy those problems differed sharply from that of the National Front leaders.

The leaders of the N.F. as a part of the older generation of intelligentsia were more secular than the intelligentsia of the 1970s. Some of them, for example Shapour Bakhtiar, had no appreciation of the religiosity of the masses. Their perception of Iran's problems and their solu-
tions were prompted by values and world views which were basically Western. To them, lack of political liberty was the most serious problem and the cause of all ills. Therefore, their suggested solution involved the proper functioning of basically Western borrowed institutions such as the parliament. Whether or not they were aware of the broader and more fundamental problems, the point is that they never succeeded in addressing these problems to the satisfaction of the populace.

Taken together, these three factors clearly separated the leaders of the National Front from the majority of the Iranian population. The failure of the National Front leaders to sense the resurgence of indigenous and traditional elements in Iranian society put them at a disadvantage compared to the powerful alternative represented by Khomeini. This failure to adapt themselves to the contemporary mood prevented the liberals from being perceived by the majority of Iranians as leaders who could truly represent and guide the Iranian society.
The first National Front was founded in November 1949, when a delegation of 19 leading personalities headed by Mohammed Mossadeg issued a public communique and declared the formation of a national front. According to its constitution the National Front was to be a coalition organization, the aim of which was to restore social justice. The specific objective as expressed in the N.F.'s constitution was the restoration of the 1906 constitution, which provided for a democratic regime by establishing free election and guaranteeing freedom of thought.

The basic program of the N.F. consisted of four major policies: (1) the amendment of electoral laws so that the parliament would become properly representative of the people; (2) the revision of laws governing the press so that freedom of expression would be guaranteed; (3) the amendment of martial law in order to limit the ability of the government to arbitrarily mistreat the opposition; (4) the interpretation of the 48th Article of the 1906 Constitution so that members of parliament could speak freely without the constant threat of parliamentary dissolution.
The first National Front was very much the creation of Mossadeq himself. His charisma and his special ties with the people always overshadowed the N.F. as an organization. Due partly to his charisma and partly to the characteristics of most other leaders of the N.F., Mossadeq practically became its sole decision maker. It is not an exaggeration to consider Mossadeq as a history maker and as the most important man in the Iranian political scene in one of the most dramatic periods of recent Iranian history. Given the importance of Mossadeq to the National Front, it is crucial to study his personality, ideas, and programs.

MOSSADEQ

Mossadeq’s life

Mohammed Mossadeq was born in 1879 to an aristocratic family in Tehran. His mother was a Qajar princess and his father was minister of finance from 1875 to 1895, a title held by the family since the beginning of the 19th century.

At about the age of eleven, Mossadeq was sent to l'Ecole des Sciences Politiques in Paris. When he received his high school diploma, he returned to Iran. He soon entered the ministry of finance and was assigned to senior posts. But after a few years he once again left for Europe to continue his education. He received his doctorate in law from the University of Neuchatel in Switzerland in 1914, and returned home the same year.
Having become disillusioned with the unprincipled operations of the most successful Swiss lawyers, he refused to practice law in Iran. Nor would he enter government service. Instead, he started teaching in the College of Political Science in Tehran. He also engaged himself in writing articles for different newspapers criticizing the inefficiency and corruption of the contemporary Iranian governments. His book *Capitulation and Iran* was a product of this period.

In 1915 Mossadeq ran for the Third Majlis from Tehran and was elected. His outspoken criticisms of the status quo created a potential base of support among democratic and nationalistic intellectuals especially in Tehran, where he was re-elected time and time again.

First as a member of the financial committee in the Third Majlis and later as minister of finance, he added another dimension to his already positive reputation. He proved to be an expert in financial matters and attempted several times to radically reform existing tax laws and the organization of the ministry of finance. However, implementation of his reforms was blocked by the conservative forces within the government, especially when the pro-British Vosuq el-Douleh replaced Samsam el-Saltaneh as prime minister in July 1918.
Very critical of the Vosuq Government, Mossadeq left Iran for Europe in 1918. In August 1919 the Vosuq Government signed a treaty with Britain which made Iran virtually a British colony. The agreement guaranteed British control over Iranian military and financial affairs. From Europe, Mossadeq opposed the treaty in an appeal to the League of Nations.

The government of Vosuq collapsed in December 1920 and the new prime minister, Mosheer el-Douleh invited Mossadeq to participate in his cabinet as minister of justice. On his way to Tehran, he passed through the city of Shiraz where he was invited to stay and become the Governor-General of Fars province. The central government agreed to appoint Mossadeq as Governor-General of Fars in January 1921.

The February 1921 coup d'état by Reza Khan was a major development in Iranian politics. The most serious opposition to the coup came from Mossadeq who saw it as foreign (British) inspired. So he was forced to resign his post and go in hiding for a few months. From June 1921 when the government of pro-British Sayyed Zia collapsed, until his election to the Fifth Majlis in 1922, Mossadeq was appointed to several governmental positions. While in government, he attempted to challenge minister of war Reza Khan's increasing power over the government. In 1922, Reza Khan
became prime minister. Mossadeq, perceiving this develop-
ment as a prelude to total dictatorship, resigned from his
post as minister of foreign affairs. He ran for the Fifth
Majlis and was once more elected.

It was in the Fifth Majlis that Mossadeq stood up
against Reza Khan, directly opposing his demand for the
passage of a constitutional amendment which would replace
the Qajar Dynasty with the Pahlavi dynasty headed by Reza
Khan. In one of his speeches, Mossadeq addressed the
Majlis: "... If they cut off my head, even if they dismem­
ber me, I will not accept this (amendment). After twenty
years of bloodshed and struggle are you now prepared to
believe that one person can be monarch and prime minister
simultaneously and rule over everything? If this is the
case, then it is absolute reaction, it is absolute despo­
tism. Why did then the martyrs of freedom shed their blood?
Why did people get themselves killed for freedom?".(122)

Despite Mossadeq's fierce opposition, the amendment was
passed by the Majlis, and in 1925, Reza Khan became Reza
Shah, the Shah of Iran. Mossadeq was not discouraged. Once
again reelected from Tehran, he continued to use the Majlis
as a forum to criticize Reza Shah and foreign influence.
But Reza Shah was able to secure the support of some impor­
tant segments of the society, including the emerging new
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(122) A collection of Notkh-ha va Maktoubat-e Doctor Mossa­
deq, (Mossadeq's Speeches and Written Works), Mossa­
deq Publication, No.7, p. 4.
professional and entrepeneurial strata. The necessity of a strong government which could launch economic programs to rapidly modernize the country overshadowed the desirability of freedom in the eyes of many Iranians. For them Reza Shah was the man who could create such a government. And if in the process he had to resort to force and dictatorial methods that was considered as an unhappy necessity.

Over the next sixteen years, Reza Shah gradually tightened his grip over both the polity and society at large. The Majlis increasingly lost its power, until it became a mere rubber stamp. Realizing that the Majlis was becoming ineffective, at the end of his term Mossadeq retired to Ahmadabbd, the village he owned. But he was still seen as a threat, and was arrested, briefly jailed and put under house arrest until 1941.

Reza Shah's abdication in 1941 brought some changes into the Iranian political scene. Mossadeq along with some other political prisoners were freed. After sixteen years, once again Mossadeq entered Iranian politics as the first Tehran representative to the Fourteenth Majlis. Using the Majlis as a tribune, he tried to defend and restore the two most important principles which he had always adhered to; the Constitution of 1906 and the independence of Iran. To pursue the latter objective, he developed his idea of "negative balance" in foreign affairs. This idea later materi-
alized in his effort to nationalize the Iranian oil industry, and his opposition to the Soviet demand for the northern Iranian oil concession. Mossadeq's firm stand on the oil issue and his strategy of "no concession" made him even more popular.

In the meanwhile, an assassination attempt on Mohammed Reza Shah's (the son and successor of Reza Shah) life provided the Shah with an opportunity to take several measures to increase his own power; the Tudeh Party was banned, some opposition leaders such as Ayatollah Kashani were sent to exile, the government rigged the election to the Sixteenth Majlis, strict censorship was imposed on the press and the constitution was amended so that the Shah could have more control over legislative and executive branches. All these measures were opposed by the opposition and by Mossadeq as the most outspoken leader of it.

The formation of the N.F. which followed a protest against the rigged election to the Majlis, strengthened the ties among the independent nationalists supporting Mossadeq. In February 1950 Mossadeq proposed the nationalization of the oil industry. Due to Mossadeq's tremendous popularity among the people (shown by holding impressive rallies throughout the country), the conservative Majlis was forced to pass the bill. But the reluctance or inability of the government to implement the nationalization of the oil
industry led to widespread anti-government and anti-British demonstrations. As a result Premier Ala resigned and the Majlis voted for the immediate implementation of the law. The Majlis also nominated Mossadeg for the premiership and he became prime minister at the end of April 1951.

During his tenure which lasted three years, Mossadeg continued his struggle against British domination over Iranian affairs. The 1953 coup ended Mossadeg's career as prime minister. He was sentenced to jail for three years followed by house arrest for the rest of his life. Although absent from public life, Mossadeg retained his influence on the liberal-minded nationalists who tried several times to revive the National Front in years to come. Mossadeg died in 1967, but his ideas and his struggle remained an inspiration to many of the Iranian political activists.

**Mossadeg's Ideas**

Mossadeg was very much attuned to the 1905-1911 Constitutional Revolution. The spirit of the Constitution of 1906 was the driving force throughout his entire life. Mossadeg was a liberal nationalist who strived for an independent and democratic Iran. In the Western liberal manner, Mossadeg believed in human dignity, in tolerance and a whole series of freedoms (such as freedom of press, of association, ...) derived from the belief in tolerance. In a speech to the 14th Majlis he declared: "... Each person
should be entitled to hold principles, should have his/her own ideas. Each human being should have his/her own personality, and should not bow down to force." (123)

However unlike the typical Western liberal, the individual was not the primary focus of Mossadeq's attention. As a major component of his value system, the ideal of well being for the community held great importance. Freedom and dignity for the society as a whole was his utmost goal. To the liberal Iranian, defense of the free community was a precondition of freedom for the individual. In an age of imperialism when the right to true independent statehood for many nations was either denied or very much in doubt, reference to individual freedom did not appear particularly relevant or at least urgent. Liberalism to be of any relevance in a country such as Iran (a semi-colony for many years controlled by foreign powers even for a good part of the 20th century) had to incorporate the idea of emancipation of Iran from foreign control. This was the context in which Mossadeq was a liberal nationalist or "Melli".

Mossadeq's ideas and values were also shaped by Islam. He defended Islamic traditions. He believed in Islam not as a series of dogmas, but as a series of norms and traditions, a secularized Islam which was the root of much of Iranian identity and Iranian culture. Speaking before the

(123) Mossadeq's speech to the 14th Majlis, Oct 8, 1945, published by Kousheh Bara-ye Pishbord-e Nehzat-e Melli-e Iran, p. 3.
5th Majlis, he declared: "... I am a Moslem ... and today again ... I have no choice but to express my opinion so I can defend the country, the ethnicity and the Islamic tradition.". (124)

Clearly his Islam was quite different from the Ayatollah Khomeini's. For Khomeini Islam is the fundamental basis and primary determinant of everything. God, through the prophet Mohammed and the holy book (Quran), has provided answers to all social, political, economic and cultural problems. To Khomeini, nationalism is an instrument, to be used to protect Islam and Islamic identity. For Khomeini the nation is not where the people's primary loyalty should lie. For Mossadeq on the other hand, the primary loyalty was to the nation state and Islam or any other religion was simply a tool to reinforce that primary loyalty. And it is only in this sense that one could speak of Mossadeq as a Moslem politician. Nevertheless, religion also was an element present in his value system. Brought up in a traditional and religious society, Mossadeq's world view was very much shaped by the general philosophy of life of that society.

Nonetheless, his love for Iran and Iranian identity did not prevent him from respecting some of the achievements of more modern societies. He believed in the necessity of change and evolution. Yet unlike many Iranian modernists

(124) Mossadeq's speech to the 5th Majlis, Nov. 29, 1915, op. cit.
whose admiration for Western societies was unquestioning and unlimited, Mossadeq was very discriminatory. In a speech opposing a bill which required the complete reorganization of the justice system by French officials, he said: "... I believe that if we have indigenous principles, (we should keep them). We should not weaken these principles simply because modernity requires it... especially since nowadays our modernity is without foundation:... we should not (based on such a fake modernity) destroy our country." (125) But then again he argued: "...I believe that we must remain Iranian... we must hold to our good things, (but we should also) adopt the good things of others. The only yardstick which enables us to distinguish good from bad is knowledge, therefore we should spread our knowledge." (126)

For Mossadeq change had to be evolutionary and acceptable to the people. Society through natural evolutionary processes coupled with guidance and education would not only accept but volunteer for change. To him no one had the right to force people to accept changes merely because some perceived them as good or necessary. This attitude explains part of Mossadeq's opposition to the many dictatorial measures undertaken in the name of modernity by Reza

(125) Mossadeq's speech to the 6th Majlis, June 8, 1917, op.cit..

(126) Mossadeq's speech to the 6th Majlis, Oct. 16, 1917, op. cit..
Shah and Mohammed Reza Shah.

Mossadeg's Programs

As a political activist for most of his life, Mossadeg tried to translate his ideas and values into achievable goals. He developed two major goals: firstly to make Iran a truly independent and sovereign country, free from foreign control and influence, and secondly to free the Iranian people from internal dictatorship and to eliminate the threat of despotism.

His strategy to achieve the first goal was based on his famous "negative balance" policy. This involved the abrogation of the old colonial concessions and opposition to any further concession. In a 1944 speech critical of the proposal to grant the right to control the northern Iranian oilfields to the Soviet Union, he said: "... All I have said is in the interest of the country and a government which supports "negative balance". To have political balance, if we follow positive balance policy we have to give (the Russians) the right to northern oil for ninety two years. ... giving such a concession is like asking a one handed person to cut off his other hand so that he can have balance." (127)

(127) Mossadeg's speech to the 14th Majlis, Nov. 27, 1944, op. cit. .
However, the central and most immediate part of Mossadeq's overall negative balance policy, at the time, was abrogation of the southern oil concessions given to the British at the turn of the century and the nationalization of the oil industry. The political importance of such a move was indeed great. The Anglo-Iranian Oil Company which controlled the oil industry was not merely an economic entity concerned with making profits. It functioned as a very powerful actor on behalf of the British government to protect the interests of the latter. Its political clout was protected by the many Anglophile Iranian politicians who had close ties with the British government. Therefore for Mossadeq and many other Iranian nationalists the political aspects of the nationalization of the oil industry were closely related to the independence of Iran and consequently of prime importance. Mossadeq outlined his position in a letter written to the oil committee in the Majlis: "For me the ethical aspects of the oil industry are more important than the economic aspects.... If the oil industry becomes nationalized, then there will no longer be a corporation able to interfere in our internal affairs in order to promote its own interests. It (A.I.O.C.) can no longer be allowed to replace the honest and patriotic people with corrupt personalities." (128)

Mossadeq and his supporters both within and outside the National Front launched an intense campaign to nationalize the oil industry. With public opinion on their side they were able to pass the bill through a conservative Majlis in March 1950. The British, however, were not ready to give up their interest. They reacted with force, first threatening Iran by sending a naval force to the Persian Gulf and then imposing an economic blockade on Iranian oil. This reaction reinforced the deeply rooted suspicion of Mossadeq and other nationalists towards British imperialist intentions, making any future compromise on the oil issue very unlikely.

To achieve his other major objective the creation and sustaining of a democratic regime, Mossadeq tried very hard to revive the Constitution of 1906. He believed that democracy would be best preserved through a parliament in which people could voice their ideas and put forward their demands. He also knew that free elections were a prerequisite for an independent and powerful Majlis. Not surprisingly then, when he realized that the elections for the 16th Majlis were rigged, he asked for a new election. To make this demand effective, he and 19 other leading Iranian personalities took sanctuary in the Shah's palace and as noted above, their cause was successful. With his demand for free elections came other demands directly related to
the basic freedoms supposedly guaranteed by the Constitution. As a Majlis representative, he was able to use the Majlis as a forum for dissent. He also wrote articles for newspapers and gave public speeches.

Again as a prime minister he made several attempts to achieve his second objective. He tried to curb the power of the Shah by taking the army out of his control and putting it under civilian control. He fought against the Court's meddling in politics and through parliamentary means, he succeeded in taking away most of the powers that the Shah had secured for himself during the last several years. Mossadeq's hope was that by taking these actions he would be able to force the Shah to reign and not to rule and therefore to decrease the threat of a monarchical dictatorship.

To provide a more democratic atmosphere he ordered the law enforcing agencies not to restrict the freedom of the press and freedom of expression even if he himself was to be the target of attack. He also introduced an electoral reform bill in the Majlis. In Iran, many powerful people, especially the landlords, manipulated the illiterates and peasant population during elections, forcing them through a combination of carrots and sticks to vote for the landlords' favorite candidates. Mossadeq's intention was to redraw the district boundaries in a manner that would allow
a separation between districts based on literacy and therefore to increase the representation of the more educated urban population. Mossadeq failed to gain passage of this reform bill. As a result the composition of the 17th Majlis was more or less conservative. Mossadeq nevertheless refused to interfere in the election of the 17th Majlis, and once again proved himself more a man of principle than a pragmatic politician.

Looking back at the two major objectives of Mossadeq one would realize that his overriding concerns were more of a political nature. For a long period of time, Mossadeq did not pay enough attention to socio-economic reforms. He himself later on admitted to the fact. On the second anniversary of his premiership, Mossadeq gave a speech in which he tried to explain his inaction regarding economic reform: "... Due to the struggle in the foreign front, I did not think that it would be wise to launch internal reforms which would cause great tension. (I did not want) to impose war on Iranian people on two fronts. That is why I tried as much as possible to maintain the status quo in internal affairs." (129)

Although it is true that most of Mossadeq's energy was spent on the dispute over the oil issue, he did have some positive economic programs, the most important of which was

But due to lack of financial means most of these plans were disrupted. This disruption cost Mossadeq dearly and contributed to his downfall.

OTHER LEADERS OF THE NATIONAL FRONT

There is no doubt that Mossadeq was the man who led and symbolized the democratic movement in general and the National Front in particular. But, there were some other men who although not as nearly as popular, charismatic or in some cases able and courageous as Mossadeq, nonetheless played a role in the rise and fall of the Melli Movement. The most important of these personalities were Khalil Maleki and Mozafar Baqai (the leaders of the Toilers Party), Allahyar Saleh (the leader of the Iran Party) and the Ayatollah Abolqasem Kashani (the leader of the Society of Moslem Warriors).

Khalil Maleki was born in a middle class family in Tabriz in 1901. His father was a merchant who participated in the Constitutional Revolution. Since his father and most of his relatives were involved in the revolution, Khalil as a child had first hand experience (as an observer) with the revolution. In 1928 he won a government sponsored scholarship and went to Germany to study chemistry. Accusing him of being a communist, the government cancelled his
his agricultural reform policy. Mossadeq's agricultural project, though not as grandiose as the Shah's land reform program in the 1960's, was certainly much more relevant to the specific socio-economic characteristics of the Iranian countryside. Mossadeq believed that land distribution would not solve the agricultural problem and would not benefit the peasantry, although as a long-run policy he was supportive of the idea. He argued that since Iranian agriculture depended on a costly irrigation system, the mere distribution of land would create more problems than solutions. Peasants being provided with small amounts of land would inevitably fall into the hands of loan sharks, who were much less sympathetic towards them, than the landlords who traditionally were obliged to fulfill some responsibility towards the peasants. Therefore Mossadeq introduced his agricultural plan known as the 20% Program. According to this policy the landlord was obliged to turn 20% of his profit back to the village. This profit would be equally divided into two parts. One part would be distributed among the peasantry and the other half would be given to the village council (not controlled by the landlord) for community improvements, for education, sanitation, health and irrigation purposes.

In addition to agricultural reform, Mossadeq had a few other programs concerning such areas as industry and educa-
aid and he came back home without having a chance to finish his dissertation.

European prosperity made Maleki and many other politically conscious students more aware of Iran's poverty and destitution. These young intellectuals came to the conclusion that there must be drastic socio-economic and political transformations in poor and semi-colonial countries such as Iran. But Western Europe, at the time, was experiencing a great depression which included a high degree of unemployment and an acute economic crisis. The grave economic situation, and its social implications, led these intellectuals to look for another model of development. For them the Soviet Union provided the alternative. Not aware of what was really going on in Soviet society at the time, but being impressed by the socialist revolution in Russia, they found themselves in great sympathy with the Russian Revolution and the model it offered. These young students, Maleki as one example, who were unable to perceive any other alternative, chose communism as the best of the two alternatives. The choice was particularly justifiable, because in the eyes of these students, the capitalist countries of the West had offered the poor part of the world nothing but colonial subjugation.

In Iran, Maleki joined the Tudeh Party soon after its formation in 1941. In January 1948, Maleki along with some
other Tudeh members left this party. According to the remaining Tudeh leadership, Maleki (labelled as "separatist") left the party because of personal rivalries, opportunism and intense individualism. But Maleki himself and later on his supporters gave a completely different explanation of the problems which led to the split in the Tudeh Party.

In an article called "Two Methods for One Objective", Maleki summarizes the reasons behind his differences with the Tudeh Party which made the split inevitable. His argument goes as follow: the primary loyalty of the Tudeh Party rests with International Communism led by the Soviet Union, and therefore the party has not only lost its own independence but also has sacrificed Iran's independence and well being. To sustain its independence, strength and effectiveness an Iranian communist party, Maleki continues, must rely primarily on the Iranian masses. The primary objective of such a party must be the victory of the socialist movement in Iran. It is a mistake to wait for the "socialist international victory", believing that it would inevitably bring victory to the Iranian socialist movement. Therefore according to this line of


reasoning Maleki left the Tudeh Party not because of personal ambitions and desire for power but because of fundamental differences in principles, world view and goals.

Disillusioned with the Soviet Union and the Tudeh Party Maleki reevaluated his views and came to the conclusion that an Iranian problem needed an Iranian solution. To him that solution was personified in Mossadeq. For Maleki, Mossadeq as the leader of Iranian democracy and the anti-imperialist movement deserved the support of those who hoped for Iranian independence and democracy. As a result, Maleki along with Baqai decided to form the Toilers Party and join the National Front. Maleki as a knowledgeable theoretician and Baqai as a very able organizer and mobilizer made this party an important component of the National Front. But for the reasons which will be explained later, Baqai left the National front and that resulted in a split within the Toilers Party. Maleki and his followers who stayed in the N.F. called themselves "the Toilers Party: the Third Force", or in short "the Third Force".

But soon after the 1953 coup d'etat Maleki was arrested, sent to jail and his party went underground. While he was in jail, some prominent members of the Third Force started questioning his leadership and accused him first of mistaken tactics and later of treason. The dispute soon spread to the rank and file and in the course of a few months, the Third Force disintegrated.
Upon his freedom from prison, Maleki once again started his political activity and he along with his supporters organized a group called The Socialist Society of the National Movement of Iran. When the limited liberalization of 1961 permitted the formation of the Second National Front, the Socialist Society decided to join it. But since the leadership of the Front was under heavy influence of those who several years before accused Maleki of treason, the Front refused to admit him and his supporters to join the Second N.F.. However, in 1965 Maleki and the Socialist Society participated in the formation of the third national Front. But then, the era of limited liberalization was over and within a couple of months all the leaders of the Third National Front were arrested and the Front itself was outlawed. Maleki was put in jail for another year and a half and died two and a half years later in the summer of 1969.

Maleki was not a politician. He was not a great orator, mobilizer or organizer. His importance rested on his ideas. He was a thinker and a theoretician. If in the minds of most Iranians, Mossadeq symbolized the Iranian Nationalist Movement, in the eyes of his supporters (mainly young secularized intellectuals) Maleki symbolized Iranian socialism.

Maleki founded the basis of a theory which he called the "Third Force" theory. In its most general sense this theory divides the world into three blocs; the Western bloc (the
capitalist industrial countries), the Eastern bloc (the communist industrial countries) and the countries which are now referred to as the Third World. The Third World consists of those Asian, African and European nations which through helping each other and also through taking advantage of the great power rivalries are trying to keep their own national and social identity. (132)

Within the Western bloc, Maleki argues, there are tendencies which would disrupt its apparent unity and ultimately, due to many internal and international issues, would separate Western Europe from the United States. These tendencies are what Maleki refers to as the European Third Force in its general sense. The same phenomenon exists in the Eastern bloc and the experience of Yugoslavia is a proof of it.

