

The background of the cover is a light yellow-green color with several faint, stylized leaf motifs scattered across it. Each motif consists of a stem with two leaves pointing upwards and to the right.

# DEFYING THE IRANIAN REVOLUTION

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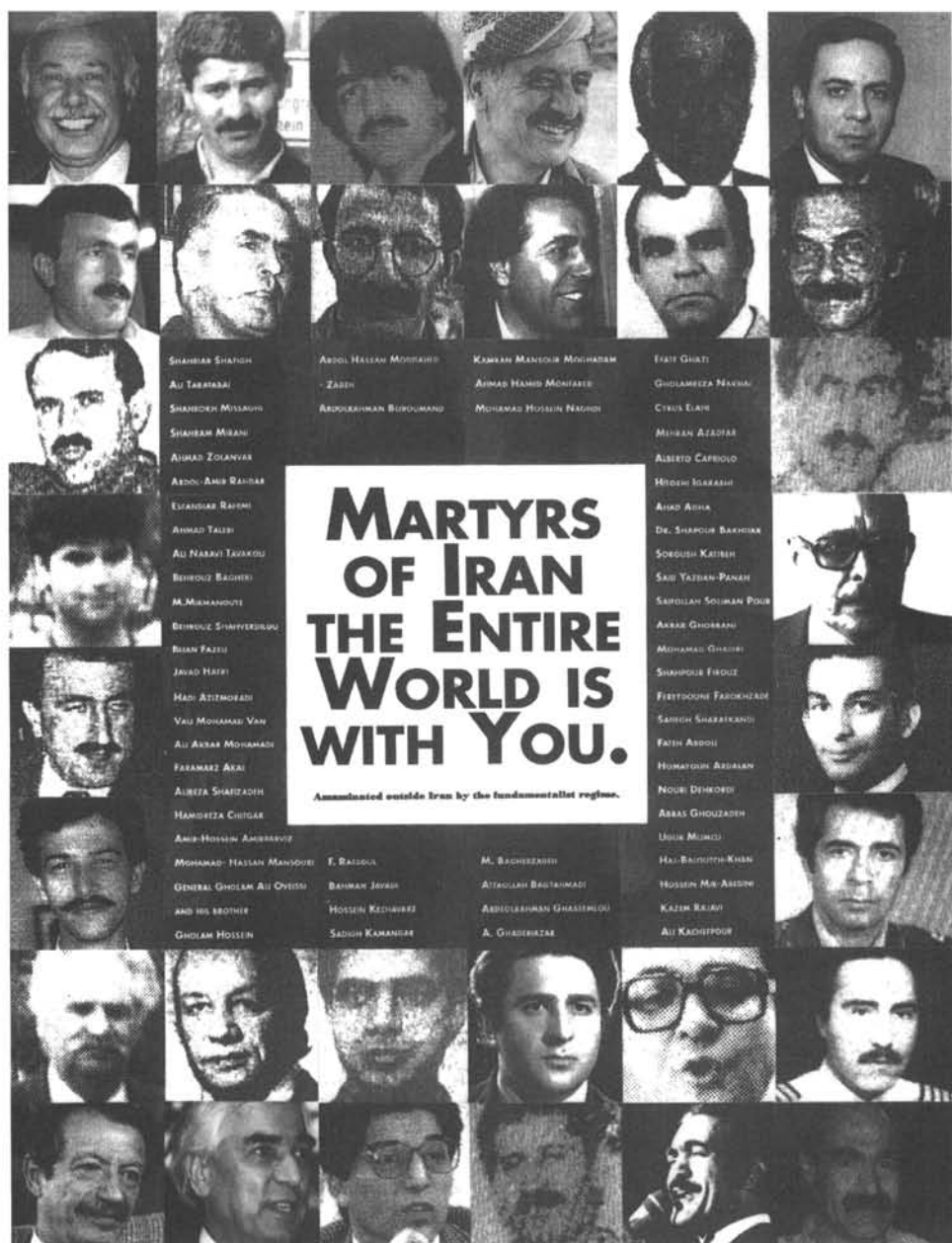
From a Minister to the Shah  
to a Leader of Resistance

**Manouchehr Ganji**

The logo features a stylized green leaf with a stem and two smaller leaves, positioned to the left of the text.

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PUBLISHING GROUP

*Defying the  
Iranian Revolution*



Iranians abroad who have been assassinated by agents of the fundamentalist regime.

# *Defying the Iranian Revolution*

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From a Minister to the Shah  
to a Leader of Resistance

MANOUCHEHR GANJI

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*To all the brave Iranians  
who are struggling for freedom,  
secular society,  
justice, modernity, and democracy  
in Iran*

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## Preface

This book was written several months prior to the heinous acts of terrorism of 11 September 2001 in New York City, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania. The thoughts and prayers of the overwhelming majority of Iranians, both within Iran and abroad, are with the victims of these tragedies and their families.

During the past twenty-three years, time and again I have drawn attention to the dangers of state-sponsored terrorism carried out in the name of Islam. I have written books and articles and held interviews in Europe, America, and the Middle East pointing out the dangers of carrying on business as usual and pursuing appeasement policies vis-à-vis the terrorist states, and in particular the "Islamic Republic" of Iran. I have opposed the European countries' policy of shutting their eyes in favor of short-term commercial gain in their dealings with the ruling criminal mullahs in Iran.

During this time, I have continuously drawn attention to the harsh reality that the revenues generated by a major oil-producing country such as Iran, combined with the mullah regime's policy of state-sponsorship of terrorism, produce an extremely dangerous and explosive mix. Since its inception in 1979, the clerical regime in Iran has been actively engaged in acts of international terrorism, pursuit of weapons of mass destruction, and promotion of radical militant-Islamic fundamentalism throughout the world.

In the spring of 1996, while addressing a gathering of U.S. and Iranian scholars and representatives of international oil companies at a conference organized in Dallas, Texas, by the Petro-Hunt Corporation and the Institute for the Study of Earth and Man at Southern Methodist University, I stated:

To those who believe that the U.S. sanctions policy alone will cause the militant fundamentalist leadership in Iran to change its ways and become “moderate,” and behave in ways that the international community regards as civilized and acceptable, I have to say that you are profoundly and dangerously mistaken because you do not get to the first base of understanding what militant Islamic fundamentalism is, as pursued by Rouhollah Khomeini and followed by his disciples. It is driven by a fanatical and unchangeable conviction that it alone represents the only true faith and that its time for the conquest of the region and the Islamic world has come. So to those who believe that sanctions alone will turn the ruling mullahs into moderates I say this: Forget about sanctions. Carry on trading with the regime. Carry on making your short-term profits in dollars, pounds, marks, yen and so on; but do so in the knowledge that you will be contributing to a catastrophe for my people, the region and the world. The price for your short-term economic gain will be longer-term human and economic disaster.<sup>1</sup>

While the United States was the victim of the September 11 terrorist acts, it was in fact the values that Americans share with the rest of the free world, such as freedom, democracy, openness, tolerance, modernity, and pursuit of individual happiness, that were the terrorists’ actual targets.

