

V. MOUNTING PRESSURE AGAINST THE SHAH

From the very beginning it had been recognized that the Shah must be forced to play a specific role, however reluctant he might prove to be. Therefore, the plan presented a series of measures designed to rid him once and for all of his pathological fear of the "hidden hand" of the British, and to assure him that the United States and the United Kingdom would firmly support him and had both resolved that Mossadeq must go. The measures were also intended to produce such pressure on the Shah that it would be easier for him to sign the papers required of him than it would be to refuse.

On 23 June the timetable covering all the envoys to be sent to the Shah was drawn up at Headquarters. In execution all these steps went off as planned.

The initial task was to brief Princess Ashraf, who was thought to be in Paris at that time. It was planned to approach her about 10 July in Paris and have her back in Tehran to see the Shah about 20 July. Asadollah Rashidian, still in Geneva, was to call upon her first and prepare her for the joint visit of Darbyshire for SIS and Meade for CIA. (SIS had assured Headquarters that this call could be made in Paris at any time.) Meade arrived in London by air on

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10 July and went at once to Paris with Darbyshire. Then an unanticipated delay occurred. Princess Ashraf was not in Paris, and it was not until the 15th that she was located on the Riviera and visited by Asadollah Rashidian. He reported that she had shown no enthusiasm at all with regard to her proposed role. However, the next day the "official" representatives had two meetings with her and she agreed to do everything that was asked of her. She did say that her arrival would arouse a strong reaction from the pro-Mossadeq press and hoped that we would be able to put out effective counterblasts. Meade reported in London to Roosevelt and Leavitt. He then returned to Paris and stayed close to Ashraf until her departure for Iran.\*

Ashraf reached Tehran as a passenger on a commercial flight on 25 July. As expected, her unauthorized return did create a real storm. Neither the Shah, himself, nor the government of Mossadeq had been asked to permit her to return. Both were furious. The Shah refused to see her but did accept a letter passed on through the medium of  
,\*\* head of the Shah's household, who was

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\* Meade's character study of Ashraf is in the TPAJAX file.

\*\* SIS agent within the palace.

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loyal and devoted in an effective way throughout this period. This letter contained news that US General Schwarzkopf was coming to see the Shah on an errand similar to that of Ashraf, herself. The Shah welcomed this news and received his sister on the evening of 29 July. The session opened stormily but ended on a note of reconciliation. On the next day she took a plane back to Europe. This was as had been planned, but it came as a relief to know that she was out of the country in view of the pro-Mossadeq press reaction.

The second emissary arrived on the scene in the person of Asadollah Rashidian, the principal SIS agent. According to the plan, Asadollah Rashidian's initial task with the Shah was to convince the ruler that Rashidian was the official spokesman of the UK Government. The advance plan, that of having the Shah select a key phrase which would then be broadcast on the British Broadcasting Company (BBC) Persian language program on certain dates, was followed. In London the necessary arrangements had been made by Darbyshire to send the phrase over the BBC. On 30 July and again on the 31st the Shah saw Asadollah Rashidian. He had heard the broadcast, but he requested time to assess the situation. Asadollah was, however, able to prepare the Shah for the visit of the American emissary, General

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Schwarzkopf, and to stress the point that this emissary would repeat the message and, hence, give an additional guarantee of the close collaboration between the United Kingdom and the United States in this undertaking.

Schwarzkopf had been chosen by the drafters of the operational plan because of the fact that he had enjoyed the friendship and respect of the Shah in the period from 1942 until 1948 when he headed the US Military Mission to the Iranian Gendarmerie. Approached on 26 June 1953 by John Waller, Chief, NEA/4, briefed at Headquarters on 19 July, Schwarzkopf took to his mission with relish. He said that he had a reputation with the Shah for telling him unpleasant truths that others withheld from him, and he stated that he was sure he could get the required cooperation from the Shah. Schwarzkopf was given a cover mission consisting of a short tour to Lebanon, Pakistan, and Egypt so that his visit to Tehran would appear as a brief stop en route to a principal destination. Schwarzkopf left by air for Beirut on 21 July.

Schwarzkopf's mission was to obtain from the Shah the three papers which are described more fully in the operational plan. They were: (1) a firman naming Zahedi as Chief of Staff, (2) a letter indicating his faith in Zahedi which the latter could employ to recruit army

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officers for the plan in the name of the Shah, and  
(3) a firman calling on all ranks of the army to support his legal Chief of Staff. It was felt that it would be easier to get the Shah to sign such statements than to issue a firman dismissing Mossadeq. It was also believed that the action of replacing Mossadeq would be initiated through the Majlis.