In addition to the Third Force in its general sense, there exist tendencies which Maleki refers to as the Third Force in its particular sense. The Third Force in its particular sense in Europe calls for a socialist approach. This approach is based on the particular characteristics of European civilization and is relevant to the problems and contradictions caused by capitalism. "The European socialist and communist parties independent of Moscow, especially

(132) Niruy-e Seyvum Pirouz Nishavad, (The Third Force Will Win), a publication by the Publication Committee of the Toilers Party of the Iranian Nation, no.4, dec. 1951.
their left wings, represent the European Third Force in its particular form". (133)

In the colonial and semi-colonial part of the world, again we witness Third Forces in operation. In its general form, the Third Force manifests itself in all national and anti-colonial or anti-imperialist movements. These movements fight against two other internal forces; one being the ruling elite which consciously or unconsciously protects and sustain the interests of Western imperialism, the other the Soviet dependent communist parties which then again consciously or unconsciously promote the Soviet interests.

The Third Force in its particular form in the poor countries is not only involved in the anti-imperialist struggle, but is also in favor of social transformation. This force not only supports political independence but also believes in certain socialist principles. It advocates a particular approach (based on indigenous characteristics) for solving the socio-economic problems which the society is confronted with.

For Maleki, Mossadeq and the National Movement represented the Iranian Third Force in its general sense. The leftist tendency within the National Front symbolized mainly by Maleki's Third Force Party was what one could consider as the Iranian Third Force in its particular sense. "

... The left wing of the National Front, meaning the Third Force in its particular sense consists of groups, individuals or political parties which are the true representative of the have-not classes. These groups have progressive social programs and strive to organize the underprivileged classes."(134)

The most important social program advocated by Maleki concerned the countryside and the peasantry. Maleki argued that considering the specific Iranian agricultural problems the best solution would be to nationalize (melli kordan) land and water. By nationalization what he meant was the transferrence of land ownership from the landlords to the community of peasants. Land and water would become communal property. The village would remain the social unit of production, and although the most important problem of agriculture meaning the problem of ownership would be solved, drastic changes which would entail a tremendous amount of hardship would not happen.

Maleki's agricultural program if implemented was an alternative to the land distribution of the 1960's which overall proved to be a failure. Maleki's social programs were never seriously considered by the people in power. He himself lacking the ambition (or ability) and the necessary network of connections (most of the other N.F. leaders had

better access to Mossadeq), could not push for these programs. Feeling politically isolated, he basically limited his activities to running, supervising and writing for the theoretical publications of the Toilers Party.

Baqai

Mozafar Baqai was born in Kerman (a southeastern province) in 1908. His father, Mirza Shahab Kermani, was a nationalist who was killed during the constitutional revolution. After receiving his high school diploma in Tehran, Baqai went to France to continue his education. He obtained his Ph.D. in philosophy and pedagogy from the Sorbonne in Paris. In 1936 he was employed by the University of Tehran to teach philosophy and in 1947 he was elected to the 15th Majlis, a position which he held also in the 16th and 17th Majlis. Supporting Mossadeq in the 16th Majlis, he fiercely opposed the government's supplementary oil agreement with the Anglo Iranian oil Company. An outspoken and able orator, he used the Majlis forum to attack the army and its then Chief of Staff, General Ali Razmara. He also published a daily paper Shahed (Witness) through which he carried his campaign to the public and acquired popularity and support. Due to his provocation against the army he was accused of conspiracy and was arrested in December 1949, and was sentenced to serve a year in jail. But as a result of public pressure he was released within a month. It was around this
period that Baqai, step by step, became one of the most prominent personalities of the national movement, second only to Mossadeq, without owing his reputation to the latter. His independent reputation to some extent explains the final rupture between the two men.

In mid 1951, Baqai and Maleki formed the Toilers Party and the party joined the N.F.. The leaders of the party agreed on several points. These points became the basis for the party platform. They asked for a return to constitutional monarchy in which the Shah would reign and not rule. They attacked imperialism in all forms including not only Western imperialism but also Soviet expansionism. And ultimately with regard to the internal social issues they advocated programs that would reduce the gap between the upper and lower classes.(135)

Baqai and Maleki indeed complemented each other. While Maleki was a socialist theoretician, thinker and a writer, Baqai was an able political leader (very flexible in his ideology), an impressive orator and a good mobilizer. Then again while Maleki's support came mainly from the young secularized intellectuals and university students, Baqai was supported mainly by Kerman and Tehran Bazaaris. If Baqai had not decided to leave the N.F., the combination of these two talents would have been a great asset to the national movement and might have affected the outcome of

the 1953 events. But the alliance between the two was a short lived one, and in October 1952 the split within the Toilers Party became official.

Very soon after, Bagai left the N.F. and withdrew his support from Mossadeq. Part of the reason for his withdrawal of support was due to personality conflict between the two men. Bagai was a strong minded, very ambitious man (he even divorced his wife because he believed that politicians could operate better as bachelors) who considered himself as Mossadeq's heir apparent. Mossadeq on the other hand was a strong and stubborn man who often times ignored the demands or suggestions of others which resulted in resentment on the part of the latter (including Bagai) towards him. In addition to this personality conflict or rivalry, Bagai disagreed with some of Mossadeq's policies and methods. As an anti-communist and anti-Tudeh he accused Mossadeq of becoming too close to the Tudeh Party. His newspaper Shahed very soon became an opposition journal. Shahed mercilessly attacked Mossadeq accusing him of: flirting with the Tudeh Party; not seriously challenging British influence at home; and ignoring the pressing socio-economic issues at home.(136) Baqai's split with Mossadeq proved to be a serious blow to the former's popularity, a blow from which he never recovered. Nonetheless this split hurt the N.F. and Mossadeq as well. Mossadeq lost a political lead-

er who could mobilize an important section of the population in support for the movement. With this split the First National Front got one step closer to its ultimate defeat.

**Saleh**

Allahyar Saleh, the founder of the Iran Party, was born in Kashan in 1897. His father was a landowner who was known for his liberal ideas. Saleh received his education at the American College in Tehran. His first job was that of interpreter at the U.S. legation in Tehran from 1918 to 1927. From 1927 until his election to the 16th Majlis in 1950, he was appointed to several governmental positions including five cabinet posts. He founded the Iran Party in 1946. In 1946 Saleh and his party entered into an alliance with the Tudeh Party. But soon after, partly due to the Azarbijan incident,(137) its leadership became disillusioned with the Tudeh Party and terminated the alliance. Saleh and his party joined the N.F. soon after its formation in 1949. In October 1951, Saleh accompanied Mossadeq to the United Nations where Mossadeq pleaded the Iranian case, on the oil issue, before the Security Council. He was also the counselor to the Iranian Mission before the Inter-

(137) In 1945, the Democratic Party of Azarbijan (supported by the Soviet Union) declared the independence of Azarbijan (a northern province of Iran). The Tudeh Party did not condemn the act, and went along with the Soviet policy line. The Tudeh Party attitude created resentment on the part of the nationalists towards the Tudeh Party.
national Court of Justice in The Hague which voted in favor of Iran on the issue.

In 1952 he was appointed ambassador to the United States where he remained until the 1953 coup. When the Mossadeg government was toppled, Saleh resigned his post and returned to Iran. His political career began to wane, and the Iran Party disintegrated. He remained virtually inactive for several years. Then, in 1957 he surprised many of his old colleagues by publicly supporting the Eisenhower Doctrine. On behalf of what remained of the Iran Party he pledged to join the fight against communism and to uphold the Baghdad Pact. In 1960, he participated in the formation of the second N.F. He was also elected once more to the Majlis where he represented Kashan. In the meantime a rumor began to circulate that the Shah was considering Saleh for the premiership as a sign of national reconciliation, but nothing came of it. In 1964, the High Council of the second N.F. including Saleh resigned, and by then Saleh's political career was over.

According to all Iranian political activists (both friends and foes) Saleh was an extremely honest man. His devotion to moral principles manifested itself quite clearly during the March 1952 election for the 17th Majlis. As Mossadeg's minister of the interior, he vehemently opposed calls for the cancellation of the election, which was obviously running against the N.F. candidates.
Saleh was an anti-communist, a social democrat and a constitutionalist. Like most of the other National Front leaders he had no specific socio-economic program. Clearly a nationalist, he nevertheless perceived the world as being divided among the big powers. In such a context, he concluded that there was no chance for the survival of small, powerless countries such as Iran unless they sought the support of one of the big powers. His support for the Eisenhower Doctrine and the Baghdad (Cento) Pact derived from his perception of the U.S. as the lesser of two evils.

Although the head of a potentially important political party within the National Front, he was a weak political leader. He lacked the drive and ambition of Baqai, the persistence and charisma of Mossadeg and the shrewdness necessary to successful politicians. He remained politically conservative, always adhering strictly to law, avoided taking risks when necessary and tended to react rather than assume active roles.

Kashani

Ayatollah Abolgasem Kashani was one of the most prominent religious leaders in Iran. His world view can be traced to Jamal-al-Din Afgani, a famous religious leader of the late 19th century. Afgani, though a supporter of pan Islamism (by some accounts the very founder of the idea), was aware of the differences among Islamic nations. To him
secular nationalism was an instrument which could free the Islamic nations from the colonial yoke. Once freed from Western control, secular nationalism would be replaced by Islam with Islamic laws providing the basis for a unified state. Kashani also saw secular nationalism of the Mossadeq brand as a useful weapon to fight Western influence, especially British imperialism.

Kashani's dislike of British influence was based not only on some abstract ideological or religious belief, but on his own personal experiences: the mistreatment of his father by the British and his own British-imposed exile after WWI. These personal experiences led to Kashani's politicization, and when the nationalist movement reached its peak in 1950 he joined Mossadeq and the N.F.. This alliance proved to be a successful one as long as the movement concentrated its efforts on eliminating British influence through the nationalization of the oil industry. Once the nationalization of oil was accomplished, contradictions between Kashani and Mossadeq started to manifest themselves. Part of their disagreement stemmed from their different ideological views. Mossadeq was a secular nationalist who opposed the idea of an Islamic state based on Islamic laws (Sharia). Kashani was a religious leader who believed that Islamic laws should be applied to all spheres of life including the administration of Justice and the
functioning of government. But in addition to the ideologi­
cal differences, personal and personality clashes between
the two men were to some extent responsible for the final
break between them. Mossadeg lacked the flexibility of a
statesman. He would not compromise where he should have,
and according to many secular Mossadeqists, Mossadeg hurt
Kashani’s pride by not taking him seriously on many occa­
sions. On the other hand, Kashani, on his part, often put
unreasonable demands on Mossadeg, some of which required
the breaking of rules and laws. Kashani was not only a
religious figure but also a political man. His Islamic
principles hid strong personal ambitions. And once he found
Mossadeg to be a barrier, preventing him from realizing his
ambitions, Kashani decided to break openly with him, ally­
ing himself with the court and the conservative forces in
January 1953.

Kashani’s break with Mossadeg hurt the National Front
more than did Bagai’s. As a prominent religious figure,
Kashani had a great deal of support among the lower middle
class, and had brought out a large bloc of street support
for the National Front. While splitting from the National
Front did not help defectors such as Kashani, Bagai and
Makki(138) to realize their ambitions (it actually hurt
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(138) Hossein Makki was another National Front leader who
broke with Mossadeg in 1952. Makki like Kashani and
Bagai enjoyed support from the Bazaar and had a cer­
tain ability to mobilize people and bring them out to
the streets.
them) it certainly hurt Mossadeq and the National Front too. It changed the balance of power between the nationalists and the conservative forces. The timid conservative faction within the 17th Majlis which until then had supported Mossadeq (less out of conviction than from opportunism) found three powerful new allies, who were now willing to mobilize their forces against Mossadeq. With the defection of these three men, the 17th Majlis, potentially anti-Mossadeq and anti-Melli, had the opportunity to show its true nature. As a result, in 1953, the Majlis (the only institution which Mossadeq could have used against the court and the army), became a liability to him. The Majlis blocked all the measures through which Mossadeq intended to control the military and to consolidate his rule.

Although many other National Front leaders remained loyal to Mossadeq until the end, none of them played any major role in this period. None of the other leaders had the popularity, leverage and ability necessary to neutralize the defection of powerful people such as Kashani and Baqai. There was, however, one other National Front personality who became an important symbol for the nationalist movement. This man was Dr. Hossein Fatemi, the most famous martyr of the nationalist struggle in the 1949-53 period. Fatemi was one of the youngest of the National Front leaders. His firm stand against British control and court cor-
ruption, his fiery, emotional and provocative speeches cre­
ated so much concern and animosity in the royal family and
the British government, that he became the only National
Front leader sentenced to death after the 1953 coup.

Fatemi's fate made him a martyr: a symbol of courage.
His execution provided the nationalist movement with an
asset which, along with the memories of Mossadeg's strug­
gle, was to inspire the younger generation of political
activists in later years.

THE NATIONAL FRONT AS AN ORGANIZATION

The National Front was the organizational expression of
the Melli Movement. It was not a political party, but an
umbrella organization. It consisted of a loose coalition
of individuals (the founders), groups and parties, which
shared two common goals: (1) abolition of the internal dic­
tatorship; and (2) the achievement of Iranian independence
through the elimination of foreign control and influence
over Iranian affairs.

The major political parties and groupings within the
N.F. were the Toilers Party, the Iran Party, the Pan Iran­
ist Party and a loosely structured group called "The Socie­
ty of Moslem Warriors".
The Toilers Party

The Toilers Party was formed in 1950 by Bagai and Maleki. It represented the left on the National Front spectrum. Its slogans were anti-communist yet socialist. It sought the support of strong labor unions, especially the oil workers. Nevertheless it developed strong connections with the Bazaar (through Bagai's personal ties with Bazaaris who were influential with the Tehran mob), university students and some civil servants who were attracted to Maleki's ideology.

Because of the differing talents of Maleki and Bagai there was a clear division of labor between the two. While Bagai and his followers were in charge of political activities, both parliamentary and non-parliamentary, Maleki and his supporters handled organizational, educational and ideological tasks. This division of labor was also manifested in the publications of the Toilers Party. Shahed, published daily and remaining under the supervision of Bagai, became the political organ of the party. But the two other major publications (the weekly, Niruy-e Sevvum (Third Force) and the monthly, Elm va Zendegi (Science and Life)) along with a series of educational books, were supervised and written by Maleki and his followers.

The total membership of the party is a matter of controversy. Bagai himself claimed that the Toilers Party had ten
thousand formal members (who paid fees) only in Tehran, and
one million supporters around the country. But others
estimated the formal membership at only five thousand.

According to party leaders, their platform was based on
scientific socialism. They saw the party as ideologically
to the left of the Fabians, close to the French Syndicalists. Yet they saw the role of the central government quite
differently from the Syndicalists. The Toilers Party did
not advocate the abolition of the central government, and
actually declared its support for the Mossadegh government
and for the establishment of a genuine constitutional mon-
archy.

But as mentioned above, the party had no substantial
support among industrial workers or trade organizations. There were no workers in the inner core of the party. This
problem manifested itself particularly with regard to the
most organized workers in Iran, the oil workers of Khuzes-
tan a southwestern province of Iran. In fact, if any party
had any influence with the refinery workers of the South,
it was undoubtedly the Tudeh Party.

The failure of the Toilers Party to attract support from
workers and labor unions was a result of the above men-
tioned division of labor in the party, particularly the

(139) Based on Asnad-e Laneh-e Jasousi (The Spy Nest Docu-
ments), #23, p. 136.
(140) Ervand Abrahamian, op. cit. p. 257.
objectives and methods of Baqai who was in charge of political activities. As a very ambitious man, Baqai's priorities were less to build a solid political party with a clear and well planned program which in the long run could survive him than to acquire personal power in a very volatile situation. For him the party was a vehicle through which he could reach his personal goals. In practice, most of his efforts were directed towards seeking the cooperation of those influential people (mostly in Tehran) who could help him bring people into the streets.

On the other hand, Maleki, whose ideology vacillated less than Baqai's, and who had a clear picture of what a solid party should look like, did not enjoy Baqai's political appeal. His talent as a theoretician and a thinker, appealed more to the educated young intellectuals than to the ordinary worker. These factors coupled with the existence of a powerful rival party (the Tudeh) which remained influential with the industrial workers, explain the failure of the Toilers Party as a labor party.

After the Toilers Party's split and the subsequent formation of the Third Force in September 1952, Maleki tried to organize the latter in a more formal manner. As an ex-Tudeh member, Maleki patterned the Third Force closely after the Tudeh Party. The Third Force was now a more structured party, consisting of front organizations, direct
action groups (in charge of mobilizing people for street demonstrations), a youth organization and a women's organization. At the top of the party hierarchy was an executive board, members of which were elected by the Central Committee. The most basic unit of the party was the party cell which met regularly and discussed political and theoretical issues. The party also ran a school to teach some of its members to become professional cadre for the party.

Most of the members of the party were students and civil servants who responded to Maleki's call for a non-communist approach to change and reform. The party, however, remained a party of intellectuals. The post-1953 repression denied the party to develop into a viable party.

The Iran Party

In 1943, the Iran Party was formed from a group called the Iran Engineers Association which was founded in 1942. The initial purpose of this association, which was composed of young foreign educated intellectuals, was to break traditional barriers in order to achieve positions of greater authority for its members. By changing its name to Iran Party, the Engineers Association was able to broaden its recruitment, becoming open to non-engineers. The new members were mostly lawyers, law professors and professional governmental employees.
Attempting to appear more as a political party than a narrow interest group, the Iran Party also broadened its programs. It advocated land distribution, economic modernization, democratic government based on majority rule and the creation of a "just" society. Social justice was vaguely defined as the elimination of conflict between rich and poor through the creation of a uniformly middle class society, complete equality among citizens, and full rights for women and minorities. Yet its energy and its activities tended to be directed primarily towards administrative reform.

The alleged socialism of the Iran Party was more akin to that of the Fabian Society than to scientific socialism a la Marx. Its appeal was a moral appeal, and its demand for change was one of gradual change. The party was also a strong advocate of national independence from both British and Soviet control. The nationalistic character of the party was responsible for its conflicts with the Tudeh Party (its partner in a coalition between 1946-48), especially over the Azarbijan issue. In 1949, the party joined the National Front, supporting Mossadeq in the battle to nationalize the oil industry.

The party was organized more as a pressure group than a modern political party. In 1949, the official membership of the party was estimated at one thousand, with support com-
ing mostly from Tehran and two other major cities; Isfahan and Rasht. The party had no mass following and its meetings were mostly limited to the social gathering of its leadership. Despite a general policy outline, the party concentrated its efforts on the issue of administrative reforms. The party never seriously attempted to mobilize the populace. Its political activities were mainly confined to seeking the cooperation of individual leaders in traditional style and not to building a mass base. According to its critics, the Iran party never developed into more than a political club.

In 1952 the Iran Party split. Some of the younger members who disagreed with the strategies and tactics of older, more established leaders, considering this latter group as unduly conservative, broke with the Iran Party to found the Mardom Iran party. The Mardom Iran Party was led by men like Mohammed Nakhshab and Hossein Razi who believed in a mixed philosophy of Islam and socialism and who called themselves Socialistay-e Khoda Parast (God-loving Socialists). While it was never to achieve the status of an important party, the Mardom Iran Party damaged the prospects of the Iran Party by drawing off large numbers of the latter's young activists.
The Pan Iranist Party

The origin of the Pan Iranist Party was in the activities of an officer called Jahansouz who along with forty-five other men had been arrested for organizing a "fascist plot" against Reza Shah. While Jahansouz and ten of his accomplices were subsequently executed, his activities sparked the creation of several small parties devoted to Pan Iranism. Among these parties were the Sumka party, the Arya Party and the Pan Iranist Party.

The Pan Iranist Party was extremely nationalist and exhibited pseudo-fascist tendencies. The pro-Hitler sentiments of the party were evident in its publications and its meetings, in which Hitler's writings, and Nazi publications in general, were discussed and disseminated. The party was anti-Semitic, anti-communist and anti-capitalist. Its slogans focused on the idea of the returning of lands which had belonged to Iran, before being taken by the Russians and British in the 19th Century.

In 1949, the party was led by Muhsin Pezeshgpar and Dariush Foruhar. Its membership never exceeded several hundred, the majority of whom were high school students. Its main activities were street battles with the Tudeh Party. When the nationalist movement gained momentum, the party joined the National Front. But as it became clear that the court and Mossadeq belonged in two different camps, the Pan
Iranist Party split. The faction led by Pezeshgpur sided with the Shah while the other faction led by Foruhar remained loyal to Mossadegh, calling itself the Party of the Iranian Nation. In the course of its evolution this new party became less and less chauvinistic. Nevertheless, as with most other parties, it never became a mass organization with a solid structure. The Party of the Iranian Nation remained something of a political band most adept at fighting battles in the streets.

The Society of Moslem Warriors

The Society of Moslem Warriors was not a political party. It was a loosely structured group led by Ayatollah Kashani and some religiously minded wealthy Bazaaris. It was a nationalist (or anti-Western influence) and anti-secular organization which advocated the return of Sharia as the law of the land. In addition to its followers among religious students, the Society had lay supporters. These supporters believed that the ills of Iranian society would be cured if religion were to become the basis of socio-political and cultural decisions. Its anti-imperialist activity targeted the social and cultural aspects of Western influence (such as women's rights and availability of alcohol) more than its economic impact.

As with so many other groups or parties in Iran, the Society of Moslem Warriors formed to strengthen the posi-
tion of a prominent personality, in this case Kashani. The Society supported Mossadeg only as long as Kashani was willing to support him. As an organization, the Society of Moslem Warriors was very small and insignificant. But as a group which included Kashani and some prominent and influential Bazaaris it was very instrumental in mobilizing the population. And this capacity to mobilize, which once aided Mossadeg, ultimately hurt both him and the nationalist movement when Kashani withdrew his support from the National Front.

THE FALL OF THE MELLI MOVEMENT

The 1953 coup d'état put an end to another phase of the popular nationalist movement in Iran. It crushed hopes for an independent and democratic Iran and paved the way for the emergence of Mohammed Reza Shah's dictatorial rule. Although the rise and fall of Mossadeg's Melli Movement closed an important chapter in Iranian history, it opened a new chapter for students of Iranian politics. Why did Mossadeg fail? Was the failure of the movement inevitable? In other words are the causes of its failure to be found outside the movement, or in its internal characteristics?

The most common interpretation of the failure of the Melli Movement focuses almost exclusively on the role of the foreign powers and their domestic collaborators. This
interpretation suggests that it was the active role of the U.S. and the United Kingdom, the passive acquiescence or at least indifference of the Soviet Union (which manifested itself in the Tudeh Party's inaction on the day of the coup) along with the active participation of the army officers and the court which brought about the fall of the Mossadegh government and the defeat of the Melli Movement. Implicit in this line of reasoning is the inevitability of the failure. In other words, no matter what the leadership or organizational characteristics of the National Front, nor what program it offered, the movement was doomed to failure. Such an approach is based on the assumption (itself a product of a particular perception) that the forces of imperialism are so strong as to be omnipotent. This would imply that the world is so rigidly structured as to leave no room for any genuinely anti-imperialist, nationalistic movement to succeed, in which case it would serve no purpose to focus on the characteristics and dynamics of the movement.

It is true that the Melli Movement in Iran faced great external odds. The big powers did exert a great amount of influence in shaping the events which led to the defeat of Mossadegh's movement. There is no doubt that the C.I.A. monitored and financed the coup and the Iranian army saw to the success of the coup. But it is equally true that Mossa-
deg and the National Front were partly responsible for the defeat of their own movement. To blame imperialism and the world structure alone denies the relevant facts. It is ahistorical to ignore the specific context (including some of the important characteristics of the movement) in which the failure became "inevitable" (in the sense that it happened).

If one assumes that defeat was not inevitable from the outset, then the question must be how could the National Front and its leadership have ensured the long term victory of the movement. In other words, what should the National Front and its leadership have done that they did not do, and what did they do, that they should not have done. In short, where do their weaknesses and mistakes lie?

In a very general sense the success of a political movement in power depends on three factors: its ability to introduce constructive and relevant programs which can solve the most urgent socio-economic and political problems of the society; its ability to come up with suitable organizations to mobilize support for its programs and their implementation; and an effective leadership which can harmonize, supervise and guide the movement.