There is no such thing as Islamic terrorism or a monolithic Islam. Militant Islamic fundamentalism, which has resorted to international terrorism for the attainment of its goals, has in fact made Islam the first victim of its crimes. At home, it has aimed at the imposition of a rigid fanaticism on society with the hope of preventing the evolution of history. Its breeding grounds for militant Islamic fundamentalism have been dictatorship, political repression, widespread poverty, corruption, non-accountability, the widening gap between rich and poor, and the sense of alienation from the political system. Democracy, openness, economic prosperity, accountability, and social justice are its antidotes.

In the aftermath of September 11, hundreds of millions of Muslims, like Christians, Jews, Buddhists, Hindus, and others throughout the world, have shown their human solidarity with the American people. They have all condemned the horrendous criminal acts that took place that horrible day. Now is the time to go after the perpetrators of state-sponsored terrorism seriously.

In my work *The Hidden Fire* it is stated: “Sheikh Osama bin Laden, during the past eight years has been entertaining close relations with the clerical regime in Iran. In October 1994 he attended a meeting in Khartoum, the capital of Sudan, for the purpose of planning terrorist actions against the United States. The meeting was held with the presence of Hassan Turabi, the religious leader of Sudan, Ali Janati, the representative of Ali Khamenei—the ‘supreme leader’ of Iran—and a representative of Ali Akbar Mohtashemi, the founder of the Hizbollah in Lebanon and today an ardent supporter of Mr. Mohammad Khatami—the President of Iran.”<sup>2</sup> On 22 March 1998, the *Times* (London) reported that Mr. bin Laden and the Tehran Revolutionary Guards, in 1998, had concluded a pact consolidating certain areas of their operations. There are reliable reports of close ties between the Al Qaida and Hizbollah, as well as other

Tehran-supported terrorist organizations. On 15 October 2001, Chrispian Balmer of Reuters reported on further and even clearer instances of such collaborations.

As former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger correctly states, the United States has “to get the terrorist system on the run and make any government that harbors and supports terrorism pay an exorbitant price.”<sup>3</sup>

The ruling mullahs in Iran have carried out their heinous crimes and anti-American rhetoric with impunity throughout these years in an environment of appeasement. During the past twenty-three years, “Death to America” has been the Islamic Republic of Iran’s most favored slogan. In addition, during this time the top officials of the Tehran regime, from the “supreme leader” down, have all been racing with each other to incite commitment of crimes against the United States. For instance, the country’s president of its supreme court, cleric Mousavi Ardebili, at a Friday prayer function in Tehran on 4 October 1989, called on all Muslims “to organize terror cells and hit at American interests anywhere in the world.” He even advised Muslims to “put poison in the water which the Americans drink.” During the rare occasions that the western democracies showed some resolve in dealing with the mullah regime, they, more than often, temporarily eased their militancy. A famous Iranian narrative states: “The cat behaves like a mouse in front of a lion but turns into a tiger in front of a mouse.”

In this book one reads detailed accounts of how, within the past twenty-three years, the mullah regime in Iran has been the main promoter of hatred against the United States and the West and the instigator of acts of terrorism and attempts of “export of revolution” around the world. Rouhollah Khomeini, in his work *Islami Government*, states: “We too have a mission to accomplish”—the mission of making the entire Moslem world recognize that “our cause of establishment of Islamic government in all Moslem countries is just . . . and by that very fact all the monarchs and presidents throughout the Moslem world must become submissive to us.”<sup>4</sup> The Osama bin Ladens of our times are true disciples of Rouhollah Khomeini and his successor Ali Khamenei, in words as well as in deeds. As Paul Hollander rightly points out in the *Washington Post* of 28 October 2001, “What inspires these hatreds [like Khomeini calling the United States the Great Satan] is modernity. The United States has become a symbol and scapegoat for modernity—which is at once liberating and destabilizing.”

Immediately after the 11 September 2001, terrorist assault, President George W. Bush stated: “From this day forward any regime that continues to harbor and support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.” He divided the world into “those who condoned terrorism and those who are fighting against it” and said “the United States of America is an enemy of those who aid terrorists.” He warned by saying “we plan a comprehensive assault on terrorism. . . . the course to victory may be long.” The U.S. President further said that the basic goal is “to destroy global networks of terrorists, and the regimes that shelter or sponsor them.”

Victory in the battle against terrorism can never be realized until the world

is freed of all terrorist regimes. Today the mullah regime in Iran is the mother of them all who dares to issue “death fatwas” to be carried out both in and out of Iran and who organizes international conferences on its soil with participation of all terrorist organizations of the region. This book hopes to bring about a better world awareness of this reality.

The Iranian people have begun to overtly undermine the terrorist and totalitarian rule of the mullahs, and the movement for freedom and democracy in Iran is continuously on the rise. Now is the appropriate time for the United States and the western democracies to support the forces of freedom and democracy in Iran.

## Acknowledgments

There are hundreds of people to whom I am indebted for having played a role for me to be alive today and in a position to write this book.

First and foremost, I am indebted to my late wife Soraya Vossough, who so lovingly and graciously remained at my side until the last day of her life. Although she is not frequently mentioned in the book, she is indeed my true inspiration and the star of my story. My daughter Roxanne, my son Darab, and my daughter-in-law Azar also played an important inspirational role and provided me with invaluable input and suggestions.

My gratitude also goes to all my colleagues—the yet unnamed men, women, and youth—members of the Flag of Freedom Organization in Iran and abroad and in particular to Dr. Manouchehr Tehrani, Dr. Bijan Sharafshahi, and Dr. Parviz Amouzegar. A great deal of information used in the preparation of this book came from our cell members scattered all over Iran—the brave men, women, and young people who are struggling for the freedom of their country. Here my special thanks also go to Firouz, Bahram, Ali, Ardeshir, Mehrdad, Pouneh, Farhad, and Khosrow.