Certain events of 21 July at Tehran both shocked and aroused from their attitude of complacency the more conservative elements which had firmly supported Mossadeq. Demonstrations marked the anniversary of rioting against the government of Qavam and of efforts made at that time, two years earlier, to settle the oil issue. However, it was obvious to all that the number of Tudeh participants far outnumbered those assembled by the National Front, and it was this fact more than anything else which alerted the thinking public to the strength acquired by the Tudeh under the Mossadeq government. At this time station personnel were active on several fronts. The propaganda campaign against Mossadeq was now gaining momentum.

owner of \_\_\_\_\_ was  
granted a personal loan of some \$45,000 on signed notes in the belief that this would make his organ amenable to our purposes. Headquarters-prepared propaganda material

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was turned over by the station to Asadollah Rashidian, and by the end of the month an entirely separate and specially planned campaign in favor of the Shah as opposed to Mossadeq was under way in Azerbaijan. The parallel and alternative plan of keeping in close touch with the

combination for the purposes of diverting their attention from TPAJAX and of discovering the plans and strength of this group remained in effect. Talks with the continued. At one point the station suggested sending one of the brothers to this country, and Headquarters made an immediate investigation of the mechanics required for making such a trip. The SIS was informed of these talks, and they suggested that their facilities might be used to stir up tribal revolts in the homeland of the

The station was now in direct contact with Zahedi, who had left his sanctuary in the Majlis on 21 July. After several meetings Station Chief Goiran and Station Chief Designate Goodwin reported that Zahedi appeared lacking in drive, energy, and concrete plans. They concluded that he must be closely guided and that the necessary plans must be made for him.

By 26 July a number of key individuals had moved into position: Roosevelt and Schwarzkopf were at Tehran,



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Leavitt had been at Nicosia for several days, and Ambassador Henderson had come to rest at Salzburg, where he was to remain, anxious but cooperative, for the next two weeks. At Nicosia, Leavitt did a most capable job of reassuring SIS officials who frequently felt that they were not receiving enough current information. Concomitantly, these SIS officials passed on valuable suggestions coming from London, such as detailed plans for putting the central telephone exchange out of operation.

With Roosevelt's arrival in Tehran the situation was restudied. As a part of the war of nerves against Mossadeq, it was considered advisable to cut down close contacts between high-ranking US officials and officials of Mossadeq's government. Technical Cooperation in Iran (TCI) Director William E. Warne was requested to reduce his normal government contacts, and General Frank McClure, Chief of the US Military Mission in Iran, was requested to appear less friendly with those general officers who were firmly supporting Mossadeq. At this stage it was decided to alter the nature and number of documents which would have to be signed by the Shah. These documents would be limited to one firman naming Zahedi as Chief of Staff and one letter denouncing the government-staged referendum on the question of the dissolution of the Majlis as an illegal proceeding. As

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the month of July ended, station personnel in charge of the propaganda campaign reported on the effective anti-Mossadeq activity of the formerly pro-Mossadeq politicians,

. It was stated that very effective use had been made of the 28 July statement by Secretary of State Dulles\* (made at CIA's suggestion). A request was made that US papers reflect the Iranian press campaign against Mossadeq and that inspired articles be placed in the US press.

On 1 August, two days after Princess Ashraf had left Iran and the Shah had heard the BBC message designed to convince him that Asadollah Rashidian was the official spokesman of the UK Government, Schwarzkopf had an extended meeting with the Shah. Fearful of planted microphones, the Shah led the General into the grand ballroom, pulled a small table to its exact center, and then both sat on the table. The Shah rejected the proposal that he sign the required documents at once, asserting that he was not fully confident of the loyalty of the army; that he must give advance approval for all members of a new cabinet;

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\*This statement, made at a press conference, was as follows: "The growing activities of the illegal Communist Party in Iran and the toleration of them by the Iranian Government has caused our government concern. These developments make it more difficult to grant aid to Iran."



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and that he must have time to make his own estimate as to the probable success or failure of the undertaking. On the other hand, he said that should Mossadeq carry through his referendum and dissolve the Majlis then he, himself, would have full powers under the constitution to dismiss Mossadeq and replace him by a prime minister of his own choice. This meeting was to be followed by a series of additional ones, some between Roosevelt and the Shah and some between Rashidian and the Shah, in which relentless pressure was exerted in frustrating attempts to overcome an entrenched attitude of vacillation and indecision.