If we look at the Melli Movement in Iran it is clear that it failed in each of these areas. In terms of constructive programs, the National Front had very little to
Mossadeq's programs were captured in three political slogans: free elections, a free Majlis and an independent Iran. But he lacked any substantial positive program of socio-economic reform (except the 20% Program) to attack any of the major socio-economic problems of Iranian society. His energy was consumed totally by his fight against British imperialism, and in the process he failed to pay enough attention to internal socio-economic issues. Yet even if he had put forward serious positive programs, it would have been almost impossible to implement them before a settlement of the oil issue had been reached.

During Mossadeq's tenure, Iran's economy was far from stable. Secession of oil revenues due to the British blockade, the U.S. refusal to give aid to Mossadeq's government and the economic decline put his government in a very precarious position. The budget deficit was so high that the government was forced to borrow from the people, print money and postpone the payment of salaries to its employees. The economy was short of capital. And the only way that any important project could have been carried out depended upon the resumption of oil production, something that Mossadeq could have done but decided against. Hence, the main source of government finances and of foreign exchange essential for reforms never materialized.
Mossadeq rejected (on reasonable grounds) the first proposal put forward by the British in 1951. Unaware of the political significance of the oil issue for Iranians, the British proposal was not only unattractive in economic terms but with its insistence that the general manager of the Iranian oil operation be British, was almost impossible for Mossadeq to accept. Agreeing to a British general manager would have been against all the principles for which Mossadeq had fought.

But in 1952, the World Bank came up with another proposal which, if it had been accepted by Mossadeq, would have been the first step toward a sensible settlement. According to this proposal, oil production would have been resumed, with the oil being distributed by the Bank which would have held the revenues until a satisfactory settlement was reached. The importance of this proposal was that it would have resolved the sensitive political issue of the appointment of a British general manager. Mossadeq rejected the proposal. A liberal nationalist leader gave his own explanation concerning Mossadeq's refusal to accept the World Bank proposal. He said: "Probably an important reason was Mossadeq's fear of being accused as a traitor to his own cause. The Tudeh Party at the time was viciously attacking Mossadeq, accusing him of collaborating with the U.S.. Reaching an agreement with the World Bank would have inten-
sified the Tudeh's attack on him. Mossadeq, principled as he was, could not have born this attack particularly, if he believed that the public might have been persuaded by the Tudeh." (141) Whatever his reasons, the continuing dispute cost the Iranian economy and the government itself very dearly.

The worsening of the economic situation certainly affected Mossadeq's popularity. People might accept economic hardship if they have diffuse support for a popular government. But no government and no popular leader is likely to enjoy that support for a long period of time, if people perceive no prospects for improvement. This was the experience of Mossadeq's government. Mossadeq's popularity dropped between the first and last years of his premiership. The number of people who gave their active support to Mossadeq in 1951 (by turning out to the pro-government street demonstrations) was substantially greater than in 1953. On August 19, 1953 the streets of Tehran were almost empty of Mossadeq's supporters. Of course this did not mean that Mossadeq had lost all his charisma and popularity. The point is that the active support of the populace (but not necessarily their sympathy) which, in the absence of a well structured organization, was the most important asset at Mossadeq's disposal faded as a result of the people's disillusionment with the government's ability to solve crucial

(141) Personal interview, Paris, Summer 1983.
The Melli Movement also suffered from the lack of a suitable organization. On a theoretical level, one could argue that an umbrella organization consisting of different groupings with diverse ideologies is most effective when it focuses its efforts on a negative program such as destruction of a common enemy. However, when it comes to formulating positive programs such an organization can easily lose its effectiveness in terms of agreeing on a common set of goals and tactics. The National Front was such an organization. But in addition to this general problem, the National Front suffered from some further organizational deficiencies internal to its member organizations. As discussed above, most of the political parties and groups within the National Front were more like political clubs, with no discipline and no clearly defined structure. They were predominantly vehicles for the fulfillment of the personal ambitions of their various leaders.

Mossadegh himself did not benefit from an organizational arm which could systematically connect him to his supporters. Mossadegh's links to the people were direct and one-sided: he appealed to the people and they responded. There was no regular and sustaining link between the leadership and the people. Mossadegh himself did not appear to believe in organizations such as political parties which could
translate potential support into actual and active support in a systematic and regular manner. The events of mid 1953 clearly demonstrated that disorganized public support could not compete with the combined forces of two foreign powers, their internal conservative allies and the army.

The Melli Movement also suffered from concentrating power in the hands of one man. Most of the other leaders of the National Front were almost totally dependent on Mossadeg for their positions. Once they had decided to oppose him, even men such as Kashani or Baqai, whose popularity were to a great extent independent of their ties to Mossadeg, suffered a decline from which they never recovered. Other leaders who remained loyal to Mossadeg until the end were mostly honest men, but conservative (bordering on timidity) in their political style. They basically owed both their reputation and their positions to their association with Mossadeg. Compared with the colorful charisma of Mossadeg their political popularity was at best pallid. Neither did the other leaders have much influence in decision making. It would not be a gross exaggeration to consider Mossadeg as the sole decision maker of the National Front. To understand the National Front leadership qualities we need, then, to focus on that of Mossadeg.

The world we are living in is much more complex than the one we perhaps would like to live in. So many things happen
that from a logical, rational and many times moral perspective make little sense. But the simple fact that they happen requires one to come to grips with them, try to understand them and adjust one's tactics in order to acquire some flexibility in response. Having noble principles and goals and striving to achieve them were what made Mossadeq so popular. It was his reputation as a principled man with a firm stand on issues such as Iranian independence and democracy which brought about his victory and the rise of the Melli Movement. But once in power, his tactical inflexibility which resulted from his strong adherence to democratic nationalist principles paradoxically jeopardized the permanent realization of those very same principles.

One does not have to be a Machiavellian to believe that tactical flexibility may be necessary to achieve a goal. Pragmatism does not necessarily imply compromising principles or opportunism. After all an imperfect world such as ours in many cases offers us nothing but evil choices. It is then that the art of leadership (choosing the least evil) comes to play an important role. An able leader has to be not only a person of principle but also a practical statesman.

Although a very fine line may divide a pragmatic act from an opportunistic one, an understanding of the context within which the act has taken place may help us to distin-
guish between the two. In the Iranian political context between 1950 and 1953, Mossadeq refused to take some actions which appeared to contradict his principles. Yet these actions were necessary to guarantee the long-term success of the Melli Movement, and by not taking them, Mossadeq lost a rare opportunity to nurture the growth of a budding democratic movement.

Mossadeq could have strengthened his regime and the Melli Movement if he had accepted the World Bank oil proposal. Accepting the proposal would have been a sign not of opportunism but of pragmatism. In addition to the issue of the oil settlement, Mossadeq made several other tactical mistakes. His strict adherence to legality and liberal values (for a good part of his premiership) ultimately cost both himself and the Iranian people a great deal.

One example concerned the election for the 17th Majlis. Historically in Iran the majority of eligible voters who were not politically aware tended to cast their vote for the candidate of the landlord or local notable or whoever had the power and influence over them. And although the politically articulate section of the population supported Mossadeq in this election, their numerical inferiority sealed the fate of the 17th Majlis. The principled Mossadeq refused to interfere in the election, while the pro-Shah army was able to interfere in the electoral process in some
districts considered as military zones. By the middle of the election, it was clear that the conservative forces were winning by manipulating the electoral process. Mossadeq's response was not to mount a counter-offensive but to take defensive measures. Instead of turning the tide by interfering in the rest of the election himself, he decided to discontinue the election and open the Majlis with only 69 elected deputies, most of whom ultimately decided to side against him. By refusing to manipulate the Majlis election, believing that it should be free, Mossadeq lost the support of the only organ of the state on which he could have counted. He certainly did not have the support of the army, and in the absence of any viable organization which could have acted as a rallying point, the support of the Majlis was instrumental for the long-term survival of the Melli movement.

Another example of short-sighted tactics were Mossadeq's decisions regarding those involved in subversive activities against both his government and his own person. Three days before the successful coup d'etat of August 19, 1953, there was another coup attempt. The plot was to have Mossadeq dismissed by royal decree and to replace him with General Fazlollah Zahedi who had previously threatened to overthrow Mossadeq. The plot was discovered, and the government neu-

(142) For a more detailed account of the 17th Majlis election see Cottam, op. cit., pp. 274-277.
tralized the coup. The failure of the coup attempt created excitement and euphoria among many people. There were calls for the punishment of the plotters and the abolition of the monarchy. But Mossadeq refused to arrest many of the army officers who had openly declared their intention to overthrow him long before August 16, 1953, since to have done so would have been considered illegal. General Zahedi subsequently carried out the successful coup on August 19. Although probably the most important, this experience was only one of several examples of such inaction. Mossadeq never seriously challenged the internal reactionary and conservative forces.

Although it would be simplistic to blame exclusively the liberal bourgeois mentality and background of Mossadeq (as most Iranian leftists do) without taking into account the external realities and limitations that Mossadeq and the movement as a whole were confronted with, the fact remains that Mossadeq did indeed misperceive the external world, and, as a result, missed some crucial opportunities which were presented to him. He underestimated his own power and popularity, he remained too legalistic in his approach towards his enemies (who themselves resorted frequently to illegal means) and, as a result, failed to neutralize them. In sum, Mossadeq's inflexibility as a leader prevented him from giving the proper guidance crucial for the long-term victory of his movement.
The fall of Mossadeq's Melli Movement was thus the result of two sets of interrelated factors: exogenous factors such as foreign intervention and the opposition of the conservative internal forces, and factors internal to the movement itself. While neither of these groups of factors alone would necessarily have brought about the downfall of Mossadeq's nationalist regime, together they created a situation in which his failure became almost inevitable. In other words, although the coup attempt was clearly organized by outside forces, its success was more or less guaranteed by the internal characteristics of the movement itself.
Chapter VI
THE SECOND NATIONAL FRONT

The 1953 coup was a serious blow to the Melli Movement in Iran. The coup's instigators, the Shah, his conservative allies, the U.S. and the United Kingdom, quickly managed, respectively, to consolidate, impose and reimpose their control over the Iranian politico-economic system. Through wholesale arrests of Mossadeqists (including Mossadeq himself) and Tudeh members and through suppression of democratic freedoms, the Shah took the first step in tightening his grips over Iranian society. The 20% Agricultural Program, which had been intended to reduce the profits of landlords was soon watered down. This change in policy eliminated any threat to the dominant position of landlords as a class. The conclusion of an oil agreement between Iran and an international consortium partially took care of British economic interests in Iran, and provided the opportunity for American oil companies to acquire an extensive share in the profits from the massive Iranian oil reserves. The coup also made Iran a safer place for the "Free World". From the perspective of American policy makers, the Shah
was a much more trustworthy and reliable ally than the non-aligned Mossadeq.

The arrest of Mossadeq and his followers led to the disintegration of the First National Front. The participating parties generally lacked the organizational attributes and discipline which could enable them to survive in a repressive atmosphere. They not only became incapable of maintaining ties with the masses but were unable to preserve their connections with their very small memberships. Mossadeq himself, due to his age and his beliefs, could not lead an underground struggle against the new regime. Although his courageous defense in the Shah's court brought him back most of the popularity he enjoyed in 1951, he never exploited it through covert political action.

This chapter consists of four sections. The first section is a brief overview of the activities of a group of Mellian during the period of 1953 and 1960. The second section deals with the internal characteristics of the S.N.F. The third section offers an analysis of the defeat of the S.N.F. And the last section is a postscript concerning attempts to form a Third National Front.
NATIONAL RESISTANCE MOVEMENT

As already discussed, the First N.F. consisted of both organized groups and individuals who were not identified with any party. Prominent among the latter were personalities such as Mehdi Bazargan, Ayatollah Mahmud Talegani and Rahim Attai. Though active, these individuals never became key figures in the First N.F. The religious beliefs and world views of men such as Bazargan were not to the liking of the secular Mossadeq who was trying to reduce the influence of religion on governmental policies. But after the coup, the relative persistence and firm stands of religiously oriented N.F. leaders attracted a large segment of the younger Mossadeqists, particularly those with religious leaning. Another factor which helped Bazargan and his colleagues in attracting support was the impact of Ayatollah Kashani's split with Mossadeg in 1953. With Kashani's withdrawal from the N.F., the religious elements in the Front who condemned Kashani's action found their leadership in religiously oriented but loyal Mossadeqist leaders.

Several months after the coup it was these above mentioned people who made an attempt to reorganize opposition in an organization called the National Resistance Movement (N.R.M.). The importance of this movement lay not in its political achievements: its activities were very limited. Constrained by the Shah's repressive measures, the movement...
engaged almost exclusively in publishing pamphlets and having limited meetings. The importance of the N.R.M. was in the predominance of religiously minded leaders within its organization. Religion started to become an important component of the political activities of the Melli Movement.

Bazargan, as one of the most influential leaders of N.R.M., represented and reflected a tendency within Iranian society known as Modern Islam (Eslam-e Novin).(143) This tendency developed among the religiously oriented, educated segment of the population, especially university students. According to its advocates, Eslam-e Novin was an adaptation of Islam to the problems and issues of the modern world. It was an attempt to reconcile Islamic values and doctrines with the scientific achievement and rational thinking of the modern world in order to solve the problems of contemporary Iranian society. The goal of the Eslam-e Novin was the creation of new but at the same time Islamic cultural products. This religious reform was supposed to attract the young educated generation which, due to the impact of foreign cultural values, had become lost, bewildered, areligious or anti-religious. The proponents of this new Islam argued that, in order to fight the impact of for-

eign cultural domination, people needed to be introduced to the "true" Islam. Islam, if properly understood, would help the society to become and to remain healthy. The artificial separation between religion and politics was to be eliminated. Religion was to be taken to the universities where the younger generation was spending its formative years, and politics was to be taken to the mosques. Eslame-Novin would be a politicized Islam and political struggle would find its dynamism in religious values and motivation.

The National Resistance Movement as a political entity to some extent reflected this outlook. But the life of the N.R.M. was very short. Its organization, which consisted basically of groups which had participated in the F.N.F., was very weak and vulnerable. And, in 1957, with the arrest of the leaders of N.R.M. the activity of this movement came to an end.

THE SECOND NATIONAL FRONT AND ITS INTERNAL CHARACTERISTICS

The Second National Front (S.N.F.) was organized in July 1960 in response to the temporary retreat of dictatorship. The relaxation of repression provided the opportunity for the N.F. to resurface. Like the F.N.F., the S.N.F. was composed of both individuals and parties. The parties which participated in the S.N.F. were the Iran Party, the People
of Iran Party, the Mellat Iran Party and the Socialist Party (a splinter of Maleki's Third Force).(144)

The Front had three principal objectives: 1. to restore the basic individual and social rights of the Iranian people guaranteed by the 1906 Constitution; 2. to establish a legal government through free public elections and 3. to adhere to an independent foreign policy which, though in accord with the United Nations Charter, would give priority to the national interest.(145) According to the National Front Constitution no socio-economic reform was possible without the achievement of these three goals. Political issues were given clear priority over socio-economic reforms.

The Leadership of the S.N.F.

The leadership of the Second Front was basically in the hands of the F.N.F. leaders. The most striking difference between the two was the physical absence of Mossadeq in the S.N.F. Mossadeq played no role in the policy making processes of the Second National Front. And as discussed below, he soon withdrew his spiritual support from the leadership of the S.N.F.

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(144) The Socialist Party was led by Mohammed-Ali Khonji and Masoud Hejazi who, after the coup, denounced Maleki, the leader of the Third Force, as a traitor and split with him.

The most prominent leaders of the Second Front were Allahyar Saleh, Karim Sanjabi and Mehdi Bazargan who, due to their activities in the First Front and their associations with Mossadeq, were well known. There were, however, other individuals who, although unimportant in the First Front, played crucial roles as leaders of the Second Front. Among these were Shapur Bakhtiar and Mohammed-Ali Khonji. Indeed, according to insiders and close observers of the Second National Front, the roles that these two junior leaders played in the internal politics of the Front were in some respects much more substantial than those of some of the older and more publically prominent leaders. In order to understand the leadership quality of the S.N.F., here I will focus on the life and the world views of three of its leaders; Sanjabi, Bazargan and Bakhtiar.

Karim Sanjabi

Karim Sanjabi was born in 1904, in the Sanjabi tribal area in Kermanshah. His uncle was the chieftain of an important tribe, and his brother was one of its important leaders. His family had a tradition of opposition activities against Reza Shah. In 1917 when he was thirteen years old his tribe was attacked by British forces and Sanjabi with members of his family was exiled to Baqdad. In 1919 he returned to Kermanshah and entered high school. Between 1927 and 1929 he studied law at the University of Tehran.
In 1929 he was sent to France by the government to continue his studies. In 1935 he received his doctorate in law and returned to Iran. Immediately after his return he was appointed to a teaching position at the University of Tehran. In 1946 he became the vice-president of the law college. He was one of the founders of the Iran Party and in 1949 he participated in Mossadeq's sit-in protest against the rigged elections to the 16th Majlis. He was also one of the founders of the First National Front and became minister of education in Mossadeq's government in 1951.

After the 1953 coup, Sanjabi like most other Front leaders withdrew from politics for several years. In 1960 he participated in the reorganization of the National Front. After the mass resignation of the leaders of the Front, which practically ended the life of that organization, Sanjabi once again disappeared from public life.

Sanjabi, like Saleh, had a reputation of being an honest man. He was a social democrat, a constitutionalist and an anti-communist. Although a nationalist, aspiring for an independent Iran, he nonetheless believed that in practice Iran could not do without outside support. The experience of Mossadeq's era and the 1953 coup for Sanjabi as well as most other liberal nationalists was proof of the inevitability and necessity of such reliance. Whether based on his anti-communist views and his Western education, or on
his perception that the U.S. rather than the U.S.S.R. was and probably would be a bigger influence on Iran, he was willing to seek U.S. support, both economically and militarily. (146)

In his view, closeness to the U.S. did not eliminate the possibility of a friendly or at least cordial relationship with the Soviet Union. But then again the potential for friendly relations with the Soviet Union would be realizable only if Iran could count on Western support and on a strong relationship with the U.S..

As a social democrat, Sanjabi was a typical National Front leader. In terms of socio-economic programs he had nothing specific to offer.

Sanjabi's concern was primarily with political reform. His major goals as an influential Second National Front leader were free elections and the upholding of constitutional principles. His reformist approach, his strict adherence to legality(147) and his distaste for secret activity made him a conservative and weak leader in the politically repressed Iranian context.

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(146) Spy Nest's Document, # 21, pp. 48-49 and 57.
(147) Ibid p. 59.
Mehdi Bazargan

Mehdi Bazargan was born in a Bazaari family in 1907. His father was a respected Bazaar merchant and a devout Moslem. Upon receiving his bachelor's degree from the College of Engineering at Tehran University in 1931, Bazargan left Iran for France. He entered the "Ecole Centrale" in Paris and continued his education until 1936. He returned to Iran in the same year, and started teaching at the University of Tehran. Several years later he became Dean of the College of Engineering, and in 1943 he founded the Engineering Association of Iran. In 1950 he was appointed to the Ministry of Culture as the Technical Deputy Minister, and in May 1951 he became the head of the executive board in charge of nationalization of the oil industry. Due to his differences with Hossein Makki, the influential N.F. leader and an active member of the Oil Committee, Bazargan resigned from his post in May 1952 and resumed his teaching position at the University of Tehran. In 1954 he, along with some other prominent personalities, founded the National Resistance Movement. By the time of the limited liberalization of 1960 which led to the reorganization of the N.F., Bazargan had already served two terms in jail.

In 1960 he became a member of the Second National Front, and a year later, with some religiously oriented personalities such as Ayatollah Talegani, Hassan Nazih and Yadollah
Sahabi, he founded the Freedom Movement of Iran. Due to his differences with the majority of S.N.F. leaders, with regard to both policy and organization, he became disillusioned with the S.N.F. (148)

After the bloody uprising of 15 Khordad, Bazargan along with other National Front and Freedom Movement leaders such as Taleqani were arrested and sentenced to jail. The leaders of the N.F. were set free after several months but Bazargan and other Freedom Movement leaders were sent before a military court. Convicted of treason, Bazargan was sentenced to ten years of solitary confinement. In 1967 he was pardoned by the Shah. After his release, he lived a quiet life in Tehran and occupied himself by running an engineering firm. Although he had withdrawn from open political life, he remained well known and respected by political activists. His interest in religion and religious activity kept him in touch with the religious community, especially opposition leaders such as Ayatollah Khomeini, Taleqani and Zanjani.

Though a Mossadeqist, Bazargan differed from Mossadeq both in style and in ideology. (149) He was a Mossadeqist

(148) After the mass resignation of the leaders of the S.N.F. in 1964, Bazargan participated in an effort to revive the Melli Movement under the banner of the Third National Front which was supposed to be very different from the Second Front, in terms of both approach and organization.

(149) Information about Bazargan's world views is based on a series of his writings and lectures, including his
in the sense that the idea of an independent Iran and a
democratic government were two of his overriding values. However, he parted with Mossadeg on the issue of religion. While Mossadeg, as a secular politician, believed in separation of state and church, Bazargan saw this separation as the root of the problem. In his speech to the Second Congress of the Iran's Islamic Association appropriately entitled "The Borderline between Religion and Public Affairs", he said that one of the most important reasons for the decline and fall of Moslem nations during the history of Islam was the attitude of prominent religious figures and Moslem intellectuals.

The overriding concern of these people with form, words and illusions rather than with meaning, actions and realities of life, Bazargan continued, had brought misery to all Moslem nations. Participation in politics was looked down on by the Moslem intellectuals. They preferred, Bazargan observed, to leave these functions to the lower classes of the society so that they themselves could give their exclusive attention to philosophy, literature and figh (religious knowledge). He argued that this separation was tolerable in an era when the state had not yet spread its activities and its control over every aspect of people's defense, The Borderline Between Politics and Public Affairs and The Secret Behind the Underdevelopment of the Moslem Nations, published by Daftar Pakhs-e Katab (Book Distribution Center), Houston, Texas, 1982.
lives. But now, the state has developed to such an extent that it has virtually destroyed any separation of religion from politics. Politics is now on the verge of destroying, or at least subjugating religion in the absence of a religious response. This development is particularly dangerous in countries such as Iran which have been ruled by despotic, corrupt and foreign oriented "modernist" regimes.

For Bazargan, separation of church and state, which is an influential idea in Western and predominantly Christian countries, is unsuitable and harmful for Moslem countries. He argues that Christianity has very little, if anything, to do with government, politics and in general with this world and this life. Islam on the other hand is a social religion. Islam is concerned not only with God, spiritual issues and the metaphysical world, but with human life in communities and material issues such as property, marriage, war, peace, statemanship and dispensing justice: in short, with the physical and objective world we are living in here and now. To survive, to keep their identity and their way of life intact, to push back the threat of alienation and anomie, it is therefore crucial for Moslem nations to allow religious participation in politics. Otherwise, the "moder-

(150) Here he differentiates between two aspects of religion. The first aspect consists of rules and regulations concerning the individual in his relationship to God. The second aspect consists of those values, morals and actions which affect the community as a whole. Bazargan is concerned with this second aspect.
nist" state will destroy not only Islam but the whole Islamic way of life. Bazargan believes that struggle between religion and the "modernist" state is a life and death struggle, in which one must eventually dominate the other. But he argues that if religion dominates politics, it will not destroy the latter, but will reform and revive it.

Bazargan also tackles the question of how much religious involvement is necessary or desirable. He argues that religion should only interfere with politics to the extent of determining broad political principles and governmental goals. The means to achieve those goals should be determined by the circumstances and context within which the government is operating. Selection of means should be a function of human judgment and not divine revelations.

In the same vein, he argued, religion should not directly interfere with the election or selection of public officials and the actual running of public affairs. Religious leaders should not be allowed to use their religious position to impose their preference on the administrators regarding governmental rules and regulations. Therefore although politics and religion are not separated, neither should they be mixed. There exists a borderline between the two at all but the most general levels.
Despite Western conventional wisdom, Bazargan's religiosity did not prevent him from being a liberal. Like Mossadeq he fought primarily against the despotism of the Shah and adhered to the principles of the Constitution of 1906. In his view, despotism is unnatural, and its legitimacy and therefore its perpetuation are inevitably based on lies. (151) To eliminate the threat of despotism, the administration of a society should be based on democratic principles. It is both the right and the responsibility of all members of a community to participate in making decisions which ultimately affect their lives.

Bazargan agrees with the notion that politics requires expertise. In his opinion, not every person has the opportunity or willingness to become a political expert. Yet there are some domains of politics in which the public should interfere and about which the public should express its opinions. Knowing and choosing the right candidate for the right political position is one such domain. For Bazargan the opportunity to make the right choice could only be guaranteed in an open political atmosphere, through free access to media, freedom of speech and freedom to form associations: in short the existence of basic political freedoms.

