

ARTICLE

Hezb-e Tudeh-ye Iran and Its Struggle Against the Challenges Posed Against It by the British, 1942–1946: An Analysis Based on Soviet Documents

Soli Shahvar 

Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, University of Haifa, Haifa, Israel
Email: sshahvar@univ.haifa.ac.il

(Received 28 February 2023; revised 22 August 2023; accepted 22 August 2023)

Abstract

Archival documents from Russia, which are becoming more accessible, help to provide a more accurate accounts of Iran's political past. Based on Soviet documents from the Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History, as well additional primary and secondary sources in various languages, the focus of this article is on the challenges and obstacles which the Tudeh Party faced from the British and their proxies in Iran during the Allied occupation of Iran in Second World War (thus creating Tudeh's 'British Problem'). The article delves not only on describing and analyzing those challenges and obstacles, but also on the way the Tudeh was able to overcome them, and its political breakthrough and success in the Fourteenth Majlis elections and later in introducing three of its members into Qavam's coalition government. Faced with such successes of the Tudeh, and worried about the future of their own interests in Iran, and especially the oil installations of the AIOC, the British sought American assistance. According to the Soviet view, it was only through an Anglo-American cooperation that Tudeh's political rise in Iran was checked.

Keywords: Iran; Tudeh Party; Soviet Union; Great Britain; WWII

Introduction

The fall of the Tsarist regime in Russia following the October 1917 Revolution did not really end the 'Great Game'—namely, the century-long Anglo-Russian struggle for control over Asia—in which Iran was strategically located.¹ On August 25, 1941, British and Soviet forces invaded Iran, with American forces joining them in December of the same year, officially in order to both prevent Iran from falling into Nazi hands and supply the Soviet Union with the weapons, equipment, and supplies necessary to withstanding the German invasion of June 22, 1941.² Soon after the invasion, Mohammad Reza Shah declared a general amnesty for political prisoners, among whom were members of the Marxist 'Group of the 53 Members.' The latter became part of Soviet policy, interests, and designs in Iran's

¹ Many books have been written on the "Great Game," both in general and with regards to Iran in particular, including: Ingram, *The beginning of the great game*; Kazemzadeh, *Russia and Britain in Persia*; and Hopkirk, *The Great Game*.

² Apart from the official reasons for the Anglo-Soviet-American invasion of Iran, the invading countries had other targets and objectives. See Majd, *August 1941*; Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, 97; Kozhanov, "The Prettexts," 493, 495–97.

post-Reza Shah period.³ Following their release, some of this group's members met with a Soviet representative at the residence of Solaiman Mirza Eskandari to form *Ḥezb-e Tudeh-ye Iran* (the Party of Iranian Masses).⁴

It should be noted here that the nature of the relationship between the Tudeh Party and Soviet Union, and whether the latter played a role in the former's formation, is under dispute.⁵ Scholars such as Abrahamian and Chaqueri have explored the issue. Abrahamian, for example, states: "the founding members of the Tudeh were Marxists (and...staunch supporters of the Soviet Union)." He also explores why they chose not to "call themselves communists."⁶ However, elsewhere he quotes the British Ambassador to Iran, who reported to the British Foreign Ministry in London in 1946 that he had "not yet succeed in obtaining any evidence... regarding relations between the Russians and the hard core of the Tudeh party," but at the same time adds "that they are demonstrably close and the Tudeh line of talk and publicity is identical with the line of the [Russian] Communist Party."⁷ Further on in his book, Abrahamian provides evidence from 1957 that Mohammad Bahrami—a member of Tudeh's Central Committee and later general secretary of the Tudeh—gave to the police, which shows: "the issue of links between the Tudeh and the Soviet Union remains dark and confusing...Even members of the Central Committee, not to mention the rank and file, are in the dark about this issue."⁸

Chaqueri studied this very question, and based on documents from the Comintern archives, opened in 1992 and 1993, found:

...the creation of the Tudeh was planned and brought into existence by the occupying Soviet army through secret contacts with the veteran Iranian (pro-Soviet) socialist and former Minister of Reza Shah, Solaiman Mirza Eskandari. The Soviet army officer in charge saw to it that the program and activities of the party were in conformity with Soviet interests in Iran.⁹

As far as the shah was concerned, the Tudeh was Moscow's creation: "Moscow saw the moment of opportunity for political action in Iran the day my father was forced to abdicate and leave the country. Moscow helped found the Iranian branch of the communist party, the Tudeh."¹⁰

Tudeh's first major public act took place on October 9, 1942. It was the party's first conference and the declaration of its political agenda. This act occurred in Tehran before many onlookers, including the carefully observing eyes of the Western Allies. The Tudeh was the USSR's creation and its agenda reflected Soviet interests.¹¹ In this initial phase of the Tudeh Party's existence, Tehran and Iran's northern provinces—which were under Soviet occupation—were its main arenas of activity. The British, therefore, wished to prevent the expansion of these activities, hoping especially to stop them from spilling into the western and southern areas of Iran, such as Kermanshah and Khuzestan, where the British

³ Abrahamian, *Iran Between*, 281.

⁴ Eskandari, *Khaterat-e Siyasi*, 297–326; Zabih, *The Communist Movement in Iran*, 71–4; Abrahamian, *Iran Between*, 281. Solaiman Mirza Eskandari was a highly respected radical Qajar prince and a member of Iran's early progressive movement.

⁵ For discussion of this question, see Abdul Razak, "Convenient Comrades," 276–96.

⁶ Abrahamian, *Iran Between*, 282–83.

⁷ British Military Attaché to the Foreign Office, January 25, 1946, FO 371/Persia, 1946/34-52710, as quoted in Abrahamian, *Iran Between*, 304.

⁸ Military Governor of Tehran (Teymur Bakhtiyar), *Seyr-e Komunizm dar Iran* (Tehran: Kayhan, 1336/1957), 215–16 as quoted in Abrahamian, *Iran Between*, 304, note 48.

⁹ Chaqueri, "Did the Soviets," abstract. See also, Chaqueri, *The Left in Iran*, 13.

¹⁰ Pahlavi, *Answer to History*, 73.

¹¹ The Tudeh's populist slogans did not serve British interests in Iran, especially with regards to various types of labor legislation, including a mandatory eight-hour workday, which brought extensive support for the party. See Chaqueri, "Did the Soviets," 505–6, 510, 515–16, 523.

Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC) had installations.¹² The circumstances at the time, however, were quite promising for the Tudeh's expansion, as there was potential to increase its appeal among workers in Iran in general, and among AIOC workers in particular.¹³

In existing literature on the Tudeh Party, there is a thesis—voiced by Ervand Abrahamian—claiming that the Tudeh (and its supporting power, the USSR) was reluctant to address “the vital oil industry [of southern Iran] while the war in Europe continued,” “at a time when high priority was given to the allied war effort against fascist powers.”¹⁴ However, such statements, which others have followed, raise a number of questions. First, if Britain had an interest in undermining the Tudeh Party, and if the latter's leadership were aware of it long before the summer of 1944, would they still have waited until then to make a move? And second, did the Tudeh (and Soviets) really give priority to British interests in southern Iran over their own?

In an attempt to address these questions, this article argues the following thesis: the British and their proxies in Iran took measures against the Tudeh, and its Soviet patrons, to prevent them from expanding their activities, especially into southern Iran. This thesis is supported by correspondence, not used in the existing literature, between leading Tudeh figures and their Soviet patrons.¹⁵ Analysis of this correspondence makes it possible to answer not only the two above-mentioned questions, but also a third: was it the Soviets who helped the Tudeh stand against the challenges posed by the British? If such was indeed the case, then how did the Soviets help the Tudeh and how did this help continue for so long, despite the British? It should be noted that it was not only the British, but also the Americans, who tried to undermine the Tudeh; but in its early years, the focus of senior Tudeh officials and their Soviet patrons revolved mainly around the activities of the traditional rival in Iran, Britain.¹⁶