This book is dedicated to all my colleagues and others who are struggling for the freedom of Iran and particularly to those brave patriots who have lost their lives during the past twenty-three years for this noble cause. I also dedicate this to all the victims of militant-fundamentalist terrorism. And last but not least, I dedicate this book to the children of Iran, whom out of necessity are carrying the biggest burden in this struggle and will be the ultimate beneficiaries of a free and democratic Iran.

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## Introduction

British scholar Lawrence Lockhart writes that “few countries can rival Iran in the length and the variety of her history.”<sup>1</sup> Standing at the tomb of Cyrus the Great in the south of Iran, on 13 October 1971, on the occasion of the 2,500th anniversary of the foundation of Persian monarchy, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, the late Shah of Iran, said:

After the passage of twenty-five centuries, the Iranian flag is flying today as triumphantly as it flew in thy glorious age. The name of Iran today evokes as much respect throughout the world as it did in thy days. Today, as in thy age, Iran bears the message of liberty and the love of mankind in a troubled world, and is the guardian of the loftiest human aspirations. The torch thou kindledst has for two thousand five hundred years never died in spite of the storms of history. Today it casts its light upon this land more brightly than ever and, as in thy time, its brilliance spreads far beyond the boundaries of Iran.<sup>2</sup>

Only seven years later, Mohammad Reza Shah’s kingdom fell, like a house of cards, into the hands of a backward and bloodthirsty clerical regime.

The Shah was dreaming of reviving Iran’s fame, glory, and prestige; with American support and encouragement, he was pressing ahead with drastic economic and social reforms. The Shah’s successor, Ayatollah Khomeini, and Khomeini’s successors have been taking Iran back to the time and conditions of the days of the prophet Mohammad. The Shah had, instead, been looking forward to Iran’s new position in the world at the dawn of the twenty-first century.

Mohammad Reza Pahlavi acceded to the throne at age twenty-two in mid-

1941 during the Allied occupation of Iran.<sup>3</sup> At that time, the country's population was around 14 million, 78 percent of which lived in rural areas. Feudal land ownership prevailed in the country, the illiteracy rate was over 80 percent, poverty was prevalent, and the average life expectancy was around thirty-seven years. The Iranian elite was outspoken, and it longed for reforms, respect of freedom, and constitutional rights. During the war years (1941–1945), the Allied Command exercised virtually total control over Iran. During the Soviet occupation of northern Iran (1941–1946), with the aid and assistance of Soviet forces, two autonomous breakaway administrations were set up. These consisted of a "Democratic Republic of Kurdistan" and a "Democratic Republic of Azarbaijan." At the conclusion of the war the British and Americans withdrew their forces from Iran. The Soviet forces refused to leave. Only as a result of pressure brought by the U.S. government, Soviet forces withdrew from Iran in March 1946. Thereafter, the Iranian government successfully took over the breakaway provinces of Kurdistan and Azarbaijan; however, although the Soviet military presence in Iran had come to an end, the Soviet political presence continued through the activities of the Toudeh (communist) party. In the tradition of an effective "fifth column," the Toudeh, a well-funded and organized political party, maneuvered to implement the expansionist policies of Moscow in Iran in the era of the Cold War.

For several years during this period (1944–1952), as in the early years of the adoption of the Iranian constitution (1906–1909), Iran enjoyed separation of powers, a relatively free press, freely organized labor unions, democratic political parties, and a representative government.

After the liberation of Azarbaijan, the Shah began to depend on a close relationship with the United States. The Shah's earlier experience with the Allied occupation of Iran, the Soviet expansionist policies, the political experiments of the 1940s, and the political and economic upheavals of the early 1950s must have played an important role in his subsequent posture, attitude, and behavior.

Iran accordingly entered into joint military defense arrangements with the United States, Iraq, Turkey, Pakistan, and the United Kingdom in 1954, called the Bagdad pact, which was later replaced by CENTO (Central Treaty Organization), a defensive treaty with the same membership minus Iraq. CENTO's real purpose was to prevent Soviet expansion into those countries. This treaty allowed Americans to install sophisticated eavesdropping stations in northern Iran near the Soviet frontier. The United States and Iran later concluded an agreement providing for U.S. military advisory assistance to Iran.

The 1940s and early 1950s were also years of influence and success of the Toudeh party in Iran. In early 1951, Mohammad Mossadegh, a liberal politician and the leader of the National Front (a coalition of four different political groups) became prime minister of Iran. Soon after he took office, he revoked the concession of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (a British-owned company) involved in exploitation of Iranian oil and nationalized the oil industry. Although this was an extremely popular move in Iran and had the support of the Shah

and nearly all Iranians, it was vehemently opposed by Great Britain. In 1944, the Soviet Union also tried to acquire a similar concession in northern Iran. That attempt was rebuffed by Ahmad Ghavam, the prime minister of Iran at that time. British opposition to Mossadegh's oil nationalization law resulted in a blockade against the export of Iranian oil, the main source of support of the country's economy, and Iran's oil exports came to a complete standstill. For more than two years, Mossadegh let his government's decisions regarding negotiations on the question of reparations and the start of the flow of oil to be guided by nationalist sentiments as expressed by the slogans of the mobs in the streets of Tehran. The continuing blockade caused the country's economy to fall into disarray. The Tudeh party seemed to be the main benefactor of the continuation of the deadlock in negotiations between Britain and Iran, which also included the World Bank and an emissary of the president of the United States, Averell Harriman.

Mossadegh was ousted in August 1953 by "a coalition of forces within and outside Iran."<sup>4</sup> Mossadegh's downfall was paved more by himself than by those opposed to him inside and outside the country. If he had more moderately pursued his nationalization policy by offering reasonable compensation, he could have reduced foreign opposition and preserved his government.

The factors that caused Mossadegh's rise in popularity also caused his downfall. That is, more or less, also true as to the rise and fall of the Shah. The Iranian public, however, in particular the youth and the elite of Iran, perceived Mossadegh's downfall to be the work of outside powers, in particular the C.I.A. Afterward, the opposition within Iran meticulously tried to portray the Shah as a "foreign agent" who had sided with foreign powers against Iran's interests, which was, in fact, not true. As Hugh Pope and Peter Waldman rightly state in the *Wall Street Journal* on 5 November 2001, "It is often forgotten that the 1953 coup would have been impossible without widespread support for the Shah by the Iranian public."