Bazargan also insists that a society should be governed on the basis of real mechanisms of consulting and discussing issues, and not by royal or other types of decrees. This belief on his part and his repeated pleas for upholding constitutional principles imply his adherence to democratic values. He condemns despotism whether secular or religious. The despotism of the Shah and the dictatorship of the Islamic regime are equally dangerous because of their effects on both democratic values and Islam as it is understood by Bazargan as a liberating and humane religion. This attitude explains Bazargan's opposition to and criticism of the present Islamic Republic of Iran. His opposition to the theocratic regime of Khomeini derives, in a general sense, from the same perspective from which he criticized the Shah's regime; the lack of democratic freedom, lack of legality and the arbitrariness of the regime in governing the society.

Bazargan, as a lay religious liberal intended to bridge the gap between religion and politics. He belonged to a group of political activists who believe in mixing the old with the new. As a Western trained engineer, he was open to changes (especially in economic and scientific areas) which would be conducive to progress and development. But he had no economic theory of his own. Like most of the secular liberals, he had nothing specific to say about the course
of economic development or about how to solve the economic ills of Iranian society. His overriding concerns were with the issue of resisting the dictatorship of the Shah and the establishment of a true democratic system. Where he differed from most secular liberals was in the area of culture and the importance of religion. This latter concern made possible his closeness to religious activists such as Taleqani, Zanjani and, most important of all, Khomeini. His reputation as an honest and respected figure and his ties to both secular nationalists and religious activists made him a natural choice for premiership in 1979.

Shapur Bakhtiar

Shapur Bakhtiar was born in Isfahan Province in 1915. (152) His family was one of the most prominent in the Bakhtiari Tribe, and had carried the honorary title of Governor of Isfahan since the seventeenth century. Bakhtiar's grandfather, Samsam-al-Saltaneh, who was twice appointed by the Qajar kings to the premiership, was considered a progressive and pro-constitution leader. His father, who had a great impact on his son, was an educated man, aristocratic in thought and manner. (153) When he was eleven years old, 

Bakhtiar was sent to the city of Isfahan to attend high school. Several years later, he left Iran, first for Beirut and then for France. Upon his arrival in France, he was informed that his father, along with four other members of his extended family, had been executed by Reza Shah. He immediately returned to Iran and stayed there for two years after which he returned to France. He graduated with degrees in law, political science and philosophy in 1939. Married to a French woman and fascinated by France and French culture, Bakhtiar volunteered to join the French Army at the start of WWII.

After the war, when he was 31, Bakhtiar returned to Iran. In 1947, he joined the Iran Party, and entered the newly established Ministry of Labor. Under Mossadeq's tenure, Bakhtiar was promoted to be Vice Minister of Labor. As a member of the Iran Party, he joined the National Front, but never reached the status of a first rank leader.

After the coup, Bakhtiar participated in the activities of the N.R.M. and, as a result, was arrested and sentenced to jail. It was only in the early 1960s that Bakhtiar resumed his political activities when he became a co-founder of the Second National Front. He became an influential decision maker in the Front. In this period, Bakhtiar, along with most other Front leaders, were arrested several times and served short jail sentences. The internal

(153) Shapur Bakhtiar, Ma Fidelite, pp. 15-16
disagreements and infighting among the National Front leaders over issues, methods and organization resulted in the mass resignation of the Central Council of the Front, including Bakhtiar.

Bakhtiar was among the most secular of the liberal nationalist leaders. His anti-clericalism which contained a touch of contempt for religion as a whole differentiated him from secular liberals such as Mossadeq.(154) Mossadeq regarded Islam as a part of the Iranian culture, and as a determinant of Iranian identity, a part which should be respected and upheld. Bakhtiar's comments on Iranian identity convey a different position. Spending eleven of his formative years in France, working closely with French intellectuals and studying the writing of anti-clerical French thinkers and revolutionaries had an undeniable impact on him. In his memoirs *Ma Fidelite* he time and again praised French culture, with which he identified very closely. His absolute fascination with France made him less of an Iranian in the eyes of many people. Though quite familiar with the rich Iranian literary tradition, Bakhtiar was almost ignorant of contemporary mass culture (farhang-e koucheh va bazaar). This lack of appreciation of mass culture, coupled with his distaste for clerical intervention in any political activity, and in general his misinterpre-

(154) Fred Halliday's interview with Bakhtiar in *MERIP*, No. 104, p.12.
tation of the popular mood led him and ultimately the Second National Front to assume no role in the 1963 Uprising and its aftermath. This inaction cost the liberal nationalist movement the support of the majority of the younger generation of political activists.

Bakhtiar was a social democrat and a constitutionalist. He was anti-Tudeh and anti-communist. For him, socialism was a means to establish social justice. His socialism was Fabian rather than Marxist. His ideal politico-economic system was the Swedish system in which private property, despite extensive and widespread nationalization of the economy, is a respected and secured institution. (155)

Among liberal nationalist leaders, Bakhtiar was the closest to being a typical Western liberal. His emphasis on the "obscure and undiscovered aspects" of the ancient Iranian culture (156) was an implicit denial of the powerful Islamic element of the "discovered" aspects of Iranian culture, and proof of his strong desire for a more secular culture such as that of Western Europe.

According to many National Front members, Bakhtiar was an ambitious and able man." His ambitions however", according to another liberal leader, "usually got the best of him and led him to make decisions which hurt both him and the

(155) Bakhtiar, Mabani..., op. cit.
(156) Ibid
nationalist movement”. (157) His behavior as an influential Second National Front leader in 1960-63 and his deal with the Ex-Shah (of which later) in 1979 are often cited as proofs of his overriding ambition, and his serious misunderstanding of Iranian society and the changes it had gone through.

The Organization of The Second National Front

The internal organization of the Second National Front differed from the First. This time the intention was to create a hierarchical organization headed by a seven-member executive committee. There were also provisions for a fifty-member Central Council, a Plenum and a Congress: the Congress would be the supreme body but would delegate power to the Central Council. It was to meet every two years to elect 35 members of the Central Council (158) and to make necessary amendments to the Constitution of the Front. In practice, the Central Council became the sole decision-making body of the Front.

The S. National Front as the organizational expression of the Melli movement, consisted of parties, groups and individuals who were striving for an independent and democratic Iran. The N.F., therefore, should have been open to


(158) The other 15 members of the Central Council were to be selected by the Central Council itself, provided that the Council itself expressed the need for a full 50-member body.
all groups and associations which, regardless of their ideologies, adhered to and identified with the two principal goals of a democratic and independent Iran.

But from the very beginning, there was an ongoing struggle between two tendencies within the S.Front. Part of the dispute was over the organizational characteristics of the Front. The other part concerned the programs and methods of the S.N.F. The first tendency, which was supported by the most influential leaders of the Central Council such as Saleh, Sanjabi and Bakhtiar was in favor of a unified organization. Khonji, as the theoritician of this tendency, argued for a single party organization. He denied the existence of classes and downplayed the multiplicity of contradictions and differences that existed in Iranian society. He argued that there was one nation confronted with one ruling apparatus (the state).(159) Therefore the single important contradiction was between the people and the despotic, foreign oriented state. Based on this logic, he called for the dissolution of all independent parties of the N.F. and the formation of a single party (Hezb-e Vahed). This party, which would operate on the principle of democratic centralism, would be the most appropriate type of organization to fight the regime.

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This first tendency (despite the rhetoric of Khonji) was also in favor of confining the struggle within legal bounds. Its supporters accepted the framework of the existing regime, hopeful that through political negotiation and bargaining they could penetrate the system and could ultimately establish a legal and lawful regime. But, as will be argued later in this chapter, these leaders failed even to enter into a constructive dialogue with the relatively promising Amini Government.

The second tendency favored the idea of a national front as conveyed by its very definition, a front consisting of political parties and organized political groups. The supporters of this tendency believed that the National Front should be an umbrella organization, in which different political groups, with independent organizations reflecting the complexity of the Iranian society could coalesce around a common goal or goals. They disagreed with the notion of a single party, dominated by leaders who claimed to represent the general interest of the society and therefore in practice would represent no particular interests.

The second tendency was dominated by people with a relatively confrontational approach to the regime of the Shah. Many of its adherents rejected the framework of the existing regime. Therefore, instead of adopting the idea of establishing a legal government (the slogan used by the
supporters of the first tendency) they called for the establishment of a "Melli Government".

With respect to method there was also a difference between the two groups. Unlike the first group, which concentrated its effort on political negotiation with the regime, the second group believed in the importance of organizing popular support as the most effective means to achieve its goals. This second tendency was mainly represented by the younger generation of activists, especially the university students and also by some influential elements of the old N.R.M., such as Bazargan, Taleqani and Zanjani. But throughout the period the first tendency supported by the majority of central Council prevailed.

Although according to the first article of the N.F. Constitution, the N.F. was an entity consisting of individuals, parties and groups, there were many provisions which made it very difficult, if not impossible, for parties to retain their independence. Moreover, there were some provisions which would clearly put restraints on parties which were to join the Front in the future. The power of the Central Council enabled it to prevent two groups, the Socialist Society and the Freedom Movement, from joining the Front. The barring of the Socialist Society was very

(160) For more information on this subject see Jebh-ye Mel-li Iran Dar Nakhosteen Rooya Roo-e Ra Massael Sazemani. (The Iran' National Front in Its First Encounter with Organizational Issues), 1962 National Front Congress.
much related to animosity between Khonji and Maleki. Khonji, the leader of the Socialist Party (a newly born and very insignificant party) dissolved his party and urged the other groups to follow suit. Some believe that Khonji's insistence on dissolution of parties was not totally based on ideological conviction but was also a product of his past personal history with Khalil Maleki. According to a liberal nationalist leader:

"During the F.N.F., Khonji worked closely with Maleki in running the Third Force. In fact Khonji considered Maleki as his mentor for quite a while. But after the coup, Khonji, who held some personal grudge against Maleki, accused the latter of betraying the movement and as a result split with him. This rupture was not purely ideological, and continued until the formation of the S.N.F. Khonji, now more influential with the S. Front's leaders, succeeded in blocking the Maleki party, the Socialist Society, from joining the Front. (161)"

Whether or not this statement is based on truth, the fact remains that the Socialist Society which was supported by many university students was not allowed to participate in the Front.

The important Freedom Movement was also excluded from the Front. (162) Two reasons were given for the exclusion of the Freedom Movement. Firstly, it was argued that this


(162) Some of the leaders of the Freedom Movement were already members of the S.N.F. (Bazargan himself was a member of the Central Council), but they were considered as individual elements and not representative of any party.
group did not exist when the National Front resumed its activity in 1960. (163) Secondly, the Freedom Movement would have to purge some of its members who were not to the liking of the National Front leaders in order to become a member of the Front.

The parties and individuals belonging to the second tendency joined with the Freedom Movement and the Socialist Society to start a campaign against the leaders of the Front, asking for organizational and policy reforms. But since the Central Council of the Front was already dominated by the first tendency, which had managed to secure a majority in the Congress, (164) the second tendency failed to realize its demands.

A close look at the differences within the National Front reveals that it was not ideological questions which underlay the dispute. Left or right orientation did not really explain the pattern of alignment within the Front. The degree of militancy against or conciliation of each group or each personality toward the regime was a more relevant criterion in explaining the division. There were religious, secular, capitalist and socialist people on both

(163) The Freedom Movement was formed in 1961.

(164) The number of delegates allocated to each organization did not reflect the size and importance of that organization. For example the Organization of University Students despite its membership (half of the total vote), had only 30 members, out of the 170 total numbers of delegates, in the Congress.
sides of the issue. For example, a predominantly religious political organization, the Freedom Movement, also included some individuals who were not as religiously oriented as Ayatollah Taleqani or Mehdi Bazargan. Rahim Attai and Abbas Samii, who represented the more secular faction of the Freedom Movement, were motivated more by socialism than by religion. What made their union possible was the relatively firmer stand of the Freedom Movement as an organization.

Another example which illustrates the nature of alignments within the Front was the friction between the younger generation (regardless of their ideologies) and the older leaders. The younger generation, the majority of whom belonged to the Organization of University Students, pushed for a more radical approach. The older leaders (a few exceptions) were in favor of a mild, traditionally accepted and legally bounded approach. A statement which reveals the mentality of the older generation of leaders, with regard to the method of oppositional activities, has been attributed to Mr. Hasibi, an older and respected Front leader. According to some of the Melliu, Hasibi had stated: "We want to achieve victory, in a manner that not even one drop of blood being spilt from anyone's nose."(165)

Mossadeq and the Second National Front.

The limited liberalization of the early 1960s and the revival of the National Front did not change the fate of Mossadeq. Mossadeq, who had been under house arrest since 1956, remained so and was not allowed to resume his public life. Though physically absent from the scene, his spiritual presence was felt during that era. The memory of his struggle against imperialism and for Iranian democracy remained the driving force for those who were ready to rally their support behind the Second National Front. If the leaders of the S.N.F. were successful in gathering more than eighty thousand people in their first call for a public meeting in 1960, this success was due not to their independent popularity but to their association with Mossadeq. Mossadeq, though captive, was following the 1960s developments, and through his family members, especially his grandson Hedayatollah Matin-Daftari, was able to communicate with the S.N.F. His advice on organizational and methodical matters was sought, and from the very beginning he was involved in the internal S.N.F. dispute.(166)

Believing that the Front should be an umbrella for all groups and associations which despite their ideological differences shared a limited set of goals, Mossadeq from

(166) Talash Bara-ye tashkil-e jehbe-ye Melli-e Sevvum (Attempts for formation of the Third National Front), Mokatebat-e Mossadeq, #10 Mossadeq Publication.
the outset sided with the second tendency. (167) He expressed his views on organizational issues by arguing that the Front must not interfere with the independence of parties and associations. To him all groups and parties which shared with the Front the goal of independence and democracy should be able to participate, and their independence should be respected. Mossadeg opposed the idea of a single united party. He argued that each political party had its own ideology and that if one studied party ideologies, one would realize that the success of a party in attracting support was very much depended upon its ability to form opinion and to take stand on more than one or two issues. Insisting on dissolving parties into a single organization with one or two very general goals, Mossadeg continued, would rob the N.F. of the support of those who could only be mobilized by their own chosen party with its own specific ideology. The N.F. by definition was not a political party and should not act as one.

Mossadeg was less explicit with respect to style and method of struggle. But by stating that the form of struggle should be relevant to the context and the political atmosphere of the time, (168) he implicitly supported the second tendency. The adherents of the second tendency argued that since times had changed, methods of struggle

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also had to change.

Mossadeg's view was obviously at odds with that of the most powerful leaders of the Second Front. Although these latter paid lip service to Mossadeg's ideas and opened the S.N.F. Congress with Mossadeg's message, their actual behavior manifested their disagreements with him. The outcome of the Congress was a charter which contrasted with Mossadeg's advice. The Central Council, in a letter to Mossadeg, tried to justify the dominant view and policies, particularly with regard to organizational issues. (169) But Mossadeg, unconvinced, continued to side with the dissidents, especially with the Organization of University Students which was the most active in its attempts to reform the National Front.

Mossadeg's most explicit criticism of the National Front organization focused on the rules concerning the election of the members of the Central Council. His criticisms and views were echoed by the students who were virtually denied the right to elect their own representatives to the Council and also by some leaders such as Bazargan and Foruhar who sided with the students. On May 2, 1964, the members of the Central Council, in a letter addressed to Mossadeg, threatened to resign if the latter insisted on his views. (170) They noted that since Mossadeg, who remained the leader of

(170) Ibid,
the Melli movement, did not approve the Charter of the Front and the manner in which its Central Council was elected, and since fighting against Mossadeg's views was perceived as harmful to the movement they had no other choice but to resign. But Mossadeg refused to back down. The Central Council of the Front resigned en masse, and the life of the Second National Front came to an end.

**THE FAILURE OF THE SECOND NATIONAL FRONT: AN ANALYSIS**

The formation of the Second National Front in 1960 was an attempt to revive and to direct the Melli movement which was once entrusted to Mossadeg and to the First National Front. The failure of the First Front was partly due to its internal characteristics: its organizational weaknesses, its leadership quality and its lack of positive programs. But what led to the defeat of the Second N.F.? Assuming the activities of the S.N.F. to have been in the tradition of the First Front, one should ask two questions. Firstly why did the S.N.F. never seize power and form a government as Mossadeg and the F.N.F. had done. And secondly why did it fail to even remain a viable oppositional force in a relatively relaxed political atmosphere? To answer these questions, one must first explain the general politico-economic environment of Iranian society in the 1960s in comparison with the 1950s before turning more
directly to comparison in programs, leadership, and organization between the two Fronts.

The Social Setting of Iranian Society in 1960s.

In many respects Iran's politico-economic situation in 1960 and its relation with the outside world differed from that of 1949. After the 1953 coup, the U.S. became the undeniable key influence in Iran. The new oil agreement with the international consortium and American military and economic aid to the Shah's regime reinforced this influence. The regime and the Iranian economy as a whole became increasingly dependent on the U.S. In the process, British political and economic influence rapidly decreased.\(^{171}\) As a participant in the Bagdad Pact Iran practically denounced the concept of non-alignment, and in 1959 when the Cold War was at its height, through a bilateral security agreement with the U.S., Iran sealed its military commitment and dependence on the United States.

In addition to changes in the balance of power in the world as a whole, there were some related changes in the balance of power among different forces within Iran itself. In 1961, Mohammed Reza Shah was more in control than in 1949. An increased oil flow, along with military and economic aid, the creation of Savak, suppression of the opposition, the development of a relatively powerful army under

\(^{171}\) According to the new oil agreement, the British share was reduced from 100% to 40%.
the Shah's control and ten additional years of experience made the Shah a much more powerful figure than before. Though still dependent upon and allied with the conservative forces, especially the landlord class, the Shah was in the process of breaking this alliance by building a personal dictatorship, protected by the army and the security organs, and by eliminating the power of the landlord-dominated Majlis.

With regard to the oppositional forces, the situation also differed from that of 1949-53. On the eve of the 1960 economic crisis,(172) the Tudeh party as an organization was virtually non-existent within Iran. The popular movement was in eclipse, partially due to the physical absence of Mossadeq and the passivity of the other leaders, and partly because of increased repression and several years of a fairly stable and growing economy. The political parties such as the Iran Party or The Mellat Iran Party existed only in name. So the balance of forces had obviously shifted, and the Shah was clearly in a stronger position.

But the economic crisis of 1960 along with the outlook of the newly elected U.S. President Kennedy, forced the Shah in 1960 to temporarily back down and to allow a limit-

(172) The economic crisis manifested itself in depressed markets, increasing bankruptcy among entrepreneurs, acute inflation, increasing unemployment, an unbalanced budget, crisis in the agricultural sector which forced many villagers to migrate to the cities, a tremendous increase in military expenditure and administrative corruption.
ed liberalization of the polity. The regime, which was aware of the consequences of economic hardship on the society and also of the popular reaction to that hardship (already manifested in several demonstrations in different parts of the country), decided to try the dual policy of economic reform and political liberalization in order to find a way out of the greatest crisis it had faced since the 1953 coup.

But the difference between this period and the oil nationalization crisis of 1949-50 was that by 1960 the Shah's regime was stronger and had more experience in and readiness to confront the opposition. Needless to say, in the beginning of the liberalization era, the opposition which had been suppressed for several years had no organization, and despite widespread dissatisfaction, the Melli movement had no organizational outlet. In fact the formation of the S.N.F. was more a product of or a reaction to the liberalization policy than a cause of it. In other words, unlike the First National Front which was moving ahead of and directing the Melli movement, forcing the Shah and the conservatives to retreat, the S.N.F. in 1960 behaved more in reaction to than as an initiator with respect to both the regime's policies and popular demands.
In terms of programs, the Second National Front was poorer than its predecessor. The First Front, by emphasizing British control of Iranian oil, addressed one of the most fundamental politico-economic problems of Iranian society and attracted people's support by introducing an alternative plan: the nationalization of the oil industry. It is true that only the "negative" component of the nationalization struggle, the elimination of British control over the production of oil, was accomplished. The "positive" component, which was the resumption of oil production on Iranian terms and in its turn would have enabled Iran to use the oil revenue for constructive socio-economic program, never materialized. Nonetheless, the ascent of Mossadeg and the F.N.F. to a position of power and popularity was, to a great extent, due to the oil nationalization issue. And needless to say, the fall of Mossadeg and the F.N.F. was very much related to its lack of further and positive programs.

In 1960, the S.N.F. had virtually no program to offer, not even anything comparable to the 20% agricultural program of Mossadeg. Socio-economic reforms were totally ignored in the official line of the Front. Actually, according to the S.N.F. Constitution, socio-economic
reforms were to be postponed and all activities were to be focused on addressing the political (basically legal) issues.\(^{(173)}\) In a period in which the need for socio-economic reforms was intensely felt, so much so that even the regime was preparing itself for launching an extensive reform, including land distribution, the Front remained passive. Instead of designing its own alternative reform programs addressing the problems of Iranian society, particularly problems of those groups who could have been considered its natural base of support (such as the national bourgeoisie), the S.N.F. confined itself to repeating time and again the demand for free elections and legal government.

More than anything else, the S.N.F. preoccupied itself with the legal aspect of the political struggle. An adherent of the first tendency within the S.N.F., reflecting the views of its leadership, said: "The issue was not that we should have come up with programs. Why? Because the Shah would have stolen those programs and would have implemented them. The central issue was to ask for legality and free elections which were conducive to democracy."\(^{(174)}\) But for

\(^{(173)}\) Among my interviewees, two who were members of the S.N.F. totally ignored the importance and relevance of socio-economic programs as factors which contributed to the defeat of the S.N.F. In contrast other interviewees, who belonged to the younger generation in 1961 and who were adherents of the second tendency, blamed the failure of the Front partly on its lack of socio-economic programs.
two reasons this method was quite deficient and inadequate for the Iranian situation between 1960 and 1964. It was deficient because, in a country whose regime frequently resorted to illegal and unconstitutional means, in which there was no independent judicial system, and whose supposedly law enforcing bodies were under the control of the law breaking forces, an organization could not accomplish much by limiting its activity to bargaining with the regime over legality. It was also inadequate because, logically speaking, to have and to keep people's support, in a socio-economically critical period, a political organization has to address problems of that nature, something the National Front, with its constant preoccupation with technical-legal issues, failed to do.

The National Front not only suffered from a lack of positive programs of its own, but it also suffered from its attitude toward the regime's own reform programs. In May 1961, the Shah, confronted with an increasingly critical situation, reluctantly appointed Ali Amini as prime minister. Ali Amini, who had played an active role in the negotiation with the oil consortium in 1954 and who afterwards became the Iranian ambassador to the United States, represented a more progressive faction of the ruling elite. His position as ambassador to the U.S. had enabled him to develop close ties with U.S. officials, and his willingness

The Second National Front, or more accurately the leaders of the Front, not only did not support the Amini land reform but through their insistence on a new election, actually started a campaign against him. This approach created friction between the Front leaders and some of the rank and file who tried to warn the leadership about the consequences of its decisions. A liberal nationalist, who was a member of the Organization of University Students in the 1960's, recounted:

Many of us opposed the leadership's approach to Amini's programs. We felt that we must either come up with our own original socio-economic platform, or to support that of Amini. But unfortunately we, the rank and file, did not carry any weight when it came to making decisions. The decisions were made by the leaders without any real consultation with us. (175)

The tactic of strictly adhering to legality proved to be a mistaken one. To understand why it was a mistake, and how this mistake hurt the National Front itself, one should have a complete picture of the National Front leadership and its organization in action.

Leadership Quality.

In addition to its lack of constructive programs the S.N.F. suffered tremendously from the quality of its leadership. The most obvious, serious, and unfortunate difference between the First and the Second N.F. was the absence in the latter of a respected, trusted, popular, in other

(175) Personal interview, Paris, Summer 1983.
to introduce socio-economic reforms, particularly land reform, made him a firm favorite choice with the new American administration.

The Shah's reluctance to appoint Amini stemmed partly from the Shah's close ties with the conservative landlords who would have suffered from any genuine land reform program. The army, as the most important force under the Shah's control, was also threatened by Amini's proposed governmental reform, which involved curbing the power of the military. Nonetheless, the Shah, who was probably pressured by Kennedy, agreed to appoint Amini prime minister.