On 2 August Roger Golran, for so long the experienced and valuable chief of station, left Tehran headed for Headquarters duty. While his knowledge had been of inestimable value in the preparatory stages of TPAJAX, it was judged that his departure at just this time would be an important factor in the war of nerves against Mossadeq, and in the planned efforts to confuse and disturb the potential opposition. By this time the Counselor, Gordon Henry Mattison, and the ranking political officer, Mr. Roy Malcolm Melbourne, had been briefed on TPAJAX and were discreetly helpful. Mattison, in interviews with

, followed station direction in a successful effort to divert the attention of the group

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from the real purpose of TPAJAX.

During this period Mossadeq, as always, had been on the alert to try to hold the initiative and keep his growing opposition off balance. His attention turned toward the Majlis, where opposition appeared to be hardening. On 14 July he directed the deputies supporting the government to resign. Several of the neutral or timidly anti-Mossadeq deputies followed suit until a total of 28 had resigned. Headquarters urged that the anti-Mossadeq deputies be given every encouragement to keep their posts and to take up bast (political sanctuary) in the Majlis. The theme to be built up was that those who had not resigned from the Majlis would constitute the legitimate parliamentary body. This stand was at least partially responsible for Mossadeq's growing belief that the body must be dissolved. Such action would leave him as the undisputed dictator of the country since his full-powers bill had several months more to run. However, he still had to get around the provision of the constitution that only the Shah had the authority to dissolve the Majlis. He did this by staging a national referendum in which the people were to state "yes" or "no" to the question as to whether the Majlis should be dissolved. The referendum was a clear and palpable fake. Held throughout the country beginning 4 August, some two million

were said to have voted for dissolution and only a few hundred against. As a maneuver the action was not as satisfactory as Mossadeq anticipated since it clearly revealed abuse of the constitution. This provided an issue on which Mossadeq could be relentlessly attacked by the CIA/SIS subsidized opposition press. The action also did much to alarm the more stable and established elements of the populace, who were nationalists along with everyone else, but who did not favor such a fraudulent breach of the constitution.

During the days of the referendum the station reported in detail on the multiple efforts of station agents to exploit the illegality of this referendum, both before and during the event. Also every declaration made by a religious leader in these days stressed this point. The station indicated that some 20 local newspapers were now in violent opposition to Mossadeq and that some 15 Headquarters-prepared anti-Mossadeq cartoons had appeared in these papers during the referendum week. On 4 August word reached the station that Mossadeq was aware of the true purpose of the visit of Ashraf, and the personnel on the scene felt strongly that action must be mounted very soon. On 4 August Ambassador Henderson per schedule set out from Salzburg for Tehran. He was to be met on 9 August at Beirut by Leavitt,

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who persuaded him to put off his return in view of the delayed but imminent date for action. In these same days, Henderson, officials of the State Department, and officials of the Foreign Office were drafting proposed statements which their governments planned to issue upon the successful conclusion of TPAJAX.

At Tehran the meetings with the Shah were continuing. On 2 August Asadollah Rashidian had presented His Majesty with specific details concerning the manner in which the operation would be carried out, and reported that the Shah had agreed to dismiss Mossadeq and to appoint Zahedi as both Prime Minister and Deputy Commander-in-Chief. The Shah also agreed to name General Vosuq as Chief of Staff. On 3 August, Roosevelt had a long and inconclusive session with the Shah. The latter stated that he was not an adventurer and, hence, could not take the chances of one. Roosevelt pointed out that there was no other way by which the government could be changed and the test was now between Mossadeq and his force and the Shah and the army, which was still with him, but which would soon slip away. Roosevelt finally said that he would remain at hand a few days longer in expectation of an affirmative decision and then would leave the country; in the latter case the Shah should realize that failure to act could lead only to a