## IRAN BETWEEN 1953 AND 1963

Iran's socioeconomic picture did not change much in the first decade after Mossadegh's downfall (1953–1963). Poverty continued to prevail throughout the country, and the gaps between the rich and the poor, and between cities and the villages, were becoming wider. The landed aristocracy maintained its power, wealth, and influence as before, and, as before, there was much talk of an oligarchy of "one thousand families" inside the country. The biggest landowners in the country were the Shah and the clerical establishment (through their control of religious endowment land). Toward the end of the 1950s, the Iranian economy was in recession, her budget was in deficit, and the Shah was in conflict with a number of military and civilian officials.

By this time, the Shah's regime had become more harsh and dictatorial. The presence of hundreds of American military and economic advisers in the country

made people believe that America was, in fact, involved in Iranian political activities. Thus, in the eyes of Iranians, the Americans had taken the place of the British as a domineering foreign power. In 1958, British scholar, L.P. Elwell-Sutton wrote that "it is the misfortune of so many foreigners in Iran that they have gone there in a superior, even patronizing role. The businessman with his glossy western products, the technical expert with his higher knowledge, even the missionary with his unspoken condemnation of the country's faith, all run the risk of evoking in those with whom they have to deal the reaction of the underdog."<sup>5</sup>

During this period, the United States supported the Shah with an unprecedented amount of economic and military assistance. What had given Iran such importance at this time was the country's strategic location between the USSR and the Persian Gulf. The Western countries felt threatened by the possibility of an anti-Western state in Iran that would affect the oil-producing Persian Gulf area as a whole.

Soviet proxies were at that time very active in Iran. In late 1954, the Shah's government uncovered an extensive network of more than 600 Toudeh party members among the officer ranks in the Iranian armed forces. The Toudeh party was banned and many of its leaders were sentenced either to death or to life imprisonment. From this time on, until the 1979 revolution, the Toudeh party survived primarily through its organization abroad—in Moscow, East Germany, and Czechoslovakia. Its radio stations were situated in Bakou and Leipzig, and its newspapers and publications were printed outside<sup>6</sup> of Iran to be distributed clandestinely by the Soviet Embassy and the Toudeh's underground agents in Iran.

Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev, in an interview with American journalist Walter Lippmann on 10 April 1961, said that Iran was headed for a revolution due to "the misery of the masses and corruption." Lippmann wrote that Khrushchev "would not admit that we [the United States] can divert this historic movement by championing liberal democratic reforms. Nothing that we can say can change his mind."<sup>7</sup>

Professor T. Cuyler Young of Princeton University, in a letter of 19 April 1961 written shortly after his arrival in Iran to W. W. Rostow in the Kennedy White House, said that he viewed "the general situation in Iran with considerable concern, if not alarm." James Bill wrote in 1988 that, among his recommendations in 1961, Young had suggested that the Shah be persuaded to reform his administration and his court and to "espouse vigorously reforms in the judiciary, the armed forces, the civil service, planning, land tenure, taxation, education."<sup>8</sup>

## 1963 REFORM MEASURES "WHITE REVOLUTION"

In early January 1963, at a gathering of 3,500 members of Iranian farm cooperatives from throughout the country designated "The Farmers Congress," the Shah announced a six-point program of social reforms to be voted on in a

national referendum. These included (1) a land reform program, (2) granting women the right to vote and to be elected, (3) the sale of state-owned industries to the public, and (4) profit-sharing measures for industrial workers. Two weeks later on January 14, four days prior to the national referendum, Ayatollah Rouhollah Khomeini issued a fatwa (religious edict) asking all Iranians to boycott the national referendum.<sup>9</sup> Khomeini's fatwa declared that participation in that referendum would be a sacrilegious act. In response, the government-owned radio launched a wide campaign of abuse and ridicule against the mullahs. Amir Taheri says that the Shah "dressed in his uniform of Commander-in-Chief . . . entered Qom [the religious city] not as a humble servant of the twelve Imams but as a reincarnation of Cyrus the Great . . . Addressing a large, and largely paid, crowd at the courtyard of the Shrine, the Shah launched a bitter attack on the mullahs. . . . He said that his reforms would take Iran into 'the jet age' while the mullahs wanted to remain 'in the age of the donkey.'" <sup>10</sup>

The five high-ranking Ayatollahs—Shariatmadari, Tabatabai-Qomi, Milani, Golpayegani, and Marashi—issued mild statements condemning those "unjust attacks on the dignity of the clergy." Khomeini was the most radical of all. The Shah had come to believe that, by pushing through with political confrontation with Khomeini at this time, he would secure ascendancy over all the other Ayatollahs.

Most highly placed clerics such as Ayatollahs Seyyed Ahmad Khonsari, Seyyed Mohammad Behbahani, Seyyed Hassan Tabatabai-Qomi, Shirazi, Golpayegani, Milani, Taleghani; *Akhonds* such as Mohammad Taghi Falsafi; the Toudeh; and numerous National Front leaders such as Ali Shayegan, Mehdi Bazargan, Daryoush Forohar, Shapour Bakhtiar, Karim Sanjabi, and Yadollah Sahabi had come out in support of Khomeini and against the national referendum.

In the six days that preceded the national referendum, there were anti-Shah demonstrations and disturbances in most parts of the country. On 26 January 1963, the national referendum on the Shah's reform measures was approved by over 6 million votes. Under the prevailing laws of the time, only men were allowed to vote.

The principal reason for the opposition of Khomeini and other highly placed clerics to the reform program stemmed from (1) their support for the big land-owning class and big Bazari proprietors who constituted their major contributors, (2) the fact that those reforms applied also to villages under the control of the clerics,<sup>11</sup> and (3) the fact that it granted women the right to vote.

In regard to the clerical opposition to the Shah's reforms, a U.S. scholar, Barry Rubin, states that "to admit that provocations for their fiercest fight was the breakup of estates and a threatened erosion of landlord power hardly augments the Iranian clergy's populist credentials."<sup>12</sup>

The disturbances, rioting, and demonstrations that followed for the next several months culminated in violent, destructive, and blind demonstrations in Tehran in the summer of 1963 by the orders of Khomeini and the shoot-to-kill order

by Assadollah Alam's government, resulting in a few hundred deaths and injuries to more than a thousand. Those events led to the arrest and then deportation of Ayatollah Khomeini to Turkey. Shortly afterward, Khomeini moved from Turkey to Iraq, which has a sizable Shi'ite population, is the burial site of several Shi'ite religious sanctities, and is visited each year by a great number of Shi'ite Iranian pilgrims. During most of the fifteen years of Khomeini's stay in Iraq, relations between Iran and Iraq were in turmoil and disarray. Khomeini benefited well from that state of affairs. When, in late 1978, Iraq placed limitations on his anti-Shah activities, Khomeini moved to France.