To launch his programs, Amini appointed some more or less progressive minded ministers to his cabinet, the most important of whom was Hassan Arsanjani, the Agricultural Minister who was to be in charge of the land reform program. Amini's programs had three main goals: land reform, administrative (including military) reforms, and fiscal and economic reforms. These programs, at least in principle if not in practice, reflected some of the demands of Iranian society. Amini knew that if these reforms were to be accomplished he had to dissolve the landlord-dominated Majlis. Not as legally minded as the leaders of the Front, he asked the Shah to dissolve the Majlis and the Shah, who probably (due to the very fragile and delicate situation, coupled with U.S. pressure) perceived no other choice, agreed. The Majlis was dissolved and Amini started to rule by decree.
words, charismatic leader such as Mossadeq. The overwhelming majority of the N.F. leaders drew popular support and respect due to their association with Mossadeq rather than their own personalities.

In the very beginning when, without any prior preparation, the S.N.F. called a public meeting and more than 80,000 people showed up in the Jallalieh Square, this was a clear sign of support from a people who were dissatisfied with the regime and who were seeking change. For several reasons the National Front was their natural choice. Firstly, the memories of Mossadeq's struggle for independence and democracy were still fresh and alive. Secondly, the most important alternative oppositional organization, the Tudeh Party, was outlawed and could not have resurfaced. Thirdly, there was still no talk of religious figures such as Khomeini assuming leadership roles. Therefore, there existed a golden opportunity for the National Front to recapture at least part of its past popular support. If a charismatic leader such as Mossadeq had been present and if the S.N.F. had been prepared and had a sensible direction, it was more than likely that people would have followed its lead. But none of the S.N.F. leaders could match Mossadeq in terms of decisiveness, courage and firmness. The lack of such attributes among leaders of the S.N.F. soon shattered the faith of the sympathetic people in its ability to lead the Melli movement.
Beside the absence of Mossadeq (who was the most valuable asset to the First Front) the S.N.F. suffered from further leadership problems. In the previous chapter it was argued that the concentration of power in the hands of one man was one of the weaknesses of the F.N.F. During the period of the S.N.F., no individual had the type of power and influence which had once been exerted by Mossadeq. The leadership of the S.N.F. was a collective body represented by its Central Council in which no one individual could have monopolized power. In principle, this latter type of leadership was an improvement, adopted to remedy the ills of a one man leadership.

To be effective and to be able to reach constructive decisions, a collective body (as the concept itself conveys) must consist of individuals who can harmonize their thoughts and actions, and who are willing to discuss the issues with positive attitudes towards the necessity of compromise. The Front's Central Council was far from being such a model of collective leadership. A member of the S.N.F. described the quality of the S.N.F. leadership in the following manner:

The individualistic attitudes and personal rivalries of the majority of the Central Council members, the lack of clear understanding of what the specific and important problems of the society were and the confusion about what they themselves shared in terms of ideas and beliefs (except for their desire for a vague and general notion of democracy) made it virtually impossible for the Central Council to be effective. This was very
unfortunate, because when circumstances demanded firm actions, based on clear decisions, the Central Council members failed to fulfill their responsibility as leaders and could not offer their actual and potential supporters anything but indecisiveness and confusion.(176)

Reference to several specific events will substantiate the above argument. After the formation of the Front, but before Amini came to power and proposed his land reform, a member of the Central Council, Doctor Qolam Hossain Sediqi, proposed an eighteen point political and economic program, including a land reform, to the Central Council for deliberation.(177) This proposal could have been the basis of a set of sensible programs to tackle the socio-economic problems of Iranian society. "But, basically for fear of antagonizing the landlords" a liberal activist said, "the Central Council could not decide what to do. Therefore, the proposal was soon removed from the agenda with no decision made."(178)

Regarding Amini's programs, since the leadership could not decide whether to support or to reject their substance, they decided to attack Amini's method of going over the head of the Majlis and trying to rule by decree. Since they could only agree on very broad and vague political issues,


(177) According to some National Front people, that program was formulated by Khalil Maleki whose request to join the N.F. was never decided upon. Maleki's Memoirs, p.135.

they decided to demand free elections to the Majlis. (179)

That decision (or rather lack of decision) stemmed from several poor judgments: firstly, on Amini's place in the elite political spectrum with respect to the Shah and his conservative allies; secondly, on the popularity of these reform programs; and thirdly, on a misunderstanding of their own power, capabilities and popular support.

Though a member of the elite, Amini represented a more progressive faction. Due to the socio-economic crisis, the ruling elite consensus was broken and Amini had taken a position against the Shah, the landlords and the army. The lines were clearly drawn. If the Second National Front was a revolutionary and radical organization, its decision not to support Amini's Government could have been considered rational. Normally, a revolutionary organization works outside the system and tries to topple the existing regime to create a new order. Such an organization does not differentiate much between different factions of the ruling elite. It perceives all of those factions as part of the system it wishes to destroy and thus rejects any reform which is more or less aimed at preserving the existing order. But the National Front was not a revolutionary organization. As a member of the S.N.F. well put it:

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(179) Executive Board of the S.N.F., Elamieh (Proclamation), Tehran 1962, pp. 1-2.
The Second National Front was a reformist organization the leaders of which felt compelled to work within the system. Given the reformist character of the Second Front, and considering its lack of any alternative program, and the fact that Amini represented a reformist force against the Shah, the Front leaders should have realized that siding against Amini would have made them an implicit ally of the Shah whether they liked it or not. (180)

Amini had first tried to enter into a coalition with the Front, but by withdrawing support from him the Front unwittingly and ultimately helped the Shah to win the battle and to move toward strengthening his personal rule.

Besides strengthening the Shah's position vis à vis Amini's, the National Front leaders attitude toward land reform (and for that matter all Amini's reform programs) affected the popularity of the Front itself. The support for the N.F. diminished very quickly. Part of this decrease of support was due to the positions or actually non-positions of the leaders on socio-economic issues. Although the Iranian peasantry as a political force was historically passive, there could be no denying that the Amini-Arsanjani land reform program created great enthusiasm among the bulk of the peasant population. In many villages Arsanjani was looked upon as a savior, and as the architect of the land reform he became a very popular figure. (181)


(181) I personally as an eye witness in a small agricultural town near Tehran in 1961, observed many villagers
Even the Shah realized the political benefits of the land reform. But the National Front leaders never paid any real attention to this segment of the society, despite the fact that it constituted more than half the Iranian population. By proposing their own alternative land program or by supporting the Amini-Arsanjani land reform, the N.F. might have been able to gain a foothold in the Iranian villages. Peasant enthusiasm might have been transformed into political support for the Front as champion or at least ally to the champions of the land reform programs.

But probably more achievable and therefore important was the support of the urban population. In Western culture, it is widely believed that the ideology of political liberalism is more appealing to or even is generated by the middle class. This is supposedly because its basic economic needs have already been met and higher level needs such as political and individual rights can assume greater priority. But these assumptions are not fully applicable to Iranian soci-

who one after another rushed to the store to buy radios, in order to be able to listen to Arsanjani's speech.

(182) Arsanjani's popularity with the peasants frightened the Shah, who decided in 1963 to take control of the situation and run the show. Therefore, he introduced his six point programs (including land reform as one main point) known as the White Revolution. But his land reform was quite different and compared to Arsanjani's, quite conservative. The original land reform which was peasant oriented was distorted and, as a result the peasantry once again became passive if not alienated.
ety in the early 1960s, a society hit by an acute economic crisis and threatened by its consequences. In the 1960s, not only the lower classes but also the middle classes, particularly the Bazaaris and the bourgeoisie became anxious about economic problems. Though not in any immediate danger, the national bourgeoisie was worried about its long-run survival as an economic class. Therefore it would not be illogical to assume that its priority too had to some extent, shifted towards socio-economic problems. This did not mean that issues such as political freedom or individual rights were no longer important, but the point is that in that period, a contextually limited demand for legality or political freedom could not have appealed to many people, unless that demand was skillfully tied to the socio-economic problems of the society. The leaders of the N.F. never made any practical attempt to convince people (even their own potential base of support) of the possibility of such a connection.

In addition to the problem of confusion and indecisiveness, the N.F. leadership also suffered from exuding an air of resignation. As mentioned before, many influential N.F. leaders such as Saleh and Sanjabi had one basic assumption about the relationship of Iran to the outside world. They saw the biggest factor shaping the political destiny of Iran to be the influence of foreign powers, particularly the United States, after 1953.
The intensity of this mentality becomes clear to the reader by what an elder liberal leader had to say about this matter: "The U.S. had put different types of government in power in Iran. From the point of view of the American Administration the Shah's regime was their best choice. But history proved that that was a bad choice after all. What the U.S. should have tried in Iran was a government which had popular support. The U.S. never did that and that was a grave mistake." (183) To them, any individual or group who wished to play an important and effective role in the Iranian political scene had to obtain the explicit or implicit support of the U.S.. Stated, bluntly, by a liberal nationalist: "The S.N.F. leaders thought no one could do anything unless the U.S. turned on the green light." (184) Moreover, many leaders thought of the Shah's regime as being too powerful for them to defeat. (185)


(185) There is a different view of the perception of S.N.F. leaders with regard to the strength of the Shah's regime expressed by Richard Cottam. Cottam, who has closely studied the perception of the N.F. leaders, argues that the S.N.F. leaders thought of the Shah's regime as being too weak. Based on his argument, the revival of the N.F. and its subsequent adoption of the policy of "wait and see" was the result of that perception. Believing that the regime was too weak, and that it would eventually fall (providing that the U.S. withdraw its support for the regime) the S.N.F. saw no need to support Amini's government against the Shah or to take any drastic oppositional measure against the regime.
assumptions on the part of the Front leaders explain their pessimism and their reluctance for firm actions.

Whether or not the regime was too powerful for any opposition to survive, what the S.N.F. leaders did was mistaken. If the regime was too strong, then the reformation of the N.F. in 1960 showed very bad timing. Based on the second assumption, since the Front was doomed to failure, then the only thing that the reformation of the Front accomplished was to raise the expectations of its actual and potential supporters, only to crush them. The result was widespread disillusionment with the National Front, an organization which once symbolized the Iranian struggle for democracy and independence.

But what if the above assumption was wrong? Then the resigned mentality of the leaders, which was reflected in their actions, only resulted in a series of self-fulfilling prophecies. Through their actions, they unconsciously helped the Shah's regime to become stronger, and the popular movement to become weaker. Clearly the Shah's regime was more powerful in 1960 than in 1949. But this did not necessarily imply that the popular opposition had no real chance, had the N.F. acted differently. A whole series of strikes and demonstrations showed that people were indeed dissatisfied with the regime's performance and were ready for action. Further, in the absence of any other opposi-
tional organization, the Second National Front had a golden opportunity to become the unrivaled leader of the potential movement. But most of the influential leaders of the Front ignored or at least underestimated the popular potential for political activity and instead concentrated their effort basically on persuading the regime to grant them concessions. This emphasis on negotiation with the regime ironically intensified when the more conservative Alam replaced Amini as the prime minister. (186) It should come as no surprise that nothing came of these negotiations.

Meanwhile the Shah had met with Kennedy and had probably convinced the U.S. administration that he, himself, would continue the reforms and that he would be a good ally to America. So when Amini resigned to be replaced by Alam there was no American protest in the form of cutting military and economic aid. The Shah very quickly took control of the land reform program. He introduced his White Revolution and thereby took a big step towards firmly establishing his personal rule. By then he had the backing of the U.S., had gotten rid of the independent Amini, had Alam as a faithful prime minister, had succeeded in projecting him-

(186) Amini resigned after being in office for 15 months. His struggle against the army which was manifested in his demands for a cut in military budget and more effective control of the army by the government were not accepted by the Shah, and as a result Amini resigned. His successor, Assadollah Alam, represented the interest of the more conservative faction of the elite.
self as a supporter of the popular land reform program, and probably saw no reason to bend and to be flexible towards the increasingly weak and isolated Second National Front. If S.N.F. leaders had concentrated more on attracting and organizing public support they could have been able to enter into negotiation from a position of strength the results of which might have been more fruitful.

The same argument could be made about N.F. attitudes toward the U.S. administration. Even if it were correct that nothing could be done without explicit or implicit U.S. support, the N.F. leaders chose the wrong tactics to attract this support. To earn support or at least acquiescence, one should convince the potential supporter of one of the two following consequences: either that the denial of support would ultimately hurt the latter, or that the end result of the support would be desirable from the point of view of the potential supporter. The Front leaders did not convince the U.S. either way.

To Kennedy the best way to fight communism and to prevent socialist revolution in countries such as Iran was to introduce socio-economic reforms, particularly land reform. The S.N.F. gave no indication that it was able to introduce or carry out such reforms. On the other hand, to convince the U.S. of the harmful effects of not

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(187) Kennedy's policy of "Alliance for Progress" in Latin America was a manifestation of this belief on his part.
supporting the N.F., this organization would had to project itself as a powerful force in the society. Only as an organization which could count on and capitalize on popular support could the N.F. have convinced the U.S. of possible negative consequences, such as demonstrations, strikes and even revolution, if the latter did not choose to support the National Front. But through their policies and tactics the leaders of the Front isolated the N.F. and denied this organization the opportunity to become a viable force in Iranian politics.

There are several examples of the attitudes of the leaders toward popular mobilization. In 1962 there was a big sit-in by the students in Tehran University. On behalf of the Central Council Shapur Bakhtiar went to the University and asked the students to end the sit-in. The students reluctantly left the campus. But despite the assurances given by Bakhtiar regarding their safety, as they were leaving the campus the students were attacked, many of them severely beaten, by the military guards. This episode had a very negative impact on the university students, who were the only effective supporters left of the Front.

Another example of the leadership's approach to popular mobilization was their reaction toward the popular uprising in June 1963. By this time, the National Front had already passed up many opportunities, but still existed as an anti-
ty. The June 1963 events, in which several hundreds if not thousands lost their lives, was the last dramatic reflection of widespread popular dissatisfaction with the regime for a long time to come. The regime which was frightened by the intensity of the uprising decided to brutally suppress the movement. The National Front not only did not play a role in organizing and leading the uprising, but its leadership could not agree even to publicly condemn the regime slaughtering of the people. By failing to take a stand regarding one of the most serious and dramatic sets of events in recent Iranian history, the National Front lost its last vestige of credibility. The "wait and see" policy of its leadership was in sharp contrast with what people in this crucial period perceived as suitable and therefore demanded.

Organizational Characteristics.

Closely related to these leadership weaknesses were the organizational deficiencies which ultimately made the Second National Front a virtual non-entity. On paper, the Second National Front had a more structured organization than the First Front. It had a Congress, a Plenum, a Central Council, an Executive Board, an Investigation Board, several social and syndicate organizations and local town com-

(188) In a letter addressed to the National Front abroad, Saleh officially endorsed the policy of wait and see. Mossadeq Publication Number 10, pp.128-129
mittees. But in practice, despite its apparently clear divisions of responsibility, this structure amounted to nothing. No disciplined organizational relations were evident. The lower level units did not carry that much weight, and therefore could not make any impact on decision making processes.

The only important and relatively organized unit of the National Front was the Organization of University Students, but almost all of its initiatives were ignored by the Central Council. (189) Other units such as the Bazaar committee, which could have played an important role in promoting the N.F., especially financially, very soon became disillusioned with the Front and withdrew their active support.

The member parties, such as the Iran Party, retained their old image and therefore were not able to attract members from any significant group within the society. Their supporters still consisted of small groups of professionals and intellectuals. As before, none of these parties was successful (or even made any serious attempt) either to change or broaden their base of support. They remained as weak as before, incapable of helping the Front.

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(189) For a detailed account of the Organization of University Students and its activities look at Mokatebat-e Mossadeq, #10, and also Bijan Jazani, Tarh-e Jame-eh shenasi va Mabani-e Estrategi-e Jonbesh-e Engelabi-e Iran (Sociological Design and the Strategic Bases for the Revolutionary Movement of Iran.), Mazear Publications.
Moreover, the exclusion of groups such as the Freedom Movement and the Socialist Society from the Front, made this organization even less effective than it could otherwise have been. The Freedom Movement, an organization which tried to reconcile the elements of old and new, tradition and modernity, religion and science and therefore to preserve the Iranian identity while promoting progress, could have attracted an important section of the population to the Front. The Socialist Society, which was comprised basically of young, educated and enthusiastic people, never had the opportunity to be a part of the N.F. The members of the Socialist Society had participated in the Third Force, a group better organized than other parties during the F.N.F. Their experience could have been an organizational asset to the Second Front. But the Front denied itself the possible benefit of inclusion of these two groups into its ranks. And in the end, the continuous and ultimately fruitless organizational disputes not only did not result in a more effective organization but in fact diverted the Front's focus of attention and its energy from societal problems to internal organizational power politics.
Summary.

In summary, the reasons for the defeat of the Second National Front should be sought in its lack of socio-economic programs, its lack of decisive, clear minded and courageous leadership, and its organizational deficiencies. In the context of the Iranian situation of the early 1960s, the defeat of the National Front became even more "inevitable" than in the early 1950s.

Mossadegh, who was the most valuable asset to the First Front and who to a great extent compensated for its organizational weaknesses, was not available to do the same for the Second National Front. Due to the growing arbitrariness of the Shah's regime in the 1960s, the legalistic approach of the Second Front leadership was even less suitable and had a more negative impact on the popular movement than in the 1950s.

In terms of positive programs the S.N.F. was even more empty handed than the First Front. In retrospect it seems that the Second National Front leaders did not learn the lessons of the past. There was no evaluation of the previous struggles, of the experience and fate of the First Front, and of its strengths and vulnerabilities. In addition there was no proper evaluation of the 1960s situation, of the forces which were operating within the society, the foreign influence, the Shah's regime, the dissatisfied pop-
ulace, and lastly, of the N.F.'s own place and responsibility as the organizational expression of the opposition. The National Front in the 1960s had another chance to become a viable force and to even form the government, but it let the opportunity slip from its hands, an opportunity which would never present itself again.

POSTSCRIPT: THE THIRD NATIONAL FRONT.

The organization of the Third National Front was attempted by adherents of the more radical tendency within the N.F., including Bazargan and his Freedom Movement, Foruhar and his Mellat Iran Party, the Socialist Society and the Organization of the University Students. In a message, Mossadegh endorsed the formation of the Third National Front. But before it had the chance to become a real entity, the T.N.F. was suppressed. All its prominent leaders were arrested and sentenced to jail. The rank and file, who had remained out in the cold became once again (and this time for good) disillusioned with the National Front. Many of them became inactive. Some went abroad and made an attempt to revive the N.F. in Europe and America. But some, the majority of whom were young, decided to continue the struggle in Iran.

This time, the younger generation turned away from the N.F., and its traditional methods. They decided to take
their political fate into their own hands. They evaluated the past struggles, the present situation, and the future opportunities. They saw the N.F. as an outdated organization unable to understand, to express and to solve the fundamental problems of Iranian society. This new generation of activists concluded that growing dictatorship had left no room for anything but a drastically different approach.

The socio-economic, political and cultural developments of Iran after the White Revolution, the development of a "repressive technocratic modernist" state, the changes in the social structure of the society, the increasing numbers of lower class people who became politicized, and the cultural shocks which hit the traditional sectors of the society provided the objective substance for the subjective theories which called for a change in oppositional activities. It was in such a context that the nucleus of guerrilla activities was formed. And it was then that the N.F. with its legal approach, its Westernized image and its more or less secular views became part of history, a part which would have no viable place in the turbulent history of Iran for decades to come.
Chapter VII
THE FOURTH NATIONAL FRONT

The suppression of the 1963 uprising was followed by almost fifteen years of apparent political tranquillity. The absence of viable oppositional activities was due to several factors. Firstly, increase in oil revenues and economic growth of the 1960s and early 70s bought the acquiescence, if not the support, of an important section of the middle class, particularly the professionals. Secondly, the disillusionment of political activists with the inability of traditional leaders (the National Front leaders) to direct and guide the oppositional movement worked in favor of the regime. Thirdly, for many people, the failure of the 1963 uprising with its high cost in human lives was proof of the strength of the regime, and the futility of attempts to challenge it. This view, which the brutal suppression of any critical voice reinforced, resulted in apathy, pessimism and passivity on the part of many socially conscious people. Although the nuclei of guerrilla activities were formed after 1963, even the two major guerrilla groups were not successful in inflicting any major attacks
on the regime. In terms of guerrilla activities these
groups were, in a practical sense, more like nuisances than
any real threat to the stability of the regime.

It was only in 1977 that the fragility of the regime
became apparent. In a span of less than two years, a refor­
mist criticism of the regime developed into a full fledged
revolution and resulted in the collapse of the Pahlavi
Dynasty. It was during this period that the National Front
reemerged.

The purpose of this chapter is, first, to trace the
revival of the N.F.; second, to recount its defeat; and
third, to explain the reasons behind its defeat.

THE REVIVAL AND DEFEAT OF THE MELLI MOVEMENT.

Limited liberalization. 1977-78: the Policy of Carrot and
Stick.

In order to understand and to analyze the recreation of
the N.F. and its subsequent defeat, it is crucial to look
at the context in which its activity was resumed. One of
the important actors in shaping that context was the Irani-
an regime and the Shah at the top of it. The actions and
reactions of the regime in the period of 1977-79 had their
own impact on the fate of the liberal nationalists. In
order to highlight this interplay, we next take a brief
look at the regime's behavior in that period.
The circulation of a two page open letter to the Shah in June 1977, signed by three liberal reformist N.F. leaders, (190) is usually referred to as the beginning of a period of limited liberalization. (191) Although the content of the letter was quite mild and left ample room for compromise, the fact that its writers were not punished signaled a definite departure from the regime's past behavior towards critical voices.

In answering the question of why another era of limited liberalization started in 1977 when repression had already reached its peak, one has to look at a few developments inside and outside Iran. Internally, the continuing growth of socio-economic problems and the subsequent increase in popular discontent made the situation potentially explosive. In such a context, the Shah, who was terminally ill with cancer, (192) was probably worried about a succession crisis. The actual power that the Shah held and the control which he exerted over the society far exceeded his legal authority pursuant to the Constitution of 1906. On his dem-

(190) The three leaders were Sanjabi, Foruhar and Bakhtiar.

(191) Actually this letter was not the first criticism voiced against the state of affairs in Iran. A two hundred page critical essay written by Ali Asgar Hajj Said Javadi, a liberal intellectual, and an open letter to the Imperial Court in May 1977 signed by fifty-three lawyers, demanding an independent judiciary, preceded the open letter to the Shah.

(192) At the time the Shah's illness was a well kept secret.
ise, there would have been a power-vacuum, which his young and inexperienced son could not have filled effectively. Given this situation, it is conceivable that the Shah was not completely reluctant to ease repression. This easing of repression had to involve a degree of power sharing with some sectors or elements of the society. Although in the Shah's view this solution may not have been an ideal one, it could have been a useful tactic in acquiring the cooperation of some sectors. This in turn could have made the succession process, from father to son, smoother than would otherwise be possible.

In addition to this internal factor, there was an assumption of outside pressure on the regime on the part of both the Shah and the opposition. When Jimmy Carter became the U.S. President in 1977, he emphasized his interest in human rights as an issue in his overall foreign policy. Regarding Iran, whether Carter was pressing for a broad observance of human rights or only for the abolishment of torture of political prisoners, and whether or not he intended to cause the Shah's regime some inconvenience (such as restriction of arms sales to Iran) in the absence of any improvement, the fact remained that his human rights declaration was taken seriously by the Shah and the opposition alike. Even prior to Carter's Human Rights policy...
cy, the regime had begun to feel some pressures from world opinion created by the campaign launched by different international organizations such as Amnesty International.

No matter what necessitated or who initiated the liberalization era, the important point is that open criticism of the Shah's regime grew very rapidly. Different groups, such as lawyers and writers, formed their organizations and made their demands for freedom very clear. At the same time there were some gestures from the regime. One such gesture was the reduction of torture and the open trial of some people who were charged with anti-state offences. Another example of these gestures was the granting of permission to the International Red Cross to visit many of the Iranian prisons in 1977, and the introduction of new laws concerning military tribunals.

But a regime which for so long had relied on repression as its primary source of sustenance could not very well change its nature rapidly. Even if it could, it would not easily convince a people, who were subject to its repression, of such a possibility. Therefore the outcome of the relaxation of repression was not accommodation or cooperation on the part of the populace, but the surfacing of a

ty. Bazargan in his recent book: *Engelab-e Iran Dar do Harekat* (Iranian Revolution in Two Motions), expresses the same view.