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Communist Iran or to a second Korea. He concluded by saying that his government was not prepared to accept these possibilities and that some other plan might be carried through. In a later meeting with the Shah, the latter requested Mr. Roosevelt to solicit from President Eisenhower assurances that it was advisable for the Shah to take the initiative in removing Mossadeq. Mr. Roosevelt stated that he would pass this request on to the President, but he was very confident that the latter would adopt the attitude that the Shah had already had US desires made adequately clear to him. By complete coincidence and good fortune, the President, while addressing the Governors' Convention in Seattle on 4 August, deviated from his script to state by implication that the United States would not sit by idly and see Iran fall behind the Iron Curtain. Mr. Roosevelt used the President's statements to good effect, by telling the Shah that Eisenhower did indeed feel further assurances of US attitude toward Mossadeq were unnecessary but that his reference to Iran in the Governors' Convention speech was made to satisfy the Shah. In the end the Shah said he would again discuss the question with Rashidian. In the cable describing this meeting, Roosevelt stated his belief that it was hopeless to attempt to proceed without the Shah, and that it must be decided whether to exert

ultimate pressure for the next two or three days or to accept a delay of up to ten days in which the Shah might finally be won over. On 7 August Rashidian met again with the Shah who agreed that action should be taken on the night of either the 10th or 11th. On 8 August Roosevelt again saw the Shah and struggled against a mood of stubborn irresolution which broke down to the extent that the Shah agreed to give oral encouragement to selected army officers who would participate in the action. Then, he said, he would go to Ramsar\* and let the army act without his official knowledge, adding that if the action was successful he would name Zahedi as Prime Minister. On 9 August Rashidian took over the struggle in his turn and reported that the Shah would leave for Ramsar on the 12th, and that prior to his departure he would see Zahedi and key officers and express orally his choice of Zahedi as the new head of the government.

On 10 August Colonel \_\_\_\_\_ saw the Shah and informed him of the names of the army officers who were ready to take action upon receipt of an order from the Shah. The Shah again asserted that while he approved of the plan for action he would sign no papers.

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\*Royal resort on the Caspian Sea, north of Tehran.



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registered a protest at this decision, and the Shah again sent for Rashidian to discuss this all important point. Rashidian carried a message from Roosevelt to the effect that the latter would leave in complete disgust unless the Shah took action within a few days. At the conclusion of the audience the Shah stated that he would sign the papers, would see Zahedi, and then would leave for Ramsar on the Caspian. The next day he did see Zahedi and did leave for Ramsar, but the papers, contrary to the promise of the Rashidians, were not ready for the signature of the Shah. The Shah thus promised to sign the papers as soon as they were sent to him at Ramsar.

After discussion between Roosevelt and Rashidian, they reverted to a decision closer to the original London draft of TPAJAX, deciding that there should be two firmans (royal decrees), one dismissing Mossadeq and one naming Zahedi as Prime Minister. Rashidian and , the Shah's

and an established UK agent, prepared the documents, and on the evening of 12 August took them by plane to Ramsar.

At this same time the psychological campaign against Mossadeq was reaching its climax. The controllable press was going all out against Mossadeq, while

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under station direction was printing material which the station considered to be helpful. CIA agents gave serious attention to alarming the religious leaders at Tehran by issuing black propaganda in the name of the Tudeh Party, threatening these leaders with savage punishment if they opposed Mossadeq. Threatening phone calls were also made to them, in the name of the Tudeh, and one of several planned sham bombings of the houses of these leaders was carried out.

The word that the Shah would support direct action in his behalf spread rapidly through the "Colonels' conspiracy" fostered by the station. Zahedi saw station principal agent, Colonel [redacted] and named him as liaison officer with the Americans and as his choice to supervise the staff planning for the action. Then [redacted] took General [redacted] and Colonel [redacted] to see Zahedi. CIA officer Carroll maintained close contact with [redacted] and members of the "Colonels' conspiracy," and on 13 August [redacted] was present at the final meeting of those individuals to whom would fall the responsibility of carrying out the operational staff plan. However, this meeting was the last one in which the station was represented, and the fact that contact was broken proved to have serious results. Late on the evening of 13 August, Colonel [redacted]

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returned to Tehran with the firmans signed by the Shah and delivered them to Zahedi; according to his story (which has never been confirmed), it was Queen Soraya who finally convinced the Shah that he must sign. If this is true, here was an ally from a totally unexpected quarter.

On 14 August the station cabled that upon the conclusion of TPAJAX the Zahedi government, in view of the empty treasury of the country, would be in urgent need of funds. The sum of \$5,000,000 was suggested, and CIA was asked to produce this amount almost within hours after the conclusion of the operation. No more news came in from Tehran on the 14th, and there was nothing that either the station or Headquarters could do except wait for action to begin.

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