## IRAN BETWEEN 1963 AND 1978

In 1961, as a result of pressures brought by the Kennedy administration, the Shah publicly placed "all" his personal wealth—"hotels, casinos, stocks and other immovable properties"<sup>13</sup>—into the Pahlavi Foundation. The board of trustees of the foundation included the minister of the court, the prime minister, the president of the senate, and the chairman of the lower house. At the time of the 1979 revolution, Sharif-Emami, a former prime minister, was its chairman of the board. The foundation had a vast amount of properties in Iran and abroad, and after the 1979 revolution, Sharif-Emami, in New York, signed papers turning over all the assets of the foundation to the "Islamic Republic."<sup>14</sup>

Measures relating to land reform, emancipation of women, free and compulsory education, and privatization of state-owned industries were also carried out by the Shah with much force and tenacity. While in 1963 only 33 percent of primary school children were girls, in 1978 more than 49 percent were girls. Thirty-five percent of students in universities were girls, and this number was on the rise each year.

The Shah's land reform measures, his initiatives regarding women's political rights, his support of women lawyers and women judges, and the "family protection law"—which put an end to polygamy, temporary marriages, marriage of teenage girls, repudiation of wives, and dissolution of the family at the husband's desire—were undoubtedly bold and progressive measures. Khomeini opposed all these Westernizing measures initiated by the Shah.

In 1963 there were only 15,000 schools at all levels throughout the country for 2.5 million pupils; however, by 1978, there were more than 55,000 schools for more than 9 million pupils. Between 1970 and 1978, the country's GDP, on average, rose at an annual rate exceeding 11 percent. The number of industrial plants and the size of the industrial workforce doubled. Iran enjoyed an economic buoyancy virtually unparalleled in the third world.

The GNP increased more than thirteen times, from a little over \$4 billion in 1962 to over \$53 billion in 1976. Per capita income went up eight times from \$195 to \$1,600 in the same period and increased further to \$2,400 in 1978.<sup>15</sup> Iran's investment in its development projects between 1970 and 1975 was larger than the total investment made in the country in the preceding two centuries.<sup>16</sup>

The years 1970 to 1977 were a period of rapid capitalist development in Iranian history. Fred Halliday, a British scholar, states that this situation “forced onto the defensive the different political forces that had resisted the Shah: landowners, tribal leaders, ulema (religious leaders) from the traditional sector of the opposition on the one side, and the National Front, the Toudeh, the students and the teachers on the other.”<sup>17</sup>

While in 1970 oil revenues were little less than nonoil revenues, in 1974 they amounted to 87 percent of total revenues. As oil revenues leveled off and tax collections increased, the share of oil revenues in the 1977 budget dropped to 65 percent of total revenues. On the expenditure side, more than 35 percent of the budget was associated with defense expenditure,<sup>18</sup> and 35 percent went to development expenditure. Capital investment in the armed services increased by 300 percent in 1973 and 1974, and the regular military expenditure more than doubled. In the mid-1970s, subsidy costs of staple food items amounted to more than \$1 billion, nearly 2 percent of the budget. Only 25 percent of the budget was earmarked for public administration, police and internal security, education, health care, housing, foreign relations, social security, and other entitlements.

As the Shah pushed ahead with his fast industrialization program, pressures increased for migration from the countryside to the cities. As of 1973, Iran had entered an oil boom period. Iran’s revenues from the sale of oil amounted to \$22 billion a year—four times more than before. The Shah spoke of making Iran one of the “fifth largest industrial states” in the world before the end of the century. Iran’s GNP growth rate was among the highest in the world. The Iranian government, funded mainly by oil income, allocated a substantial share of this revenue toward developing the infrastructure and assisting the private sector. The civil service was overhauled according to new meritocratic standards. Inside the cabinet, as Alinaghi Alikhani says, “free debate was encouraged,” except on the issues of internal security, armed services, oil, behavior of members of the royal family, and foreign policy topics, “which were considered sacrosanct by the Shah.”<sup>19</sup>

An Iranian economist writes: “Iran’s development during the two decades before the revolution—if not exactly the ‘economic miracle’ that the Shah’s supporters liked to call it—was undoubtedly one of the world’s clearest success stories in the second half of the twentieth century.”<sup>20</sup>

Alikhani, a former minister of economy and former chancellor of Tehran University, writes:

The Shah could not bear the idea of democratic participation in the political decision-making process, nor could he tolerate the prospect that someone else might gain a degree of popularity . . . Given the Shah’s sensitivity to success of his own appointees, it is hardly surprising that he regarded the prospect of popular and possibly successful, leaders elected through democratic processes as intolerable. As the years went by, so the mere word “democracy” came to produce an allergic response in him. Once, to mark Consti-

tution Day the two main evening newspapers published leaders, proclaiming that Iran "will gradually develop western-style democracy, as the people grow accustomed to political participation at the level of village, county and province." The Shah's response was to order Alam to call in the papers' editors and insist that they print new articles, stressing that Iran "has no desire to pursue western-style democracy so long as in practice it merely encourages treachery and leads to tyranny by a minority." . . . Convinced that the people shared his political beliefs, the Shah could see little point in an opposition party.<sup>21</sup>

In 1974, Iran was on the blacklist of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights. One day in early February, I was told by the minister of foreign affairs that I had been named as the representative of Iran for the forthcoming session of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, meeting soon in Geneva. As a condition for my acceptance, I asked to be fully informed on the number of political prisoners and on the situation of torture in Iranian prisons. In particular, I submitted the names of Vida Hajebi, Simin Salehi, a certain Zibakalam, and a certain Khaghani. Those names had appeared for some time in opposition groups' publications outside the country in connection with torture allegations in Iranian prisons. The opposition groups had used allegations of torture against them as the signpost of atrocities being committed in Iranian prisons. Two people claimed to have been paralyzed, one to have had a miscarriage under torture, and another to have been crippled under torture. I demanded precise information and recent full-size pictures of each person. Shortly afterward Parviz Sabeti, a top official of SAVAK (the National Security and Information Agency), contacted me and offered to cooperate and provide me with whatever information I needed. He told me that the country's total number of political prisoners was 3,200. He denied all allegations of torture regarding the aforementioned individuals. He offered to take me to the Evin prison to meet with each of them. An old friend of mine, a former BBC television producer, Alan Hart, happened to be in Tehran for the preparation of a documentary on Iran. I asked whether he could take Hart and his British crew into the Evin prison to meet with each of the above and record their conditions and statements on video. He agreed. Hart and his crew of three Englishmen visited the Evin prison, met with each of the above, and came out with a video showing the four in good physical condition at the time. Of course, Hajebi and Salehi became very upset and angry when they saw that they were being filmed.