(194) There was no open political trial in Iran for many years prior to 1977.
tremendous number of deep-seated grievances. As time went by, the open criticism of the regime which had been mild and only expressed by limited sections of the society spread rapidly, included more and more people, and became more radical in content. The regime, and the Shah at the top of it, could not handle the situation and vacillated between policies which at times were conciliatory and at times harshly punitive.

There were some important examples of conciliatory policies, economic as well as political. In January 1978, the government announced 80 billion rials subsidies for some important foodstuffs. In March 1978, about 240 political prisoners were set free. In his speech of August 5, 1978, celebrating the seventy-second anniversary of the constitution and the beginning of the Islamic holy month of Ramadan, the Shah promised free elections and also stressed his own religiosity. On August 27, the Shah appointed Jaafar Sharif-Emami as prime minister to replace the Western oriented, technocratic Amuzegar. This appointment was a conciliatory gesture toward the religious community.

Immediately upon his appointment, Sharif-Emami closed down the gambling casinos throughout the country and reverted the Shahanshahi calendar to the Islamic one. On September 10, the government announced programs to raise salaries of the civil servants, to fight corruption and to
improve agricultural development. On October 1, the Shah guaranteed the safety of political exiles who were willing to return to Iran. In the meantime some former ministers were arrested, and charged with corruption. Very soon after, General Nassiri, the former head of Savak, was arrested for criminal actions including the torture of political prisoners. In the same month a major cutback in military expenditure was announced by the government. On November 6, the Shah, wearing a conservative civilian suit, appeared on television and gave a humble speech in which he acknowledged the grievances of the population, and stated that he too was with the nation and part of the revolution. The Shah's last attempt at conciliation, made in hopes of preventing a revolutionary toppling of the Pahlavi Dynasty, was his appointment of Shapur Bakhtiar to premiership in December 29, and his departure for Egypt on January 16, 1979.

But as mentioned above, the carrot policy was accompanied with a stick. Harsh and punitive policies aimed at containing the revolutionary outbreaks either preceded, followed or coincided with the conciliatory gestures. Among the harsh policies, one can differentiate between two types. One type was terroristic actions for which the regime never claimed responsibility. The other type was policies which were officially declared by the regime and
carried out by the armed forces. Among the first type of actions were installations of bombs in the offices of five members of the newly organized Iranian Committee for the Defense of Freedom and Human Rights. On August 19, 1978, there was an explosion and fire in a movie theater in Abadan in which 400 to 450 died. There was circumstantial evidence which pointed to the involvement of some city departments such as the police and fire departments. The matter was never fully investigated either by the Shah's regime nor by the revolutionary regime of the Ayatollah Khomeini. But at the time the majority of people and their spokesmen believed that the regime was responsible for the fire. (195) Among the officially sanctioned policies were the declaration of martial law in several cities, and the arresting and killing of demonstrators. The most important of such actions was the incident at the Jaleh Square in Tehran on September 8, 1978, when the army opened fire on the demonstrators, killing hundreds if not thousands of men and women. This day became known as "Black Friday" throughout Iran.

The question of whether or not, in 1979, the collapse of the Shah's regime was inevitable is still an issue for debate among both scholars and people with a personal

(195) For example Sanjabi, in a press conference in August 23, stated: "We have no proof, but it (the incident) reminds me of the Reichstag fire." Newsweek, September 25, 1978. p.30.
interest in Iran. For many Iranian and foreign apologists of the Shah's regime, Carter's Human Rights policy and its real or perceived pressure on the Shah's regime, and the subsequent lack of will on the part of the Shah to seriously and systematically suppress the unleashed oppositional forces, was the main cause of the revolutionary upheaval and the downfall of the Shah.(196) For many of them the socio-economic, political and cultural malaise was either unimportant or could have been most effectively and efficiently dealt with through the use of repression.

On the other hand, the radical elements within the opposition in particular talked about the inevitability of the revolution and the collapse of the Pahlavi Dynasty. For them the causes of the revolution could be found within the dynamic of Iranian society and Iranian politics. To them, liberalization was just a sham used to deceive people and to postpone the revolution rather than speed it up.(197) There was also a middle ground view expressed by many scholars, and many moderate Iranian opposition leaders. According to this view, the external pressure provided the opportunity for the revolution, whose potential already


(197) See for example an interview with Khomeini in Iran Erupts, edited by Ali Reza Nobari, a publication of The Iran-America Documentation Group. p.21.
existed, to develop into an actuality. (198)

Looking at the Iranian context in 1977 and tracing the policies of the regime in the 1977-78 period, I find the third argument more persuasive than the other two. There can be no denying, as most liberal nationalist leaders themselves admitted, that Carter's Human Rights policy was perceived as an opportunity. This perception persuaded the liberal leaders to start their campaign against repression. The subsequent lack of harsh reprisal, convinced and subsequently activated many sections of the intelligentsia. But the policy of stick, whether a cause or an effect of the radicalization of the movement, had a definite and negative impact on the fate of the liberal nationalist leaders and contributed to the rise of the radical leaders to the positions of leadership of the whole movement.

Response of Oppositional Groups.

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(198) For example, Bazargan, refering to Carter's Human Rights policy and other external pressure as favorable opportunities, says: Other historical revolutions (like the Iranian revolution) were successful because they took advantage of the opportunities which were presented to them." M. Bazargan, Engelabi-e Iran ..., p.25.
The Moderate Opposition.

The two page open letter to the Shah marked the beginning of a series of similar actions taken by liberal members of the intelligentsia. The issues put forth in the letter to the Shah were of a political nature. The restoration of the Constitution of 1906, freedom of political prisoners and freedom of the press were the basic demands of the letter. The letter was deferential in tone and moderate in substance. After criticizing the state of affairs in Iran, the last two paragraphs of the letter are as follows:

This open letter is addressed to a person who, a few years ago at Harvard University, declared: "The outcome of the violation of individual freedoms and the disrespect for the spiritual needs of human being is frustration. And frustrated individuals will follow the path of rejection to cut themselves off from all social rules and traditions. The only way to eliminate these frustrations is to respect individual freedoms and to believe in the truth that people are not the slaves of government, but government the servant of the people." And more recently, your majesty in the holy city of Mashhad said:"To eliminate faults, one can not resort to pistols. Corruption can only be fought through social crusades."

Therefore, the only way to restore and nurture the personality of an individual, to reestablish national cooperation and to escape from the problems which threaten Iran's future, is to abandon authoritarian rule, to submit completely to the constitutional principles, to revive people's rights, to respect the constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to abandon the single party system, to permit freedom of the press and freedom of associations, to establish a popularly elected government based on the majority will.
In the letter there was no sign of radical demands such as the Shah's resignation or the abolition of the Pahlavi Dynasty. This letter was followed in the same month by another one addressed to Prime Minister Hoveida. The latter was signed by forty prominent writers and poets. They declared the revival of the "Writers Associations" which had been suppressed in 1964. The signatories, who represented different political tendencies, including some Marxists and pro Tudeh, again demanded the implementation of the constitution and an end to censorship, and condemned the role of Savak in stifling intellectual and artistic activities. In the same period, a group of lawyers, sixty-four of them, protested the official lawlessness and demanded strict observance of law through the creation of a genuinely independent judiciary. These lawyers were headed by Hassan Nazih, a leading member of the Freedom movement, Doctor Abdol Karim Lahidji, a one-time member of the Organization of University Students affiliated to the Second National Front, and Hedayatollah Matin-Daftari, the grandson of Mossadegh. Both Lahidji and Matin-Daftari were members of the Maleki Socialist Society. Soon a manifesto was drafted by these leaders and was signed by 142 lawyers. In this manifesto, the formation of the Lawyers Association was declared, the immediate goal of which was to curb the control the Ministry of Justice had over court judges and
to guarantee the financial independence of the judicial branch.(199)  

Very soon after, these same leaders along with people such as Bazargan, Sanjabi and Ayatollah Zanjani formed the Iranian Committee for the Defense of Freedom and Human Rights. By taking advantage of the internal situation and sympathetic world opinion, this committee started its campaign, striving to gain freedom for political prisoners and political exiles, and voicing protests against Savak and the regime. To promote their cause they resorted to tactics such as writing open letters to international institutions like the United Nations and inviting Iranian and foreign correspondents for a series of press conferences.

Until the formation of this committee, most of the organizations which were formed belonged to particular professions such as lawyers, writers, university professors or merchants.(200) Although each of these organizations attacked the dictatorship of the regime, their basic demands were limited to matters related to their own professions. But in Autumn 1977, a number of political organizations were formed or were revived.

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(199) "The Lawyers Manifesto", Khabar-Nameh (Supplementory), no.8, December 11, 1977, pp.52-53.

(200) In 1977, university professors formed an organization called the National Organization of University Professors, demanding academic freedom. Similarly the Bazaar merchants formed the Merchants, Traders and Craftsmen League.
On November 19, a manifesto was issued, declaring the revival of the National Front, or what was called the Union of the National Front Forces (Ettehad-e Niruhay-e Jebhey-e Melli). Sanjabi and Asadollah Mobasheri as independent personalities, and Bakhtiar, Foruhar and Reza Shayan as representatives of the Iran Party, the Mellat Iran Party and the Socialist Society respectively, were responsible for the revival of the National Front. Their demands, broader than the demands put forward by different professional organizations, were very much like Mossadegh's demands of the early 1950s and included the independence of Iran from foreign domination. To promote its goal, this N.F. (referred to as the Fourth N.F.) started to publish a paper, Khabar-Nameh (Newsletter), and urged all the freedom loving and independence seeking forces and organizations to join the National Front.

In the meantime, Bazargan and his supporters intensified the activities of the Freedom Movement. Another liberal political organization which was formed during this period was Nehzat-e Radical (the Radical Movement), the spokesman of which was a French educated intellectual named Rahmatollah Mogadam Marraqeh-e. But unlike the early 1950s, in 1977 the National Front was not only unable to assume the leadership of the Iranian opposition as a whole, but failed to assume leadership of the secular liberal opposition as
well. Most of the prominent liberals did not join the National Front in 1977.

The Radical Opposition.

On January 7, 1978, an article appeared in one of the officially sanctioned newspapers. The article was a personal and brutal attack on Ayatollah Khomeini aimed at discrediting him. It was believed to have been written by Dar-iush Homayoun, then the Minister of Information. But in light of the event which followed, this attempt proved to be a grave mistake. On the following day, a huge demonstration was staged by religious students in Qum, demanding the return of Khomeini, and denouncing the Shah's regime. The demonstration was quelled by the security forces, leaving many people dead and many more injured. "The Qum incident," a secular leader admitted:

was a turning point in many respects. First of all, the secular leaders had no role in initiating the demonstration. Secondly, slogans used by the demonstrators were clearly voiced in religious language. And third, the regime's severe reaction convinced many people that the most feared enemy, from the regime's point of view, was the religious community, and therefore that the religious opposition must be the most powerful of all opposition.

(201) For example, in denouncing the Shah's regime, the demonstrators referred to it as the "Yazid Government". According to Shiism, Yazid was a usurper against whom Hossein, the grandson of the prophet Mohammed, waged his crusade and lost his life.

This incident was usually referred to as the event which changed the form of oppositional activity by adding to it the element of demonstration and popular oppositional gathering. But, the argument that previous activities led by the secular and basically moderate forces were exclusively limited to pamphleteering and issuing manifestos is not totally accurate. The Writers Association, in its attempts to spread its cause, organized ten consecutive evenings of peaceful poetry reading, starting October 10, 1977, in the Iranian-German Cultural Society (the Goethe Institute) and in the Aryamehr University. The sessions were highly political and attracted an audience of eight to ten thousand for each session. (203) The last session was disrupted by the police, and the audience, which consisted mostly of students, poured into the street in protest. This incident was followed by a few others involving the university students. But the regime's response to these protests was not as severe as the one in Qum which left many people dead.

The difference between the Qum demonstrations and the previous ones was the chain reaction created by the former. In Shia tradition, on the fortieth day after one's death, there is a ceremony in which people gather to remember the dead and to mourn. This is an automatic process for which there is no need to set a date or a place. Regarding the

(203) The Writers Association's proclamation, no.10, Khabar-nameh, no.8, p.54.
context of Iranian society, and the set of events, this tradition created a perfect opportunity for staging demonstrations at predetermined intervals. From abroad, Khomeini denounced the government's action. Inside Iran, the Grand Ayatollah Shariatmadari gave a speech in the Grand Mosque of Qum. The speech, which asked for the observance of the fortieth day, was taped and copied. Ayatollah Shariatmadari, who was basically a non-political but highly respected religious scholar, was born in Azarbijan and had tremendous popularity among Azarbijanis. His tape was widely distributed in Tabriz, the provincial capital of Azarbijan. Such political action from a non-revolutionary but highly regarded religious leader created excitement among Azarbijanis.

This was probably an important factor in explaining why the fortieth day of the Qum incident, which was observed in most major cities in Iran including Tehran, turned into a violent demonstration in the city of Tabriz. Angry people attacked and destroyed buildings. Banks, some movie theaters, the office of the Rastakhiz Party, and some luxury hotels believed to belong to the Pahlavi Foundation were targets of attack. The selection of these particular buildings revealed the focal point of popular anger, namely Western domination, both in the economic and cultural spheres, and the dictatorship of the Shah's regime. But
there were no attacks on human life, even against those who were considered enemies. At the end of two days, the Tabriz demonstrations were crushed by the bloody interference of the military.

There is no accurate figure for the number of dead, but the result generated another fortieth day. This time the N.F. also joined the religious leaders in asking for the observance of the fortieth ceremony. This next fortieth day, March 29, was observed in many more cities, and, unlike the first one, the processions turned into violent clashes in more than one city. The second fortieth day was followed by the third, and the same pattern of violence was repeated in many more cities. To cooperate with the call for these procession days, bazaars and many universities and high schools went on strike on the same days. It was during these periods that the slogan "death to the Shah" was heard.

These Arba-ins (fortieth days) and the following huge but extremely peaceful and orderly demonstrations against the regime brought to the surface one important issue concerning the nature of state-society relations. That issue was the lack of legitimacy of the regime and the fragility of its stability. This revelation created hope for the radical opposition and made them adamant in their demand to overthrow the Shah. It created a mixture of hope and anxie-
ty on the part of the more moderate opposition, which was basically looking for gradual change. (204) Finally, it created fear, confusion and indecisiveness on the part of the regime, the Shah in particular, which was reflected in its vacillating responses to a movement which became increasingly intense and popular. The carrot part of the regime's policies was regarded as deceitful, at worst, and as too little-too late, at best. On the other hand, there were no continuing or consistent punitive policies. Whether the continuance of systematic repression on the part of the regime was, first, possible (205) and, second, could have saved the Shah is questionable and is still a matter of debate. But the fact remains that the end result of the sporadic and unsystematic use of violence by the regime was to increase popular anger, to jeopardize the chances of the moderate leaders and non-revolutionary solutions, and to increase the popularity of radical leaders and revolutionary alternatives.


(205) Considering that many rank and file members of the army had already been influenced by the movement and by Khomeini himself, and that an extensive involvement by the military forces was needed to crush a movement of such magnitude, it is questionable that the Shah could have implemented increasingly repressive policies.
In the meantime, the entry of some classes, which were not participants in the oppositional activities until mid 1978, into the scene changed the class composition of the oppositional forces. (206) The core activists up to mid 1978 came from the ranks of the middle class, such as intellectuals, Bazaar merchants and university students. But in July of that year the working class, including the urban poor, joined the revolution. The entry of these new groups provided the religious opposition with an asset not easily available to the intellectual moderate opposition. A major factor in spreading oppositional activities to the lower urban strata was a tightening economic policy adopted by the regime to fight the high rate of inflation. The recessionary policies, which were initiated by Jamshid Amuzegar in 1977, took its toll in 1978. The freezing of wages, and the high rate of unemployment induced by deflationary policies, affected the lower classes whose expectations had already been raised by previous boom years. As a result, using Robert Gurr's terminology, (207) discontent, caused by perceived discrepancy between these groups' value expectations and their value capabilities, increased.

(206) For a detailed account of different groups and classes in the revolution, see E. Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions.* Princeton University, Princeton, N.J., 1982, pp.251. Also see Nikkie Keddie, *Roots of Revolution.*

ing been exposed to national politics, these groups blamed the government for their deprivation, a belief that resulted in their politicization.

The Iranian situation in 1978, and the belief that the regime was not as strong as it once appeared to be, made the mobilization of these strata an easy task. Since, as argued in previous chapters, the ties between these lower strata and the religious opposition were much stronger than to any other oppositional groups, including the secular intellectuals, their mobilization strengthened the position of the religious opposition at the expense of both the regime and the secular opposition. Moreover the use of violence on the part of the regime, particularly in Qum, Tabriz and most importantly on "Black Friday", played into the hands of the radical as opposed to the moderate groups. So by mid-summer 1978, the radical-religious opposition came into control of a movement which had been initiated by moderate and mainly secular forces in 1977.

Attempts at Unification

It is only in retrospect and for analytical reasons, that one can and should make a very sharp distinction between different groups and label them as radical, liberal, moderate, secular or religious. During 1977-78, because of the volatility and unpredictability of the situation, there was lots of room to maneuver from one position to
another, taking first a moderate and then a radical stand. Moreover, as in many other modern revolutions, the existence of one common enemy necessitated efforts towards unification and coalition building. Different groups either could not or would not emphasize their particular positions. Instead, there was a tendency to find a common ground to ease the process of unification. That is why there were several attempts on the part of different groups and personalities, including Khomeini himself, to build alliances and to take joint actions. The calls for peaceful demonstrations during 1978 came jointly from Ayatollahs Khomeini, Shariatmadari, and Taleqani, the lay-religious organization of the Freedom Movement and the secular National Front.

But as far as the majority of the population were concerned, Khomeini was the undeniable leader of the revolution. Considering the nature of the Iranian Revolution, whose strength was based on massive demonstrations and strikes and not on armed insurrection or negotiation with the regime, and considering the fact that popular sym-

(208) This assertion is based on the slogans heard during the huge demonstrations, particularly that of Ashura (The anniversary of Imam Hossein's martyrdom), in which, in Tehran alone, 1.5 to 3 million people peacefully participated. Based on the data collected during the major demonstration 38% of the slogans were anti-despotic, about 47% were demands for Islamic revolution and Khomeini's leadership, and only 15% were about other personalities most of whom were already dead. M. Bazargan, Engelab-e Iran dar Do Harekat, pp. 37-38.
pathies lay with the Islamic revolution and Khomeini's leadership, it would be difficult to imply anything but a minor role for either the guerrilla organizations or the secular liberals in controlling or changing the direction of the movement by mid-1978. It was probably based on this perception that Sanjabi, the leader of the Fourth N.F., went to Paris, met Khomeini and accepted his terms. After meeting with Khomeini, Sanjabi as the leader of the N.F. issued a three point public communique:

1. The Iranian monarchy, by its continuous violation of the constitution, by inflicting injustice and spreading corruption, and by giving in to foreign powers, is devoid of any legal and Shar-i (of Islamic laws) justifications.

2. The Melli-Islamic Movement of Iran will not accept any form of government as long as this unlawful system of monarchy exists.

3. The Melli regime of Iran must be based on the principles of Islam, democracy and independence, and must be determined by popular referendum.

In the meanwhile, Bazargan also met with Khomeini, and as the leader of the Freedom Movement openly accepted Khomeini as the leader of the revolution.

After peaceful demonstrations came a series of strikes. Strikes of factory workers and later of the governmental offices soon spread all over Iran. The strikes by the Ministry of Education and by teachers and university professors were followed by strikes by employees of different
banks, the Department of Customs, the Railroad, ...etc. This wave of strikes reached its peak in November and became most effective when the workers in the oil industry went on strike.

Realizing the severity of the situation, the Shah, who hated the National Front because of what Mossadeq's popularity in 1953 had done to him, decided to enter into serious negotiation with the leaders of the National Front. He first met with Sanjabi, but the latter refused his offer of the premiership. In his search for a compromise solution, he offered the office of prime minister to Shapur Bakhtiar. Bakhtiar accepted the offer and became the Shah's last premier on December 30.

**Defeat of Bakhtiar's Government**

Bakhtiar accepted the Shah's offer with several conditions. First was that the Shah would leave the country for an extended vacation; second, that the prime minister would exercise the right to select his own cabinet and not the Shah; third, that Savak would be abolished; fourth, that freedom would be granted to political prisoners; fifth, that the government would take control of the assets of the Pahlavi Foundation; and some others. The Shah accepts——

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(209) Several days before the successful August 19, 1953 Coup, the Shah, due to Mossadeq's popularity, was forced to flee the country.

ed the conditions and left the country in January 16, 1979. But Bakhtiar's government did not survive more than thirty-seven days. He failed to secure the approval of his own organization. He was condemned by both Sanjabi and Foruhar and was consequently expelled from the National Front. But most importantly, Khomeini refused to give his blessing to Bakhtiar's government. Instead, Khomeini urged the population to continue their opposition, declaring that any government appointed by the Shah should be regarded as illegal.

Bakhtiar's declared programs, including full restoration of the Constitution of 1906, stoppage of Iranian oil to South Africa and Israel, and cutting the military budget, (211) did not create enthusiasm among the people and did not buy the support needed for his survival as the prime minister. Very soon, demonstrations and strikes were resumed and this time Bakhtiar's government was the target of their attack. (212)

The shah left Iran on January 16, and on February 1, Khomeini returned triumphantly to Iran. Upon his arrival, a crowd of three million greeted him in Tehran. On February 4, 1979, Khomeini appointed Mehdi Bazargan as prime minister and asked him to form a government, even though Bakhtiar still considered himself as prime minister. For a few 

(212) Sh. Bakhtiar, Ma Fidelite, p. 117
days the situation was confusing and Bakhtiar's government was immobilized. But on the eve of February 9, a very brief period of armed insurrection started.

The event which triggered that period was the bloody suppression of pro-Khomeini Homafarans (air-force cadets and technicians) attempted by the Shah's Imperial Guard. Upon receiving the news of the battle between these two groups, the two major guerrilla organizations, the Mojahedeen and the Fadayen who were equipped with arms, rushed to help the Homafarans and played the most crucial role in the last stage of the revolution which lasted only two days. They defeated the Imperial Guard, the only military group which stood fast behind the Shah's regime.

During these two days the guerrilla groups distributed weapons among their sympathizers and were successful in opening up the prisons, and in taking over the police stations and some of the military bases. On February 11, the Military High Council met and published a communique. In this communique, the military declared its neutrality and ordered the military units to go back to their barracks.(213) In this declaration, Bakhtiar lost the last base of power at his disposal, and his thirty-seven days of premiership ended. He went into hiding and then fled the country.

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(213) "The Military Communique", in Chand Got-e-Goo ba Shapur Bakhtiar, p.144.
Defeat of Bazargan's Government

On February 4, Khomeini through a written statement appointed Mehdi Bazargan as the head of the provisional government. According to this statement, Bazargan was appointed because he was a devout Moslem and had a long history of fighting for "Islamic and Melli" causes. (214) It was also stated that in appointing Bazargan no consideration had been given to his party or organizational affiliation. The task of the provisional government, as decided by Khomeini and the Revolutionary Council was first, to arrange and carry through a public referendum to determine the form of the future Iranian regime (changing it from a monarchy to an Islamic Republic); second, to convene the Constituent Assembly, consisting of the people's representatives in order to ratify a new constitution; and third, to arrange free elections for the Majlis.

Soon after this statement, Bazargan started to form his cabinet. Among the ministers were Sanjabi, Foruhar, Asadollah Mobasheri, and Ahmad Madani of the National Front. There were also men such as Yadollah Sadr and Ahmad Sadr Hajj Said Javadi and some others from Bazargan's Freedom Movement itself. The Islamic Society of Engineers, of which

Bazargan himself was one of the founders, was also represented in the cabinet by men such as Ali-Akbar Moинфar. Overall the complexion of the provisional government was for the most part moderate and liberal. The provisional government of Bazargan lasted only through November 6, 1979. On that day, two days after the occupation of the American Embassy in Tehran, which marked the beginning of an era of revolutionary fervor, Bazargan resigned.

The resignation or the collapse of Bazargan's government was an official defeat for the moderate and liberal forces in Iran. But one should be cautious not to read too much into this official defeat because Bazargan's government was devoid of any real power from the very beginning. Several reasons explain this lack of authority. Beside Khomeini who did not give his much needed support to Bazargan and his government, several other institutions acted as stumbling blocks to the provisional government's initiatives. The most important of these forces was the Revolutionary Council whose membership was kept secret for a year.

