

# **Trips: Trips - 77**

*HS L 179:67*



Dag Hammarskjöld's samml.

Sec. Gen.'s trip to Iran 1956

Jan. 11

Some notes on Iran

11 January 1956

SOME NOTES ON IRAN

GENERAL INFORMATION

Iran has an area of 628,000 square miles and an officially estimated population (1952) of 19,798,000. Of the total population, about 94 per cent belong to the Shi'a sect, the official religion of Iran, and five per cent to the Sunni sect of Islam. The remaining one per cent comprises Zoroastrians (Parsis), Christians (Armenians and Assyrians) and Jews. These three minority religions are officially recognized. A fourth minority religion, Baha'i, is not recognized as such and its adherents have encountered, from time to time, difficulties, the latest of which were brought to the attention of the Secretary-General in 1955.

During the period between the two World Wars, Iran was dominated by the forceful personality and accomplishments of Reza Shah Pahlavi, who founded the present dynasty in 1925. After the Anglo-Russian occupation of Iran in 1941, the Shah was obliged to abdicate and live in exile in South Africa. His son, the present king, Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlavi, is the principal exponent of economic and social reforms in the country, and, unlike his father, is noted for his democratic outlook.

CONSTITUTION AND GOVERNMENT

Iran is a constitutional monarchy. The constitution of 1906 as amended provides for ministerial counter-signature of royal decrees and collective and individual ministerial responsibility to the legislature. In practice, however, the delineation of powers has not been entirely clear, and this lack of clarity has given rise to differing interpretations of the relative positions of the

monarch and the responsible ministers. The Prime Minister is appointed by the Shah, subject to the approval of the National Assembly. The Government may be overthrown by absolute majority vote of the Assembly (Majlis) or of the Senate.

The Assembly, consisting of 162 representatives from 26 constituencies, is elected by male suffrage for a period of two years. Christians, Jews and Zoroastrians have special representation. The Senate, though provided for in the constitution of 1906, was not convened until 1950. It consists of 60 members, 30 nominated by the Shah and 30 elected.

By law, candidates must be residents of their respective constituencies for a minimum period of six months before election to either House. Actually, this is not strictly observed and the Government slate of nominees is usually elected. In theory, the Parliament represents the entire public, but in fact both Houses are composed principally of absentee landlords and important merchants. The Shah has in the past asked the Parliament to enact new electoral laws, and at the present plans are under way for effecting certain reforms.

#### POLITICAL GROUPS

The pattern for the exercise and maintenance of power in Iran is not based on political party systems in the Western sense. The groups which exercise power usually follow dominant personalities, and are diverse and overlapping.

Traditionally, Iranian society was composed of the rural and tribal elements, with a numerically small but politically powerful group which comprised the landed aristocracy, the clergy, the judiciary, the Army, and the

bureaucracy. Since the turn of the century a third group has emerged, assuming an increasingly effective role in shaping public opinion. This group, led by the intelligentsia and student groups, is composed of multifarious elements dissatisfied with the shortcomings of the present system. They have found a common cohesive force in their principal concern to break the present system and secure political and economic independence from foreign domination which they regard as the bulwark of the status quo in Iran. The component elements within the group, while exhibiting divergent attitudes on domestic issues, have maintained a united front on foreign questions, notably the nationalization of oil. One manifestation of this general disaffection in Iran has been the rise of the communist Tudeh Party which, though it had been outlawed early in 1949 after the assassination attempt on the Shah, played an active and vociferous role in the support of Dr. Mosaddaq. In 1954, the Government announced the discovery of a large Tudeh organization within the Army. Several hundred officers were arrested and some were executed. Another manifestation of discontent has been the Muslem organization, Fidaiyyun-i-Islam, which, under the clerical leadership of Ayatullah Kashani, wielded considerable influence during 1951-1953 and has been responsible for several assassinations in recent years, including the last attempt on the life of Prime Minister Ala in November 1955. Closely allied with these groups, on the oil question, were the National Front and tradesmen in bazaars which, as a consequence of dissensions between Kashani and Dr. Mosaddaq, became disorganized but are still to be reckoned with as a potential political force.

Iranian politics is also influenced by the tribes of which the most powerful are the Bakhtiyari and the Qashquai, in central and southern Iran. The

rivalry between these two tribes has constituted an important factor in the political events of recent years. The Qashquai were staunch supporters of Dr. Mosaddaq and, since his fall, this tribe has been disarmed and many of its leaders exiled. On the other hand, the Bakhtiyari, one of whose tribal leaders is the father of the present Queen, supported the Shah. Many of the highest officers of the Army come from this tribe, and their support of the Shah was a crucial factor in the overthrow of the Mosaddaq Government in August 1953.