With that background and the promise by the high authorities to change course and henceforth to allow the representatives of Amnesty International and the International Commission of Jurists entry into the country, I went to Geneva to represent Iran in the Commission on Human Rights.

The Iranian mission to the United Nations in Geneva appointed Shirin Tahmaseb<sup>22</sup> as my assistant in the commission.

On the afternoon of a beautiful mid-spring day in Geneva, the commission

was deliberating the case of gross and systematic violations of human rights in Iran. When my turn came to speak, I said:

Mr. Chairman, it is late April. We are meeting in the serene and beautiful city of Geneva. It is a part of a beautiful democratic and prosperous country of Switzerland. In this country the illiteracy rate is nearly nil. Infant mortality is nonexistent. Hunger and dire poverty have long disappeared. There are no shortages of doctors, nurses, engineers, lawyers, well-trained, free and dedicated judges. . . . Minimum education of the Swiss police is equivalent to a junior college certificate. The press is free and responsive to its public duties. . . . What a beautiful country Switzerland is, in spite of its own kinds of problems. . . . It must be wonderful to live in Switzerland.

But I was born in Iran. We still today have over 50 percent illiteracy. We still have poverty, hunger, and a high rate of infant mortality. My country is called a developing country. We are short of lawyers, short of well-trained judges, engineers, doctors, nurses, skilled workers. . . . Average education of our police force is only a sixth grade education. Until a few years ago, there existed a host of discriminations against women. The situation has somehow improved since that time. Still much remains to be done here. We still don't have enough schools, enough hospitals, enough universities. . . . But we are committed to change this situation and we are moving ahead with fast speed and determination.

Of course, it is pertinent to ask why there exists today such a chasm between our situations and that of the western democracies? We are not here today to point fingers of blame at each other for the exploitations and mistakes of the past. What is important is for the U.N. Commission on Human Rights to take note of the fact that we consider ourselves duty-bound to comply with the terms of the Universal Declarations of Human Rights. We are cognizant of the fact that we have problems and shortcomings. We are determined to overcome those problems in the most expeditious way possible.

I informed the commission about the falsehood of the 100,000 figure for political prisoners and the factual situation of the four celebrated torture cases. The commission decided to remove Iran from its blacklist. After the meeting, Tahmaseb said to me, "Doctor, don't you think you went too far by saying that you liked the prevailing conditions in Switzerland so much more than in Iran?" I told her, "That is in fact the way I feel."

A few days later in New York, one of my closest friends at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mehdi Ehsassi, told me that it might be wise to delay my return to Iran for a little while. I found out that the Shah had not liked the tone or the content of my speech, which implied that the attainment of the Western democratic model was in fact our ultimate goal. The Iranian delegation in Geneva connived with the U.N. documentation division to make my statement disappear completely from the United Nations archives. As Alikhani, basing his statement on Alam's memoirs, says, "Elections were customarily rigged."<sup>23</sup>

Political, economic, legislative, and judicial powers were centralized to the utmost. This situation bred mismanagement, corruption, favoritism, and disaffection. Furthermore, real checks and balances, transparency, independent oversight, and a powerful independent judiciary did not exist.

This is what the highly respected chancellor of Tehran University, Ahmad Farhad, wrote to Prime Minister Ali Amini on 21 January 1962 in regard to intervention of forces of “law and order” to put down in-campus demonstrations by unarmed students: “I have never seen or heard so much cruelty, sadism, atrocity and vandalism on the part of government forces. Some of the girls in the classrooms were criminally attacked by soldiers. When we inspected the university buildings we were faced with the same situation as if an army of barbarians had invaded an enemy territory.”<sup>24</sup>

Tehran was (and still is today) the political and economic power base of the country. All power resided in Tehran and practically everything was decided in Tehran, with the Shah playing the central and pivotal role. Provincial governors and top administrators were appointed in Tehran. Provincial judicial authorities were appointed in Tehran. Top provincial education, health, housing, agricultural, and even planning officials were appointed in and sent from Tehran. With minor exceptions, there existed no locally elected governmental representative organs. Oil and gas revenues and nearly all taxes were collected and apportioned by the central government. Information media, such as radio and television, were all government controlled and managed from Tehran. The one and only news agency, Pars News Agency, was state owned and headquartered in Tehran. The two major national daily newspapers with countrywide circulations were both printed in Tehran and depended largely on government advertisements. They both gave tedious prominence to the latest official statements, never writing one negative word against the members of the court, the royal family, their lives, dealings, or business ventures. In 1975, the government arbitrarily closed down more than 90 percent of all daily publications. The government’s pretext was that their circulation “was below 3,000.” No one could dare to oppose the government’s action.

The January 1963 reform program, which was approved overwhelmingly in a national referendum and coined “the Shah and the people revolution,” was in fact the end of what was left of Western-style parliamentary democracy and the beginning of absolute monarchy.