The talk of the need for a revolutionary council goes back to mid-1978. But its formation occurred in mid-January after Khomeini returned to Tehran. The original members of the Council included people such as Bazargan, Bani-sadr, Qotbzadeh and Ayatollah Beheshti. In the course of a few months the composition of the Revolutionary Council changed
and the number of clerics represented in the Council increased. (215) Lacking the necessary independence the Bazargan government had to consult the Revolutionary Council on crucial domestic and foreign policy issues.

The fact that the membership of the Revolutionary Council was secret at the time made the position of the government even more vulnerable than it otherwise would have been. The secrecy of the Council made that institution immune from attacks. And although it shared with the government the right to make crucial decisions, it was the latter which practically bore all responsibility for those decisions. The revolution released all sorts of social and political forces which were striving to share power, and which made vast arrays of demands on the government. The government, which among other things lacked real independence, could not possibly fulfill these demands. Therefore Bazargan's government not only became a target of criticism by people who were hoping for an effective government, but was also challenged by several new institutions which took it upon themselves to play the role of the government in different spheres.

Among these institutions were first, the revolutionary guard, a para-military organization designed to undercut the power of the regular army; second, the revolutionary

committees, a decentralized fully armed set of organizations which took upon themselves a vast array of security related tasks including the arrest of the Shah's officials and confiscation of property; and third, the revolutionary courts, with almost unlimited jurisdiction, filled by radical, vengeful prosecutors(216) who carried out hundreds of hasty executions in the first year of the revolution alone.

All these revolutionary organizations, which had the practical blessing of Khomeini and the Revolutionary Council, interfered with the normal operation of the provisional government. Bazargan himself on many occasions complained about and opposed, without any tangible success, the undue power of these institutions.(217) Moreover, the leftist groups such as the Tudeh Party, the Mojahedeen and the Fadeyen used every occasion to attack Bazargan and his government, accusing them of betraying the revolution and flirting with imperialist powers, particularly the U.S.(218) The constraints and pressure put on Bazargan's government by the revolutionary institutions and different political forces led Bazargan, on many occasions, to submit his resignation. But it was only after the occupation of

(216) The most notorious of these prosecutors was Sadeq Khalkhali, a member of the clergy who became known as the "Hanging Judge".

(217) M. Bazargan, Moshkelat va ..., pp. 165-171.

(218) Look at Mojahed and Mardom newspapers during 1979.
the U.S. Embassy, preceded by a meeting in Algiers between Bazargan and Brzezinski for which Bazargan was severely criticized, that the last attempt by Bazargan to resign was put into effect.

WHY THE LIBERALS FAILED: AN ANALYSIS.

The 1979 Iranian Revolution and its aftermath once again demonstrated the inability of the liberals to become a viable force in the Iranian political scene. As it has been argued throughout this dissertation, the defeat of the liberals was caused by a combination of two sets of factors. The first set was the socio-economic, cultural and political transformations of Iranian society, particularly since the early 1950s, and the second set consisted of the internal characteristics of the liberal movement itself.

The External Factors:

The goal of this subsection is: first, to show how socio-economic, cultural and political transformation led to the radicalization of Iranian society, and how radicalization in general hampers the chances of liberals; second, to analyze the impact of the social structure on the fate of the Iranian liberals; third (and highly related to the notion of radicalization) to explain how the regime's behavior between 1977-1979 affected the liberal movement.
In the economic realm, predominantly due to the increase in oil prices and production, a rare opportunity for economic expansion presented itself. The economic expansion was an apparent success. For several years, the low unemployment rate was accompanied by a low inflation rate. The result of the economic boom was rising expectations on the part of people who became integrated into the national economy in larger and larger numbers. The economic boom by itself created several problems including economic bottlenecks, uneven development, and acute inequality.

In addition to the problems associated with rapid economic growth, the Iranian economy encountered a new set of problems as economic growth started to decline in the mid-1970s. The relative decline in economic growth was accompanied by a very high rate of inflation. Inflation affected the lower strata of the society more than others. The deflationary policies of the Amuzegar government resulted in a high rate of unemployment, the victims of which were again the poor. People's expectations were severely frustrated. Frustration resulted in anger, which in its turn facilitated the polarization and radicalization of the society. The object of the population's anger was predominantly the regime of the Shah and its state machinery.
In the political realm, Iranian society experienced continuous and increasing repression under the Shah's rule. The creation of repressive organs, such as Savak and its subsequently increasing power, was accompanied by the denial of the society's right to legal political activity. Expression of criticism in any form or manner was suppressed. The intolerance of the regime in that respect left no room or hope for a reformist approach to politics. The choice, from the population's point of view, was limited to either total submission to the state or total denunciation of the regime. This mentality, for the most part, lingered even when the liberalization of 1977 started. Promises for political reforms expressed by a repressive regime which on previous occasions had broken such promises did not create hope for or trust in a reformist approach, and therefore did not eliminate the desire for radical transformation.

The socio-cultural transformations of Iran during the Shah's reign, as discussed previously, had their own impact on the radicalization of the society. The influx of millions and millions of peasants into urban areas, and their subsequent exposure to and experience with national politics created a new potential political force with ties with religious groups. At the same time, the modernist policies pursued by the Shah created a new cultural elite, which aggressively strived to impose its newly acquired Western
taste and habits on the whole society. The attempt of the new cultural elite to remold Iranian society backfired. Their arrogant attitude and their aggressive methods produced a radical reaction on the part of the population to resist and to fight this trend. The development of a dual culture helped the polarization of the society even further.

The radicalization of the society worked against the liberals in a more or less deterministic fashion. Liberals, by nature, tend to be more moderate than non-liberals. What explains this tendency is the idea of tolerance. A liberal by definition is a person who is tolerant of different ideas and therefore more inclined to accept compromise solutions. Because of his tolerant character, a liberal sees the world in different shades of grey rather than in black and white. In contrast, in a revolutionary situation, when ordinary citizens become politically active, intending to overthrow the existing regime, the political choices are narrowed. In such a context, the grey shades of choice quickly disappear and one is considered either a part of the revolution or an enemy of it. Here, especially if people realize their potential power, compromise solutions are interpreted as either unnecessary concessions to the enemy or as signs of betrayal.
Moreover, and again by definition, the primary unit of concern for a liberal is the individual, his life and liberties. Therefore a liberal, more than a non-liberal, is reluctant to pass judgment and make decisions which may jeopardize life or liberties of many individuals. But because of the nature of most revolutionary situations, where violence as an offensive or defensive mechanism is often inevitable, a leader, in order to win, has to make decisions which might very well endanger the lives and liberties of many people. For that reason, a non-liberal leader is in a much more comfortable ideological position in making such decisions and leading the way. In this respect, the Iranian case is no different than other important revolutionary situations such as France in 1789 or Russia in 1917.(219)

Besides this general pattern which characterizes many radicalized and polarized societies, the specific socio-economic characteristics of Iranian society did not easily render the liberal alternative an attractive one. Liberalism is equated with the ideology of the middle class. In his theory of human motivation, Maslow presents a hierarchy of human needs starting with basically economic needs (physiological and safety needs) followed by basically psychological needs such as the needs for affection, for inde-

pendence, and for freedom. According to Maslow: "The appearance of one need usually rests on the prior satisfaction of another, more pre-potent need." (220)

Based on this theory the need for political freedom, though it might entail some implication for the satisfaction of more basic needs, belongs to a higher level of needs. That is why concepts such as liberty and freedom are given utmost importance in the overall world view of the middle class whose primary economic needs are more or less satisfied. For the lower classes, especially of a Third World nation, who are still primarily striving to satisfy their basic physiological and safety needs, the liberal ideals are either irrelevant or not high on their list of priorities.

Iran in the 1970s, though enjoying a growing middle class, was also experiencing an even more rapid growth of urban poor. And the crucial point was that this urban poor quickly became politically aware and therefore constituted an important potential political force. The Iranian liberals, partly due to the nature of the ideas and demands which liberals usually push for, and partly because of their class background, were unable to establish effective ties with these lower classes, and therefore, were unable to attract their support. The social structure of urban

Iran, and the forces which it represented, put the liberals in a disadvantageous position and greatly contributed to their defeat.

The Shah's policies in the last two years of his rule and his attitude toward liberal politics and liberals themselves, particularly the Mossadeqists, also help to explain the failure of the liberals. It is true that the limited liberalization of 1977 and the regime's carrot policies provided the opportunity for the liberals to take the initiatives and to start a round of political activity. But the carrot policies were not taken as an opportunity only by the liberals, but also by other groups and personalities including Khomeini.

In a speech addressing the Ulama in 1977, Khomeini says: "... Today an opportunity has been created in Iran. Take advantage of this opportunity... Write about problems and declare them to the world. ... Reveal the Shah's crimes. Write down the problems and give them to them (The Shah and his government) ... Some have done this already and we have seen that nothing has happened to them". (221)

Although the carrot policies benefited the non-liberal as well as the liberal opposition, the subsequent stick policies harmed only the liberal opposition. The harsh and punitive policies fed the idea that a repressive regime, whose life and stability were primarily dependent on its

(221) Quoted in Bazargan, Engelab-e Iran ..., p.26.
reliance on oppressive organs, was incapable of genuine liberal reforms. The regime's apparent willingness to relax politically was regarded as a tactical move to dilute the growing opposition and to buy breathing space for itself, until it could reinstate its full repressive character.

Based on this interpretation, voiced by Khomeini and other radical leaders, anything short of the collapse of the regime would not have made much difference. Therefore, the attempts on the part of the liberals to reform the system were, by mid-1978, regarded as futile and hopeless. The Shah's attitude towards the liberals robbed the latter of the opportunity, which had some prospect in 1977, to present themselves as a real and effective reformist alternative. The Shah was unwilling to enter into negotiations with Mossadeq's followers until it was too late. His distaste for liberals emanated partly from his personal vendetta against Mossadeq. In his last book, Answer to History, the Shah portrayed Mossadeq as a demagogue who, if given the chance, would have ruined Iran. (222) It was only at the end of 1978 that the Shah first asked Sanjabi, and when the latter refused, Bakhtiar, to form a government. But by then, even most reformist liberals had come to the conclusion that there was no chance for a head of a government, no matter how popular, to succeed if he had been

appointed by the Shah and/or if he had not the blessing of Khomeini.

Against these powerful external odds, the liberals had little chance to succeed. But there were certain characteristics internal to the Iranian liberals which, in conjunction with these above mentioned external factors, made the defeat of the liberals so total so soon. It is these internal factors to which we now turn our attention.

The Internal Factors:

To explain the internal factors which contributed to the defeat of the liberals, once again we divide them into three categories: first, the programs and demands put forward by the liberals; second, the organizational characteristics of the liberals; and third, their leadership qualities.

The liberals' programs and demands were basically of a reformist nature. The most important and actually all-encompassing demand of the liberals was the full restoration of the 1906 Constitution. These demands were considered most daring when they were first expressed in early 1977, and attracted the attention of many people, particularly the middle class. But within a year, the dynamic of Iranian society made these demands look quite conservative and outdated. At the time when more and more people were using the slogan "death to the Shah", the proposition that
"the Shah should reign and not rule" sounded antiquated. It was reminiscent of three decades ago, when that old man of Ahmad-Abad boldly requested it and won the heart of a nation. But that was a different time, an era in which almost two-thirds of the present population were yet to be born and an era in which the Shah's dictatorship was yet to be developed. New circumstances require new demands. The basic demands of the liberals between 1977-78 were no different from those of the Mossadeq era. It seemed as if the tremendous transformation of Iranian society went unnoticed by the liberals.

The formation of the Union of the National Front Forces (the Fourth N.F.) was declared in mid November 1977. The constituent parties were the Iran Party, the Mellat Iran Party, and part of the Socialist Society. It is probably repetitious but still an important fact to state that, again in this era, these parties were no more than names. The sad story of the National Front since its inception in 1949 was its lack of viable organization. This weakness grew as time passed. In 1949-53, for a good amount of time, the popularity of the charismatic Mossadeq veiled the organizational weakness of the National Front. In 1961-63, the efforts of some groups, particularly the Organization of University Students, and the existence of bodies such as the N.F. Congress, Plenum, ..etc, at least gave the pre-
tense of some organizational capability and order. But in 1977-79 none of these existed. There was no organizational order, no viable student body, ...etc. There were only a few leaders, one newspaper and three parties with no viable rank and file membership.

It is easy to blame everything on the Shah's repression and the circumstances surrounding the liberal opposition. To be fair, one should acknowledge the difficult situation with which the liberals were confronted. But to be equally fair, one should not overlook the opportunities which were presented to the liberals in 1977-79. The relaxation of repression in 1977 and the subsequent inability of the regime to restore its control over the polity created an opportunity for the opposition. Some sectors of the opposition did take effective advantage of it and some did not. The religious opposition, by using the network of mosques, by sending preachers here and there, by distributing tapes of respected religious leaders among the population, did a remarkable job in mobilizing support for their cause. The liberals did not.

Again, it is easy, of course only in retrospect, to blame the inability of the liberals in mobilizing support on the social structure of the society, and on the political importance of the newly awakened urban poor, who had strong ties with the religious community. But one should
the Freedom Movement, the Radical movement, the Lawyers Association, the Writers Association and the Iranian Committee for the Defense of Human Rights. The First N.F. and, to a lesser extent, the Second N.F. (at least in its initial phase) were able to push for a broad coalition of different liberal groups. The Fourth N.F. was never able to establish formal or even effective informal ties with any of the above mentioned liberal groups. Therefore, it was never able to create a broad coalition under the umbrella of a united front. All these organizations decided to remain completely independent of the Fourth N.F. The reason for the inability of the Fourth N.F. to create a united liberal front lay, to a great extent, in the quality of its leadership.

Once again, as in the early 1960s, the N.F. suffered from lack of a charismatic leader such as Mossadeg. This handicap was particularly important in 1977-79 because the alternative opposition had the charismatic Khomeini as its leader. The most important leaders of the Fourth N.F., namely Sanjabi, Foruhar, and Bakhtiar, were not only uncharismatic, but quite unknown among the majority of the population who had no memory of Mossadeg's era. But as a liberal nationalist observed: "These men (the Front leaders) perceived themselves as the rightful heirs of Mossadeg and therefore the rightful leaders of the Melli movement in
not forget that a decent percentage of the urban population belonged to the middle class, the "natural" constituency of the liberals. Looking back at the revolutionary era, one would realize that a large part of the middle class, particularly the professionals and the civil servants, were last to join the revolution. For a long period they were hesitant, partly because they benefited economically from the Shah's regime, and probably partly, because they thought the Shah's regime was too strong to be toppled. But the fact is that they ultimately sided against the Shah and with the revolutionary forces. The point is that this important section of the society could have been mobilized earlier and would have provided the liberal leaders with the substance for the formation of viable organization, if the liberal leaders had been more concerned with this important issue. A former head of the Department of Social Planning in the Plan Budget Organization told me: "In 1978 in our organization alone, on several occasions, people came to me and showed their willingness to give their support to the liberals and become politically active. They asked me why these people (the Front leaders) were not making any attempt to organize their support."(223)

Another organizational weakness of the N.F. concerned its relation with other liberal groups which were already formed. There were several liberal organizations such as

(223) Personal interview, Chicago, November 1983.
1977. They were reluctant to share their perceived rights with other Melli leaders." (224)

This perception, on the part of these leaders, definitely acted as a stumbling block to attracting the cooperation of important personalities and groups with the Fourth N.F.. As Bazargan mentioned in his latest book (225) and as many of my interviewees observed, this attitude of the N.F. leaders manifested itself from the very beginning in the open letter they sent to the Shah. According to Bazargan and some other members of the liberal opposition, the three leaders of the N.F. did not accept Bazargan's proposition that the letter be signed by a large number of the intellectual community. Apparently they were willing to let only Bazargan, Nazih and Yadollah Sahabi, the three Freedom Movement leaders, sign the letter. After failing to persuade the N.F. leaders, Bazargan and the two other Freedom Movement leaders declined to sign the letter and the letter was published with the signature of only three people. A Melli personality told me:

The insistence of Sanjabi, Bakhtiar and Foruhar to exclude other personalities' names from the letter, created resentment or at least disappointment among Melli circles towards them. It was a reminder of the attitude of the Front leadership in the early 1960s, when some important groups and personalities were denied the opportunity to join the S.N.F.. The lesson was obviously never

(225) Bazargan, Engelab-e Iran ..., p.27.
learned.(226)

Nevertheless, in 1977, before the formation of the Fourth N.F., several attempts, particularly by some prominent Bazaaris such as Mohammed Modir-Shanechi and Qasem Lebaschi, were made to unite the Melliu and to present a united front. On an August eve, between twenty to thirty Mellii leaders were invited to the house of Sayyed Abolfazl Mousavi Janzani, a prominent religious-Mellii personality, to discuss the possibility for such a united front. Of the three National Front leaders, only Sanjabi attended the meeting, while Bakhtiar and Foruhar declined. Bazargan and his colleagues from the Freedom Movement, some Bazaaris and some prominent independent intellectuals, such as Ali Asgar Hajj Said Javadi, the famous essayist, and Abdol-Karim Lahidji, attended the meeting.

In that meeting, Sanjabi argued that conditions for the revival of the N.F. were ripe. Many others, including Bazargan, believed that the N.F. belonged to the past and had no appeal for the majority of Iranians. In addition to the controversy over the N.F., there were disagreements over general organizational, strategic and tactical matters. Some, basically the older people, emphasized the leaders' contact and cooperation with each other, while the younger men tried to point out the importance of popular

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mobilization and the necessity of political organization.

After a great deal of discussion (in which no one revealed his true opinion for fear of breaking the session, which was convened more as a result of a sense of moral obligation on the part of the participants than their desire for common understanding and cooperation) a seven-member council was elected to meet regularly, to work out an agreement (over what issue was unclear!) and report the result to the rest.(227)

The members of that council were Sanjabi, Bazargan, Hajj Said Javadi, Nazih, Moqadem-Marrageh-e, Habibollah Payman(228) and Lahidji. After a few sessions, the council, with the approval of the original larger body, decided to form a united front called the United Front Against Despotism. Lahidji and Hajj Said Javadi were entrusted with the task of writing the text of a manifesto, declaring the formation of the front and stating its basic demands. A text was soon prepared.

The content of the manifesto emphasized basically the principles of the 1906 Constitution. Again, there was no demand for the abolishment of the Pahlavi Dynasty or for the Shah's resignation. The difference between this manifesto and the previous open letters was that in the latter, there was no reference to the necessity of popular struggle as a means of achieving the goals, while the former, by pointing out such a necessity, was considered a serious

(227) Personal correspondence with a member of the above mentioned council, January 1985.

(228) Payman resigned soon after his election and was replaced by Doctor Sami.
warning to the regime.

The text was presented to the council. According to Lahidji, Nazih was the first to disagree with the content of the text, arguing that the name chosen for the front and the content of the manifesto would put them in a position of direct confrontation with the Shah. This confrontation, the argument went, would soon lead to the imprisonment of the council members and probably others as well. After serious discussions, Sanjabi sided with Nazih, and Bazargan and Marrageh-e kept silent. At the end no agreement was reached and the attempt to create a united front failed. (229) Sanjabi joined Foruhar and Bakhtiar to form the Fourth N.F., Bazargan and Nazih revived the Freedom Movement, Marrageh-e formed the Radical Movement and worked closely with Ayatollah Shariatmadari, and Lahidji and Hajj Said Javadi concentrated their efforts on the activities of the Human Rights Committee. Once again the Mellion proved to be incapable of working as a collectivity. This inability played into the hands of the religious opposition led by Ayatollah Khomeini.

The resistance or inability to cooperate did not end at the inter-group level, but was in evidence at the intra-group level as well. This handicap was most consequential in the case of the Fourth N.F.. It is a widely shared belief among the Mellion that the union of Sanjabi, Foruhar

and Bakhtiar under the banner of the Fourth N.F. was a marriage of convenience. They argue that these three men got together not because they shared common ideas, or even because they believed in and respected each other. They joined each other, the argument goes, because they did not want to be left behind in the competition for the leadership of a movement, the substance and intensity of which was not clear to them. There is some evidence to support the claim that there was no love or respect lost between these men. Bakhtiar referred to Foruhar as a commoner with "no culture and personality". (230) His portrayal of Sanjabi is even more contemptuous. He calls him a weak person who was under the influence of persons such as Foruhar, and also who had no moral character. (231) Whether or not the analysis of Melliun about the leaders of the Fourth N.F. and their union is accurate, the important fact is that the behavior of these leaders betrayed the lack of cooperation between them. And what more convincing evidence is there to demonstrate this shortcoming than Sanjabi's and later on Bakhtiar's behavior. In November 1978, Sanjabi was selected to participate in an international socialist conference in Vancouver, Canada. Sanjabi, on his way to Canada, stopped in Paris, met with Khomeini, accepted his terms, and never

(230) In "Chand Got-e-Goo ...", p.31.
got to Canada. His agreement with Khomeini was not based on a collective decision on the part of the N.F. leadership. He unilaterally made that decision in Paris. On the other hand, two months later, Bakhtiar, without notifying the leadership of the Front, met with the Shah and accepted his offer for the premiership. He was subsequently expelled from the National Front.

In addition to the lack of a spirit of cooperation, the liberal leaders suffered from a distaste for popular politics and therefore popular mobilization. This distaste emanated from the perception, on the part of the basically Western educated liberals, that the political culture of the Iranian people was not "developed" enough to make active mass participation desirable. Whether the political culture of Iranian people is "underdeveloped" or "developed" is not the relevant issue regarding the point that I would like to make. The point is that the liberals' perception forced them to underestimate the political significance of the masses and their religious representatives, a miscalculation of which they themselves became victims.

Their contempt for popular level politics played a crucial role in underestimating the importance of organized popular support. Even an eye opening phenomenon such as the revolution did not shake the liberals in a practical sense. "When Bazargan's government was in the process of
being formed," one of Bazargan's secular advisers explained:

it was agreed that some liberal leaders should decline any offer of cabinet positions or other state administrative agencies, and instead concentrate their energy on forming and organizing political parties. They agreed on the view that there were only two choices: first, a dictatorship; and second, a pluralist political infrastructure characterized by strong political parties. In the meanwhile, Beheshti and his gang started their activity to channel the unorganized, spontaneous popular forces into a well structured political party. Beheshti sent some of his men to North Korea to study the structure and methods used by the North Korean Communist Party so that they could apply it in Iran. He more or less succeeded in doing so, while the liberal leaders, entangled in their personal rivalry, their lack of programs, and distaste for or inexperience with anything but elite-level politics, were paralyzed and watched the growing danger of dictatorship with desperation and disbelief."(233)

Here again the point is not whether or not the Melliun could have been fully successful in outdoing Beheshti and the radical religious factions. Most probably, they would not have been able to end up at the top of the political power structure. The point is that, because of their fatalistic attitude, their rivalries, and their indecisiveness, they failed to take advantage of opportunities to affect change.

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(232) The powerful Islamic Republican Party was Beheshti's creation.

(233) Personal interview, Dayton, Ohio, Spring 1983.
Summary:

Since 1949, the Iranian liberal movement and the N.F. have had three opportunities to change the course of Iranian political history. With the exception of a brief victory between 1949-53, the three periods ultimately entailed failure for the movement. In all three periods, a combination of external and internal factors led the movement to its defeat.

In terms of internal factors, in all three periods, the fate of the liberals was very much affected by its leadership quality, its organizational capacity and its demands and programs. However in the first period, Mossadeq as the leader of the N.F. provided the movement with its most valuable asset. In the next two periods, the N.F. was deprived of such an asset. Moreover, the N.F. deteriorated both in terms of organization and programs as time passed.

Among the three periods, the active and direct role of foreign powers, particularly the U.S. and the U.K., was most important during Mossadeq's era. However, in a very different manner, Western influence, especially that of the U.S., affected the fate of the N.F. in the last two periods as well. During the S.N.F., as discussed in chapter 5, the perception of the liberal leaders about the U.S. affected their behavior and therefore facilitated their defeat. In 1977-79 on the other hand, the negative perception of the
population about Western influence in general, and American influence in particular, affected the fate of the liberal leaders, particularly those who projected themselves as quite Westernized both in terms of ideas and manners. In addition to real and/or perceived foreign influence as one external factor, the socio-economic, cultural and political characteristics of Iranian society, as other important external factors, played crucial roles in determining the fate of the liberal nationalists in all three periods. However the aggregate impact of these characteristics on the fate of the liberals was especially critical in 1977-79.