In the midst of such complex and turbulent political arena, the Shah has remained, for a majority of the Iranians, the symbol of national unity. From the beginning, he has perceived the urgent necessity for economic and social reforms. He has undertaken an extensive programme of distribution of his own personal lands, which is being opposed by the landed aristocracy. The Shah has urged Parliament for electoral reforms and economic and social legislation. He supported the oil nationalization programme and resisted strong domestic and foreign pressures, in 1951, to dismiss Mosaddaq from his premiership. He supported Mosaddaq on the latter's insistence for holding free elections without interference from the Court or the Army. Gradually, however, certain acts of the Mosaddaq Government, involving constitutional issues of delineation of power and ministerial responsibility, brought forth the disapproval of the Shah and of important political and economic groups, contributed to the ultimate downfall of the Government.

From all indications, including reports by American trade journals, dissatisfaction and resentment still persist among the groups who supported Dr. Mosaddaq and his programme of oil nationalization. This is despite the

consensus among oil experts that the terms of payment contained in the agreement of October 1954, between Iran and the consortium of oil companies were, at the time of its conclusion, the most favourable in the Middle East.

The oil question has not been the only difficulty which Iranian Governments have had to face. Another acute problem is the existence of official inefficiency and corruption, which became especially acute during the Zahedi Government (1953-1955) and contributed to its downfall. The present Government, under Mr. Hussein Ala, a man generally known for honesty and integrity, has aimed at the eradication of this pernicious problem. In addition, the Government has taken steps to speed the programme of economic development and implementation of the Seven Year Plan in connexion with which Iran has been aided by the United Nations Technical Assistance experts.

#### EXTERNAL RELATIONS

For more than a century and a half, Iran has been buffeted by the political pressures from Russia and Britain. Successive Iranian Governments, taking advantage of the traditional rivalry between those Powers, have been concerned principally to maintain the independence of the country in the face of pressures from north and south. At times, as in 1906-1907, when Britain and Russia reached an overall agreement defining their respective interests, the independence of Iran appeared to be especially precarious. An element in Iranian policy, in addition to playing the two Powers against each other, has been the endeavour to obtain the support of a distant or "disinterested" Power in breaking what many Iranians regarded as the Anglo-Russian stranglehold. Since the first World War, the United States has been the Power usually chosen to serve that purpose. While the discovery of oil has intensified and

exacerbated the external problems of Iran in some respects, the historic situation and the basic ideas of Iranian policy have remained unchanged in essentials.

The international relations of Iran between the two World Wars were marked by three events: (1) the repudiation by the Iranian Parliament, in 1921, of the Anglo-Iranian Treaty of 1919, which the majority of Iranians regarded as a treaty of protectorate; (2) the conclusion of the Soviet-Iranian Treaty of 26 February 1921, reaffirmed in 1927, whereby the extra-territorial privileges and concessions of ~~the~~ czarist Russia were abandoned and the Soviet Union received authorization to introduce its armed forces into Iran under certain circumstances; (3) the Anglo-Iranian oil dispute of 1932-1933, and its settlement, through the intermediary of the League of Nations. That settlement was challenged in the subsequent controversy over oil between the Mosaddaq Government and the United Kingdom.

Since the second World War, the outstanding development, aside from the question of oil nationalization and its effect on relations with the United Kingdom and the United States, has been the entry of Iran into the Middle East Treaty Organization. On 11 October 1955, the Iranian Government announced its decision to join the Baghdad Pact, stating that this decision was based on defensive considerations and was in conformity with Iranian sovereignty and the United Nations Charter. In the communications exchanged on the subject between Iran and the USSR, the latter has rejected the contention that the accession of Iran to the Baghdad Pact was in conformity with the Charter and the sovereignty and independence of Iran, and has reminded Iran of provisions of the 1921 treaty referred to above.

U N I C E F

IRAN

Field Representative:

Dr. Yvan D. Pierret  
UNICEF Resident Representative  
1953 Avenue Pahlavi  
Teheran, Iran

Office telephone: 42.763  
Home telephone: 44.303

(Dr. Pierret divides his time between  
Iran and Iraq, maintaining offices  
in both countries.)

Allocations:

\$1,406,635

Projects Assisted:

Milk Conservation. Malaria Control.  
B.C.G. Vaccination Campaign. Maternal  
and Child Welfare. Nutrition and long-  
range feeding.

Government Contributions:

\$109,059

(For 1956 and 1957 the Government has  
pledged \$200,000 annually.)

### 3. Textiles

Several TAA experts have advised on the cotton and silk industries. Progress has been good in the rehabilitation of the Zafar knitwear factory at Tabriz and the quality and output of silk at the factory at Tchalous has been improved.

### 4. Telecommunications

TAA experts have assisted in the improvement of telegraph and telephone services which has taken place with the introduction of teleprinter (teletype) machines for telegraph messages and of new wireless transmitters and receivers for telephone communications. Our experts cooperated with the U.S. mission which provided equipment for this project.