Toward the end of the 1950s, the Shah formed two political parties, the Mardom and the Melliyoun, headed, respectively, by two of his confidants, Assa-dollah Alam and Manouchehr Eghbal. An American writer, E. A. Bayne, who had interviewed the Shah, Alam, and Eghbal after the 1963 summer of Tehran upheavals instigated by Khomeini, writes that when he asked the Shah why he had created this charade of democracy, the Shah said: “They were started in 1959, helped by a kind of sentimental desire on the part of the Americans and the British to have a Westminster type of democracy here.”<sup>25</sup> In 1963, the Melliyoun party was replaced by the Iran Novin (New Iran) party. Its first secretary-general was Prime Minister Hassan-Ali Mansour, and after Mansour’s assassination in January 1965, the new Prime Minister Amir-Abass Hoveida became its secretary-general. These two parties, that Marvin Zonis refers to as “tweedle-dum” and “tweedle-dee,”<sup>26</sup> were known in Iran as the “yes party” and

the “of course party.”<sup>27</sup> In March 1974, the Shah, after finding out about his cancer, and probably under the influence of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Tito of Yugoslavia—the two countries he had just visited—announced the conversion of Iran to a single political party state. By so doing, he declared that Iran would henceforth be guided by “a single philosophy and goal aimed at protecting the country’s interests in the present, as well as in the future.” In 1980, the Shah wrote in his book *Answer to History* that this was one of the “mistakes” of his “kingship years.”<sup>28</sup>

Between 1963 and 1978, a number of successful and unsuccessful acts of political assassinations and terrorism were carried out by the antiregime groups, the clerics, and their supporters. The Moslem brotherhood (FADAIYAN-E ISLAM) to which Ayatollah Khomeini and many of his clerical supporters belonged, such as Khamenei, Rafsanjani, Khalkhali, had once again started a wave of political assassinations.<sup>29</sup> In 1951 they assassinated Prime Minister Ali Razamara. In January 1965, they assassinated Prime Minister Hassan-Ali Mansour. In April 1965, another group tried to assassinate the Shah in the Marble Palace in Tehran. As James Bill wrote, “The two groups charged with the two assassination plots of 1965 represented the major opposition that would ultimately spearhead the Iranian revolution.”<sup>30</sup> During this time (1963–1978), the two major guerrilla organizations that played significant roles in the success of the revolution were the Sazman-e Mujaheddin Khalgh (the Organization of Crusaders of the People), presently stationed in Iraq, and the Sazman-e Chirikha-ye Fadaian-e Khalgh (the Organization of the Guerrilla Crusaders of the People).<sup>31</sup> Basing his statements on a U.S. Embassy report, James Bill wrote that between 1971 and 1975 there were at least 400 bombing incidents throughout the country.<sup>32</sup> Ervand Abrahamian, on the basis of “careful calculations” states that between 1971 and 1977 341 lost their lives on the part of guerrilla and armed political groups.<sup>33</sup>

William H. Sullivan, ambassador of the United States to Iran, 1978–1979, writes:

The most extreme members of the Shi’a faithful had formed themselves into terrorist organizations that were determined to fight for the primacy of Islam against the secularism of the state. The most effective of these, the Mujahedin [now stationed in Iraq], had become an urban terrorist movement that concentrated on assassination as its method of operation. Over the two years before my arrival, the Mujahedin had assassinated six Americans and a number of Iranian officials. An intensive SAVAK operation to control and eliminate them was a major effort in the Shah’s security program.<sup>34</sup>

Between 1953 and 1978, the National Front and its various splinter groups and the Toudeh party and its associates, each in their own way, had worked for the downfall of the Shah’s regime. At one time or another, depending on the prevailing circumstances and the policies of the regime, one or the other had had the support of workers, students, teachers, bazaris (merchants), and clerics.

Alikhani, chancellor of Tehran University, 1969–1971, and previously minister of economy for several years, states that because free political gatherings were prohibited, “literary venues and mosques became meeting places for the opposition. . . . The growing mass of the disaffected turned towards religion, not from piety, but for the lack of alternative refuge.” He goes on to say that “the Shah never understood nor showed any sympathy for the basic tenets of western modernity. . . . Whilst encouraging millions to attend schools and tens of thousands to graduate each year from Iran’s universities, he could never tolerate the prospect of such people participating in the nation’s political decisions.”<sup>35</sup> Public criticism of the Shah or members of the royal family was prohibited.

### CANCER, INDECISION, APPEASEMENT, AND CONFUSION

In the late 1970s, while the Shah’s regime was constantly losing ground with its hot and cold behavior of indecision, confusion and appeasement, the forces of opposition to it were organizing and marching ahead under the banner of “unity, struggle and victory.”<sup>36</sup> This was the motto and the main slogan of the students and all the revolutionary forces in the years and months preceding the fall of Iran’s monarchy.

In the last years of the Shah’s rule, the revolutionaries had meticulously infiltrated the government establishment. Of course, besides the mosques, their emphasis had been on the army, the youth, the secret service, and the educational establishment. As the minister of education in 1976, I was flabbergasted to find that, as of 1972, preparation of texts of schoolbooks in the field of social studies had been entrusted to several former members of the Toudeh party and die-hard fundamentalist collaborators of Khomeini, such as Ayatollah Mohammad Beheshti, Mohammad-Ali Rejai, Mohammad Javad Bahonar, a certain Borghei, and others.<sup>37</sup> After the revolution, Beheshti became second in command in Iran, Rejai became first the prime minister and then the president, and Bahonar became the prime minister. The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Abbas Gharabaghi,<sup>38</sup> joined forces with them. The number-two man in SAVAK, Field Marshal Hossein Fardoust, a childhood and most trusted friend of the Shah,<sup>39</sup> joined ranks with them a few months before the revolution, and the head of the SAVAK, General Nasser Moghadam, also joined them shortly before the revolution.

The Shah had been totally unaware of all this to the point that, just before leaving Iran at a closed meeting, he told the country’s top military brass that in his absence they should follow Hossein Fardoust’s orders even above that of Prime Minister Bakhtiar.

In November 1974, Frances Fitzgerald writes that, while the opposition is everywhere “hidden as it were on the opposite side of every coin,” the Shah told me, “I am persuaded that the monarchy in Iran will last longer than your regimes. Or maybe I ought to say that your regimes won’t last and mine will.

I am sure I'm right when I say that permissive society marks the downfall of civilization. . . . Freedom of thought, freedom of thought! Democracy, democracy! With five-year-olds going on strike, parading in streets. Is that what you call democracy? Freedom? . . . It's all yours, you can keep it, don't you see? Your wonderful democracy. You will see in a few years what your democracy leads to."<sup>40</sup> I recall when in 1974 a British journalist, Alan Hart, was interviewing the Shah for a film on Iran, Hart told the Shah "Since as you say our democratic systems are not working, why do you think that yours would?" The Shah responded by telling him: "Because I am in control here."