Therefore, with the exception of the direct and active role of foreign powers as one external factor, the overall external and internal odds against the N.F. were much greater in 1977-79 than in 1949-53. So if, as Cottam concluded: "The tragedy of the Mossadeq era is all the greater because the liberal intellectuals did rise to the occasion and assert their leadership, but they lacked the wisdom and good fortune to retain it.", (234) the tragedy of the 1977-79 era is all the greater because, although the intellectuals did not or could not rise to the occasion and assert their leadership, they could have prevented their quick and complete defeat had they not lacked wisdom and at least some measure of good fortune.

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(234) Richard Cottam, Nationalism in Iran, p.260.
Chapter VIII
THE PROSPECT FOR LIBERALISM IN THE FUTURE

The nature of the post-Khomeini regime is of great interest to students of Iranian politics. The demise of the charismatic Khomeini and the subsequent power vacuum will most probably create potential and opportunities for change. The magnitude and direction of such change is yet to be known. Can the Iranian regime be transformed into a more tolerant regime? Will there be any room for pluralistic politics?

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the prospect of a more tolerant political system in the future. To accomplish this, I look at Iran from a comparative perspective, comparing her with Spain, the Soviet Union, and China. Each of these countries provides us with different models of regime transition.

As far as liberalism is concerned, Spain furnishes us with a successful case, while the Soviet Union and China offer completely different models. The relevance of each case lies in its degree of similarity and difference with the Iranian regime.
Spain is now regarded as a successful case of rapid and peaceful transition from an authoritarian regime to a democratic one. One interpretation of this transition is given by R. Gunther, G. Sani and G. Shabad in their forthcoming book *Spain After Franco*. They argue that the roots of change can be found in the socio-economic transformation of Spanish society in conjunction with elite behavior in the post-Franco era. Urbanization, increase in the literacy rate, rapid economic development, extensive periods of residence of many Spanish workers in democratic Western European countries and their subsequent exposure to democratic values, created challenges to Franquist authoritarianism. The existence of different regions, with distinctive languages and cultural traditions, and their demand for decentralization also put some pressure on the centralized character of the Franquist regime. The Spanish Catholic Church, which up to the mid-1960s gave its full support to Franco, started to produce from within some very active opponents to the regime. By 1957, within the system itself some changes began to unfold.

The desire to encourage economic development even undermined ideological consensus within the State Administration itself. The technical expertise required to manage an advanced capitalist economy and a rapidly changing social structure led increasingly after 1957 to the recruitment of relatively apolitical technocrats to staff the middle and upper positions of the bureaucracy. Many of these officials did not share the conser-
vative and/or authoritarian social values of the original Nationalist coalition which they gradually displaced from positions of power and ultimately played important roles in dismantling the Franquist regime. (235)

According to these writers, although the socio-economic transformation of Spanish society provided the opportunity or the need for a change of regime, it was the political elite orientations and handling of the situation which made the transition to democracy possible. Their positive view of compromise and cooperation, the writers argue, tempered the impact of the polarization which might have existed at the mass level and, therefore, made the chances of this transition more viable. Now the question is whether Iran could be transformed into a democracy or a pluralist polity in the foreseeable future.

There are certain objective factors present in Iran which render some chance for the emergence of a tolerant regime. One of these factors is the existence of different ethnic groups with their own distinct languages and cultural traditions. Of course, one of the ways a regime can handle the ethnic pressure is to use force or to wage war against them. That is what the present Iranian regime is doing. But another method for dealing with this kind of pressure, and probably a less costly one in the long run, is the adoption of some decentralization measures. Decen-

(235) R. Gunther, G. Sani, G. Shabad, Spain After Franco, chapter II-16.
tralization, especially if it is accompanied by regional autonomy, would certainly soften the authoritarian character of a regime.

In addition to ethnic diversity, economic diversification has contributed to the creation of a more complex society. No matter how strong a case one puts forth against the ex-Shah's economic policies, there can be no denying that these policies resulted in the proliferation of several new economic groups, and an impressive expansion of the middle class. Economic expansion and its subsequent group diversification entails competition. Other factors taken as constant, competition creates the potential for pluralist politics. A recent example of this potential is evident in the election of the Board of Directors of the Medical Organization in late January 1985. Despite the pressure applied by the Islamic Republican Party, none of its candidates acquired enough votes to become a member of the 17-man Board of Directors. (236)

Within the religious establishment itself, there exist voices of dissent, particularly on the part of some prominent religious figures including some Grand Ayatollahs. Their criticism of the present regime focuses on some of the constitutional principles of the Islamic Republic. To them, the most disturbing principle is the institution of Velayat Fagih (rule by Islamic jurist), a potentially dic-

(236) "Iran Times" January, 1985.
tatorial institution. During the constitutional debates, Ayatollahs Shariatmadari, Mokarim Shirazi and Hojjati-Kermani were supportive of the 56th principle of the new constitution, the principle of popular sovereignty. They argued that there is an inherent conflict between the concept of popular sovereignty and the 5th and 110th principles of the constitution, which grant the Faqih almost total control over the polity. Their criticism was based on both religious and political grounds. In an interview in July 1979 with Le Nouvel Observateur, Shariatmadari questioned the Shar-I bases for the institution of Faqih in particular, and the direct involvement of the Ulama in politics in general. (237) On political grounds as mentioned above all these Ayatollahs fought against Velayat Faqih, as a potentially dictatorial institution.

In addition to the criticism by traditional religious Ulama, the present regime is challenged by the competing interpretations of religion and politics of laymen such as Bazargan and Ali Shariati. The tremendous popularity of Shariati's ideas was quite evident during the revolution, and there is no reason to believe that this might not be the case in the future. As the excesses of the previous regime, which was identified with Westernism, caused people's disillusionment with Western ideas and methods, so can the excesses of the present regime, which is identified

(237) Quoted in "Iran Times" July 16, 1979, p.6.
with a particular interpretation of religion, cause a negative reaction on the part of the people to that interpretation and its application. If this happens the more liberal interpretation of religion and its role in politics may attract people's attention as a viable alternative.

In addition to new liberal interpretations of Islam, there is a tradition of the exercise of pluralism in Shiism. Unlike the Catholic church, in Shiia Islam there is no rigid hierarchy and the selection of leaders is contingent upon popular acceptance. In fact, a religious figure becomes a Mujtahid(238) only when enough people declare their trust in his interpretation. Moreover, in Shiism, with the exception of the prophet and his twelve Imams, no single Mujtahid can claim to be the sole interpreter of laws and regulations. As long as there are enough people to follow them, there can be as many Mujtahids as possible with equal authority. This tradition of pluralism might, at some point in time, translate itself into politics and challenge the dictatorial character of the present regime.

With regard to the administration of the state itself, there might be conscious or unconscious challenges to the ideological component of the present regime. Although the upper echelons of the state apparatus are now filled with people who closely identify with the general ideological

(238) A Mujtahid is a person who has the authority to interpret Islamic laws and provide guidelines for the community.
outlook of the present regime, the state bureaucracy for the most part has not been transformed. As Shaul Bakhash in *The Reign of the Ayatollahs* has stated: "In due course, the natural conservatism of the bureaucracy and its insistence on regulations and procedures acted as a check on the more impractical inclination of the revolutionaries, and as the new men took over the state apparatus, they became advocates of orderly as against "revolutionary" actions".\(^{(239)}\)

This attitude is evident, to some extent, in the behavior of Sheikh-ol Eslam Khamene-i, the President, and Mir Hosein Musavi, the Prime Minister. Since their election and selection to these offices, these two, especially the Prime Minister who is in charge of state administration, have moderated their views. Of course moderation from the revolutionary ideals does not necessarily entail a move toward liberalism. In fact, most authoritarian regimes, such as Franco's Spain, are not ideological. The point is that (other things being equal) the dismantling of a non-ideological authoritarian regime is easier than of an ideological one, for the mere fact that the former lacks the normative component to attract support. In other words, the support that a non-ideological regime may enjoy is more of an instrumental nature rather than an affective one.

At the elite level, the post-Khomeini regime will be different in some important features from that of Khomeini. The most important difference between the two regimes is the presence of a non-liberal and very charismatic leader in the first. Although Khomeini himself does not interfere in the day to day business of the government, the most important policies are made according to the general guidelines set by him. Among the elite, no single individual dares to contradict what are perceived as Khomeini's wishes.

The demise of Khomeini will change all that. The facade of what remains of the unity among the elite, thanks to the charisma of Khomeini, will most probably be shattered. The absence of a clear, legitimate successor will leave the position of power open to different contenders. Since none of the present members of the elite enjoys even a fraction of Khomeini's popularity and charisma, each might have to create a base of power by taking control of vital institutions and/or by forming coalitions with important groups and personalities. A favorable scenario for the liberals is that some moderate members of the elite, such as Ayatollah Kani or Hashemi Rafsanjani, feel the need to ally themselves with liberal forces and personalities outside the circles of the present power holders, in order to challenge the more radical members of the elite. To do so, they will
probably have to make some concessions to the liberals and to those sectors of the society which are ready to rally their support behind liberal policies.

One of these policies could be granting amnesty to the exiled liberal opposition. Another could be promises of some sort of liberalization of the society to attract those people (more than half a million) who have left Iran mainly because of lack of civil, economic and political liberties. The overwhelming majority of them are professional and highly educated. The return of these mainly self exiled people will most probably broaden the base of support of the liberals. Providing that by then the liberal elite have learned the lesson that their past history should have taught them, one could envision a better prospect for liberalism or pluralism in Iran.

As far as elite behavior and its end result is concerned, there are serious obstacles to the success of the above scenario. One of the difficulties concerns the nature of the present regime. The Iranian regime, like Franco's, is an authoritarian regime. "Authoritarianism" is an umbrella concept which was introduced to describe a vast number of regimes which fit neither democratic nor totalitarian categories. But the notion of authoritarianism is too general a concept to describe some of the crucial facets of regimes which are neither democratic nor totalitarian-
an. As Juan J. Linz in his paper "An Authoritarian Regime: Spain", argues:

Like any ideal type, the notion of the authoritarian regime is an abstraction which underlines certain characteristics and ignores, at least for the time being, the fluidity of reality, differences in degree and contradictory tendencies present in the real world. (240)

The Franquist regime was a bureaucratic, authoritarian regime without any elaborate ideology. It was a regime which discouraged political activity and attempted to depoliticize the population. As a conservative authoritarian regime, the Franquist regime, after its initial phase, is characterized by its:

lack of extensive and intensive political mobilization of the population. Membership participation is low in political and para-political organizations and participation in the single party or similar bodies, whether coerced, manipulated or voluntary, is infrequent and limited. The common citizen expresses little enthusiastic support for the regime in elections, referenda, and rallies. Rather than enthusiasm or support, the regime often expects— even from office holders and civil servants— passive acceptance, or at least that they refrain from public anti-government activity. (241)

The present Iranian regime differs sharply from the Franquist regime with regard to the above elements. The Iranian regime is an authoritarian populist regime. It is a regime which has the intense support of a core section of


the population. This core section has enough significance to create in a practical sense the impact of majority support. Therefore, unlike conservative authoritarian regimes, the authoritarian populist regime of Iran encourages politicization and mobilization of the target population, i.e. the core section. Through symbol manipulation, the regime can excite and mobilize the core section and use this section as another coercive device against the rest of the population. In Iran, it is religion which is currently supplying the regime with its necessary symbols, and it is the person of Ayatollah Khomeini who can effectively use these symbols for the purpose of rallying the support of the core section.

Since the populist feature of the Iranian regime is very much dependent on the charisma of Ayatollah Khomeini, it is very likely that on his demise, this feature will soon disappear, given that no major internal or external crisis occurs. But any phenomena such as war or some serious real or perceived threat of external aggression could well prolong the life of an authoritarian populist regime even in the absence of a charismatic leader.(242) In such a situation, even a non-charismatic leader may well be able to mobilize the population. Since both the symbols and the

(242) For example a U.S. hard line foreign policy toward Iran, as was the case in the recent past, could enable the leaders to effectively exploit the high level of popular excitement caused by a real or perceived threat of aggression by a hostile superpower.
charismatic leader who has manipulated them have been of a radical character, one can expect a better chance for the radical section of the elite, rather than for the moderate elite, in attracting the support of the mobilized core section through continuing usage of the same radical symbols in the post-Khomeini era.

But due to the nature of an authoritarian regime, very intense popular participation can not continue forever. As Linz argues: "This participation is not likely to be maintained over a long period of time, unless the regime moves into a totalitarian or a more formally democratic direction." (243) Granting that an authoritarian populist regime is unstable the present Iranian regime has to go through some changes. The question is in what direction. One scenario is already set in the earlier pages. Emphasizing the factors which contribute to the revival of liberal forces, that scenario explored the possibility of pluralistic, and ultimately liberal, politics in the future. However, there exist factors which might lead the Iranian polity in a different direction.

In this part, I will highlight these latter factors, and explore possibilities which are not conducive to liberal politics. First among these factors is a lack of democratic and liberal practices, particularly at the national level. Iran has a long history of absolutist states. With the exception of two very brief periods, the era of the Constitutional Revolution and the Mossadeq era, Iran has no memory of democratic or liberal politics. Like Russia, Iran never went through the feudalistic political system, the decentralized system which characterized most of Western Europe, before the advent of capitalism. As in Russia, Iran had no independent feudal class, and no "legitimate" channel to challenge the power of the absolutist state. The pluralistic political infrastructure characterized by strong political parties or groupings never developed in either country. The lack of pluralist political infrastructure and the long tradition of despotism facilitate attempts to justify a contemporary dictatorial regime.

The second important factor is religion as an ideology. Daniel Bell, in his article, "Ideology and Soviet Politics", says:

There is the viewpoint which sees ideologies as social formulas, as belief systems which can be used to mobilize people for action. ... Now all social movements to some extent use ideas in an instrumental sense: to reorganize old habit patterns and to provide new means of comprehending experience. But in revolutionary politics ideolo-
gy becomes completely instrumental, becomes, in fact, a way of life. And the prize example of this is Leninism. ... Lenin, more than any other thinker or leader, gave politics its totalistic framework and made ideology synonymous with total belief. ... In the Soviet Union the legitimacy of Communist rule derives in great measure from the claim of the party to know the truth and direction of History. (244)

If that is the form and the function of ideology in the Soviet Union, one can claim that there is a striking similarity between the way ideology is utilized in the Soviet Union and the way religion is employed in today's Iran. Religion in its present form as social formula and belief system is used to mobilize people for action. It is used to reorganize old habit patterns. It gives politics its totalistic framework. The official religion, by claiming that there is one truth and by claiming that only Khomeini as "Nayeb-e Emam-e Zaman" (the representative of the Imam of Time) has that truth, derives legitimacy for the present regime. The official religion like the official ideology in the Soviet Union:

is both a principle of inclusion and a principle of exclusion. It defines the official creed, and it identifies the enemy or heretic against whom sentiments must be mobilized. By its very formulation of a public creed it requires an overt statement of allegiance from those who occupy responsible positions in the society.

Thus ...(it is a form) of legitimation, a link between the generalized values of the society and the institutionalized action of the

collectivities (for example, government) in order to set the limits of action. And, if authority is defined as the regulative pattern which is relevant, too, to the normative control of political functions, then ideology can be seen as an aspect of authority, and part of the control system of the society.(245)

Therefore, in Iran, as in the Soviet Union, there is a conscious effort on the part of the present power holders to impose or in some respect to reinforce a particular set of values on the whole society. Again, as in the Soviet Union, this conscious effort is particularly intense with regard to the rising generation. The importance that the present regime attaches to the issue of socialization is evident in its effort to change the content of the educational system. Books were and still are rewritten.

The virtues of Islam, Islamic conduct and Islamic values are the focal point of the new educational strategies. The efforts for indoctrination do not end with formal education. Mass media, particularly television, which is totally under the control of the government, foster the official interpretation of Islam both with regard to social and political matters. If the effort for political socialization of the youth is successful, then this will be reflected in the future political behavior of the younger generation. The "New Islamic Man", indoctrinated to believe in one "Truth", will most probably encounter some psychological impediment in accepting the emergence and/or the legit-

imacy of diversity and pluralism of attitude and behavior.

Another important factor which reduces the chances of the future prospects for liberalism is the lack of a viable liberal opposition. Most of the liberal elite have been forced to flee the country. The only liberal group which is still heard of in Iran is the Freedom Movement. Some of its leaders, most prominent of whom is Bazargan, are still active. But their positions are very precarious and their lives are in danger. Considering the recent renewal of attacks on liberals by people in positions of power and the extreme distrust of the "core section" towards the liberals, created by years of anti-liberal propaganda, one can understand the fragile and risky position of active liberals, even the most popular of them. By themselves and without the help of the moderate elements of the present power holding elite, the liberals most probably do not stand a chance. As far as the liberal groups in exile are concerned, the situation is no better. The extreme fragmentation among exiled liberals has virtually upset their chances of becoming a viable exiled opposition. The situation was roughly similar in the Soviet Union.

There is an ongoing debate among Sovietologists about the nature of the regime and the state-society relation in the Soviet Union. At one end of the spectrum, people such as Brzezinski argue that the Soviet system is a "totalitar-
ian without terror" system. At the other end, people such as Jerry Hough argue that there are reasons to believe that the Soviet Union is moving towards an "institutional pluralist" system. Nonetheless none of these scholars, even those who believe in the existence of some sort of pluralism in the Soviet Union, considers its pluralism as similar to that of the West. If compelled to characterize the Soviet system as either a "dictatorship" or a "democracy" Jerry Hough observes: "...(the advocates of the institutional pluralist model) would ultimately join the others in electing the former term.(246)

Even if one employs the notion of "institutional pluralism" to characterize the Soviet system, one should admit that the process of achieving this kind of pluralism has evolved very slowly. Although the seeds were probably cultivated during Stalin's rule through his organizational efforts, the actualization of institutional pluralism started with Khrushchev's rule in the mid-1950s. Therefore, it has taken the Soviet system almost three decades to reach some degree of pluralism. The question is why the Soviet Union did not, and therefore why Iran might not, take a liberal path, despite the existence of objective factors which are usually regarded as facilitators. The

Soviet union as a multi-national, multi-ethnic, and advanced industrialized country is bestowed with linguistic, cultural and economic diversification. It is a complex society with a plurality of function, way of life, and world view, and high rates of literacy, urbanization and media consumption. So, what makes these "universally" important criteria unimportant? The answer will most probably rest in the crucial role played by other important factors. Some of these factors have already been discussed in the above pages. The long history of autocratic rule and the lack of democratic practices contribute to the justification of a non-liberal system. The role that ideology has played and still plays in creating support for the system and in remolding the world view of people to better fit the legitimation need of the regime is another very important factor. And of course the lack of a viable liberal opposition to the regime plays its own part in solidifying the system.

In addition to these factors, the behavior of the Soviet elite since the revolution played an important role in the development of the Soviet system. After Lenin's demise, the colorless and uncharismatic Stalin, through controlling the most important institution, the party bureaucracy, allying himself with some members of the elite and committing himself to the liberal "New Economic Policy", got rid of Trot-
sky, the heir apparent of Lenin, and his radical allies. Later on, and again by relying on his control over the party bureaucracy and this time through advocating non-liberal economic policies, he succeeded in defeating his earlier and more liberal allies. Very soon, through a combination of symbol manipulation, policy commitment and institutional control, he became the indisputable ruler of the Soviet Union. By rewarding a group of young people, new party apparatchiki, he created a new loyal and dependent elite. Through a combination of coercion against his potential opposition, and privilege given to his loyal subordinates, he managed to create a new autocratic regime. Years of purging the political opposition, accompanied by the recruitment of a new generation of indoctrinated leaders, who were committed to the system, to staff the positions of responsibility made the survival and, later on, the stability of the slowly changing but still basically dictatorial regime of the Soviet Union possible.

In Iran, as far as elite behavior is concerned, on the demise of Khomeini, any member of the elite who can establish his control over some key institutions such as the Islamic Republican Party, the Revolutionary Guard, and the Revolutionary Committees, has a better chance to emerge as a powerful leader. Based on the Soviet experience, the person need not be a charismatic, popular or even a very well
known figure. If complete control over key institutions is not possible in the short run (because filling positions of responsibility with loyal and dependent staff takes time), that person could very well ally himself with some groups, even with the liberal personalities. Without a long-term commitment to the new allies, but by advocating policies which attract their attention, he can use their support in his fight against other contenders for power. He can later turn against his allies and defeat them, especially if by then his control over key institutions is complete.

If, like Stalin, the Iranian counterpart is an organizational man, he might create a strong institutional infrastructure staffed with a new generation which, either out of commitment or because of tangible rewards, is ready to run the institutions on which the very survival of the institutionalized dictatorial regime depends.

There is one important factor that might decrease the plausibility of such a scenario in favor of a more liberal one. That is the differing role which the Soviet state and the Iranian state play in the economic sphere. The communist ideology, or at least its Leninist version, necessitates the most active and dominant, if not exclusive, role for the state in the economic realm. Moreover, in the Soviet brand of economic development, central planning and generally centralization was given utmost importance. These
two factors have curtailed, if not abolished, the economic liberties of individual citizens and small localities. The communist ideology provided the Soviet state with a justification for exerting a much more intense control over the society than might otherwise be possible.

In Islam, on the other hand, private property and individual economic initiatives are respected. Although some radical members of the present Iranian elite advocate a greater control over the economy by the state, both the objective factor (the existence of private economic groups such as Bazaaris) and the subjective factor (respect for private property in Islam) would tend to bolster the positions of advocates of relative economic liberalism. Although economic liberalism is not necessarily followed by political liberalism, it does provide for the functioning of some independent economic groups. The existence of these independent groups, coupled with an ideology which sanctions private property, reduces the extent of control that a future Iranian regime can, through its "legitimate" institutions, exert over the society.

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(247) The authoritarian regimes of most of the Third World countries (including Iran under the Shah) which are following the capitalist growth model provide us with ample examples concerning the relationship between economic and political liberalism.
With the economic distinction in mind, one might argue that the present Chinese regime with its recent initiation of some degree of economic liberalization might provide us with a more relevant model. Here the problem is that China itself is in an experimental and, in terms of results, a speculative stage. But since China and Iran have gone through some very important and in some respects strikingly similar experiences, the parallels are worth exploring.

China, again like Iran, is a country which had no experience with democracy. It is a country which has gone through a massive revolution. The revolution was led by a charismatic leader who denounced Western imperialism and intended to transform the country, using his ideology as a guideline and an instrument. Both countries have gone through a traumatic cultural revolution, which attempted to shake the very foundation of the society and its value system. It was an attack on the established educational system, the established bureaucracy and real or perceived outside influence.

While in the midst of it, no one could predict restoration of order in the foreseeable future. But the cultural revolution subsided in China in 1969, and within the span of a decade the impossible appeared to be possible. Mao died in 1976. A fierce power struggle between two groups of
basically moderate and radical contenders started. The radical group, the Gang of Four headed by Mao's widow, lost to the moderate elite led by Deng Xiaoping. The moderate elite, against all odds, i.e. the cultural revolution which mobilized millions and millions of people, the radical legacy of Mao, years of indoctrination, etc., was able to alter the course of Chinese history. A swift change of direction started in the early 1980s. And in 1984, a drastic program for economic liberalization accompanied with promises of cultural and artistic freedom was announced. In the Chinese case, again the role of the elite was most crucial in bringing about changes which were inconceivable in the not too distant past.

The cultural revolution in Iran is yet to have completely subsided. But no revolution is permanent, and no trend is utterly irreversible. Iran seems to be a lost cause to its liberal advocates, as did China in 1969. But the skill of the present Chinese elite in outmaneuvering their opponents can be seen as proof that, in the realm of politics, individual initiatives, particularly at the elite-level, can challenge the "deterministic" influence of structural, systemic factors.

Unfortunately in projecting the future, one is forced, more often than one would like, to rely primarily on the deterministic factors. There is no denying that these fac-
tors define the limits. But there are choices within these limits. Ignoring the realm of choice leads one to project, using George W. Breslauer's words: "...mechanistic and deterministic images of the future rather than dialectical and probabilistic ones."(248) Such an approach ultimately renders an apolitical image of the future.

As for the future of liberalism in Iran, the "deterministic" factors paint a grim picture. However, given the importance of the dialectical and therefore to some extent unpredictable nature of factors such as elite intentions and behaviors, one can not categorically dismiss the prospect for the reemergence of liberalism. These unpredictable factors are the colors with which one can paint a brighter future for liberalism in Iran.

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64. Mardom, year 1979.


74. Shahed. years 1952-1953.