### SPECIAL PROBLEMS

There appears to be a need for more adequate administrative machinery in the Government for sifting nominees for fellowships, and for preparing and coordinating requests for expert assistance. This has occasionally resulted in unsatisfactory nominations for fellowships and in some insufficiently well substantiated and coordinated requests for experts which have had to be modified or cancelled subsequently, or which have led to waste of time and effort by the experts.

### TOTAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME IN 1956

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Expanded Programme \$</u>	<u>Regular Programme \$</u>	<u>Total \$</u>
TAA	132,404 )	103,800 )	
ITU	12,500 )		258,704
WMO	10,000 )		
ILO	54,000		
FAO	311,660		
UNESCO	102,080		
ICAO	89,000		
WHO	126,840		
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<u>Total</u>	838,484		

### COUNTRY'S CONTRIBUTION TO EXPANDED PROGRAMME

Pledge for 1955 : \$50,000  
Pledge for 1956 : \$50,000

### COUNTRY'S GENERAL ATTITUDE TOWARDS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE/

Iran has been prolific in requests for technical assistance. The flow of requests for fellowships and experts far exceed the funds available to meet them

## IRAN

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## TAA EXPERTS

<u>Name</u>	<u>Nationality</u>	<u>Field</u>	<u>Contract Starting date</u>
R. Ballereau	France	Telephone cable repair	5 Jan 1956
J. Bannerman	U.K.	Cotton spinning	28 Feb 1955
A. Beck	Switzerland	Cotton weaving	9 March 1955 *
M.J. Camino	France	Postal communications	27 Feb 1953
A. Hethey	Ireland	Tampering iron and steel	15 Aug 1955
H. Kakizaki	Japan	Silk Spinning	5 March 1953
J. Marsland	U.K.	Cotton Industry	15 Sept 1955
A. Matoul	Belgium	Insurance Management	1 Sept 1953
R. Mouret	France	Tel. cable maintenance	15 Sept 1953
S.K. Pramanik	India	Meteorology	25 Aug 1955
P.F. Sundin	Sweden	Smelting	28 Aug 1955
P. Thomas	France	Mechanised accounting	16 Dec 1955
M.A. Viallat	France	Telegraph services	27 Feb 1953
W.H.R. Webb	U.S.	Railroad signalling	17 Aug 1955
E. Zipkes	Switzerland	Highway construction	10 Jan 1955

\* Did previous assignment from 24 March 1953 to 30 June 1954.

## IMPORTANT PROJECTS

### 1. Postal Communications

The present TAA expert in the field, and previous TAA experts, have assisted in a large-scale reorganisation and modernisation of the postal services, including the establishment of an air-mail service (without extra charge) between the principal towns last year. Speed and efficiency of mail deliveries have been markedly improved.

### 2. Industries

A TAA expert made a general survey a year ago and several additional experts have been or are being recruited and are starting work to transform and bring up to date the metal, machine tool, glass, porcelain and other industries. Useful results are beginning to appear, e.g. introduction of improved moulding sand for metal foundries.

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE BOARD



## BUREAU DE L'ASSISTANCE TECHNIQUE

UNITED NATIONS  
NEW YORK

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Telephone Number: 47002

Contribution: 1956 Pledge: US\$50,000 (same as 1955)

Level of Category I 1956  
Technical Assistance Programme: US\$838,484

Number of Experts: 90

Number of Fellows: 9

Comment:

No problems.

TEHERAN INFORMATION CENTRE

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Area Covered: Afghanistan, Iran

IRAN

D-1	Vakil, Mehdi	(ESA)
P-5	Nasr, T.	(TAA)
P-4	Aghassi, Ali	(PSCA)
P-4	Faryar, Abdollah	(DPI)
P-3	Ganjei, Nasser	(TAA)
P-3	Yeganeh, Mohammed	(ESA)
P-2	Eshag, Eprime	(ESA)
P-2	Hatami, A.	(PERS)
P-2	Nekunam, Ali	(PSCA)
P-2	Zahedi, Hassan	(TAA)

I R A N

The most significant UN mission was under Camille Gutt in 1953. It had no success and the only effective action resulted from narrowly defined technical jobs undertaken by experts. A fiscal information paper prepared on Iran in the Economic Affairs Digest in 1951 was widely used both inside and outside Iran.

The IBRD, however, is now running a successful scheme in the following manner: it has a fund paid by the Iranian Government which it uses to recruit and assign foreign experts to the Development Plan Organization in that country where they function as a "group within a group". The Director of the Plan, Mr. Ebtehag, is an IBRD staff member detached to his mother country for this work.

The TAB representative in Iran (Tom Powers) has very close relations with the U. S. Technical Assistance Programme.