During these years, elections in Iran were always victorious for the government party. When the Shah was asked about this in 1974, he said: "It strikes me that it would be difficult to be otherwise. What could the opposition say? Could it say our oil policy is bad? That our policy of national independence is bad? That our social policy is bad? That what we are doing for workers and farmers is bad?" When asked if there might be some disagreement on the methods, the Shah responded: "In our country, the methods we use are the only ones possible."<sup>41</sup>

Frances Fitzgerald writes that, in 1963, the Kennedy administration had sent an envoy to persuade the Shah to share power with others and give his regime wider and more stable foundations. Instead of the Shah "diplomatically saying yes and doing nothing," he pushed a buzzer. The door opened and one high official came in "bowing, scraping, cringing" and walking backward, facing the Shah when leaving the room. "You expect me to share power with that?"<sup>42</sup> the Shah asked the envoy. In fact, in my opinion, it was that misunderstanding of ingenious, clever, and cunning people of Iran that brought his downfall. Iranians had been yearning for freedom and public participation since the end of the nineteenth century.

In late 1976, the Shah wrote: "My greatest aspiration is to lead the Iranian nation to the age of the Great Civilization and I deem it to be my fundamental duty to shape the destiny of my country as its guide along this road."

One of the results of the Shah's one-man rule of those many years was that, in 1978, not one nationally known political figure with charisma and public support to counter Ayatollah Rouhollah Khomeini existed in the country.

In early October 1978, as the opposition forces were pushing relentlessly to end the Pahlavi dynasty, suddenly Khomeini and his entourage moved to France. Valery Giscard d'Estaing, the president of France, sent Comte Alexandre de Marenches, the head of the French Secret Service, who knew the Shah well, to ask him what to do with Khomeini. He had gone so far as asking whether the Shah wanted them to "eliminate" Khomeini or to "force him out of France."<sup>43</sup> The Shah asked that Khomeini be kept safe and sound in France. Comte de Marenches writes that the Shah told him: "I like for him to be in France, because you can control his activities." De Marenches continues, "That showed how little he knew about the workings of the Western democracies." He further writes that while the country was going down by the hour, and banks, public buildings,

and cinemas were being set on fire by the revolutionaries and marshal law was in force in the country, the Shah told me that "I will never allow soldiers to open fire on my people." He says he then told him, "Sire, in that case you are finished." De Marenches writes that on his return to France he told the French president that Mohammad Reza Pahlavi "is a Louis XVI and not a Louis XIV."<sup>44</sup>

In the months leading to the overthrow of the Shah's regime, the Iranians outside Iran played a very important role in the success of the revolution. They were aided and abetted by the PLO, Libya, Cuba, East Germany, the KGB, the Syrians, and the Algerians. They had all gathered around Khomeini, united in one voice. Emissaries traveled back and forth to Iran, and several embassies in Tehran were collaborating with them. They had open telephone lines to every corner of Iran. The BBC acted as their semiofficial mouthpiece and media of communication inside the country. In the months leading to the overthrow of the Shah's regime, the active opposition forces inside Iran consisted of the youth, the women, the workers, the elite, the middle class, the businessmen, the traditional nationalists, the leftists, and the clerics. *Time* magazine of 25 December 1978 wrote:

One *chador*-clad 30-year-old mother in Tehran, who studied business administration in the U.S. at the University of Houston and now holds a \$1,000 a month job in an import-export firm, told a Western journalist: "I don't know which is best, Khomeini or the Shah. But my people want democracy, and that is what we are protesting about." Shi'ite leaders say they are not necessarily opposed to women's rights.

As William Sullivan, the last U.S. ambassador to Iran, writes, the major well-trained revolutionary forces fighting the Shah's regime consisted of the Fadaian, the Mujaheddin Khalgh, and the Toudeh. The hard core of these forces received training outside of Iran, many in PLO camps, in East Germany, and Libya. In his book, Sullivan often refers to the fact that, in the first days of the revolution, he observed that many trained rebel forces had in their hands AK-47 Soviet-manufactured weapons.<sup>45</sup> Apart from the Toudeh and the few fundamentalist clerics, most of the revolutionaries, and in particular the youth and the women of Iran, thought that freedom and equality would be the automatic outcome of the removal of the Shah.

In early November 1978, the Shah announced the formation of a special commission to investigate charges of financial manipulation against the members of the royal family. He announced a second commission to investigate the Pahlavi Foundation (now called the Alavi Foundation), with annual revenues of more than \$500 million and a branch in the United States. As a follow-up to this, former Prime Minister Hoveida was arbitrarily arrested and detained, and a random arrest of several former ministers and other government officials took place.<sup>46</sup> The names of many former ministers, including me, and top army officers were placed on a blacklist and prevented from leaving the country.<sup>47</sup> Of course no member of the royal family was ever arrested or prevented from

leaving the country. Suddenly, on 5 November 1978, the Shah appeared on national television and made an unprecedented public address to the nation. In it he said: “Your revolutionary message has been heard. I am aware of everything you have given your lives for. I commit myself to make up for past mistakes, to fight corruption and injustices, and to form a national government to carry out free elections.”

In those days, corruption had emerged as one of the most inflammatory issues of the crisis. In fact, corruption involved mostly the court and the court circles and not Amir Abbas Hoveida, the innocent ministers, or the government officials who were being arrested left and right. That speech by the Shah was delivered on the same day that he installed the military government of Field Marshal Azhari. Confusion was everywhere. Soon Azhari’s government was removed and the Shah’s very last government was brought to power, the government of Shapour Bakhtiar. It lasted only thirty-seven days.

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## The Last Years of the Shah's Reign

### THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION

Barry Rubin, a fellow at Georgetown University's Center for Strategic Studies, wrote in 1980 that, in 1977, the Shah invited the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)<sup>1</sup> to visit Iranian prisons on a regular basis and asked Amnesty International and the International Commission of Jurists to suggest ways of improving the human rights situation in Iran.<sup>2</sup> As regards treatment of Iranian prisoners, he says that "several respected outside observers have suggested that progress had been made." He goes on further to state that "Iranian scholar James Bill called 1977 'the year of liberalization.' Richard Cottam reported that the Shah was improving prison conditions and had ended torture."<sup>3</sup>

In 1979 Fred Halliday wrote:

In 1977 the regime introduced a number of modifications in the policies it had pursued up to that time. The Red Cross was permitted to visit certain prisons, as were a few foreign journalists. The first foreign observers to be allowed to attend a trial sat in on the court where seven members of the opposition were being prosecuted. Legislation was introduced making political trials public, unless there were strong reasons against this, and allowing those undergoing trial to have civilian lawyers. It was rumored that the incidence of torture had declined.<sup>4</sup>

In 1973, I was elected a member of the U.N. Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, which was responsible for determination of cases of gross and systematic violations of human rights throughout the world. In 1975, after Iran ratified the U.N. Covenant on Civil and