In this article, these issues are examined within the theoretical framework of ‘containment-encouragement,’ specifically British containment of the Tudeh from expanding its activity in Iran, especially in the south, and Soviet encouragement of the Tudeh's development throughout Iran, particularly in the south, as the USSR regarded Great Britain as its main rival there. This article contributes to a deeper understanding of how the Tudeh Party and Soviet regime discerned and chose to overcome the ‘British problem.’ Abdul Razak has already shown that, from 1946 onwards, the Tudeh became a pro-Soviet entity, ready to enact the Kremlin's demands even at the expense of Iranian sovereignty and political independence.¹⁷ The Soviet sources consulted here show clearly that this was true even earlier, not only around the election campaign for the Fourteenth Majlis, but from the Tudeh Party's very establishment.¹⁸

¹² Iranian oil was very important to the British. Already in 1909 Arnold T. Wilson, the British consul in Mohammerah (later Khorramshahr), regarded the establishment of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company as “the most important and far-reaching event affecting British interests” (Administration Report, R/15/1/710). Since then, the importance of Iranian oil for the British grew steadily, assuming great significance after WWII, when the “revenues to the British Treasury exploded as oil production increased from 16.8 million tons in 1945 to 31.75 million by 1950” (Marsh, “HMG,” 147–48.).

¹³ Aliyev, *Istoriya Irana*, 206.

¹⁴ Abrahamian, *Iran Between*, 291; Abrahamian, “Social Bases,” 209.

¹⁵ This correspondence from the Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History in Moscow (Rossiyskiy Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Sotsial'no-Politicheskoy Istorii) (hereafter: RGASPI) has not been previously consulted in connection to relations between the Tudeh Party and the Soviet Union.

¹⁶ Mamedova, “RUSSIA ii.”

¹⁷ Abdul Razak, “Convenient Comrades,” 276.

¹⁸ We must, of course, qualify the above and point out that, during WWII, the Tudeh Party also tried to soften the expected British opposition to it and looked for possibilities to cooperate with them wherever possible. This resulted in ambiguous Soviet-Tudeh relations during WWII. It is therefore useful to regard the triangular relationship between the Soviets, the Tudeh, and the British as nuanced and complex. See Abdul Razak, *British Policy*, 104–105, 108–117, 129–166, 170–203, 206, 208–213, 215–279, 282–295; Homa Katouzian, *Musaddiq and the Struggle*, 45–58.

The Tudeh Party's Main Problem in Its Early Years: Soviet and Tudeh Leadership Views

Many issues frustrated the path of the Tudeh after its entry into Iranian politics, a number of which stemmed from the fact that its members were not cohesive or united around a single set of values, making it difficult to formulate a political agenda. The party was founded on the basis of the rather abstract and unfamiliar values of promoting Iranian democratization and various freedoms.¹⁹ In October 1942, with the Tudeh's public emergence and first party conference, disagreements raged over the meaning of democracy, the identity of the elected members of its Central Committee (determined at the same conference), and their political views, which were by no means uniform. This was acknowledged by the Central Committee's elected members in a letter to their Soviet colleagues.²⁰

The Tudeh Party also had other problems, such as the desire to gain public support across Iran, not only in the northeast. In the 1942 party conference, the issue of the party's poor organization vis-à-vis its target audiences in those areas, especially the farmers, came under discussion.²¹ A clear example of the Tudeh's defective organization concerned its activities in southern/Iranian Azerbaijan. Directed by the party's leaders, Tudeh emissaries read their speeches in Persian, which was sometimes perceived by the local public as elitist, especially as many of them had a hard time understanding Persian. This problem was also shared by local Tudeh activists, who had difficulty coping with the Persian texts sent from the party's center in Tehran, especially in southern Iran. Such problems were common also in other provincial areas: local inhabitants often had difficulty understanding the Tudeh's worldview written in the Persian language, as well as the Persian terms and concepts used by the party's emissaries, who mostly belonged to the Tehrani intelligentsia. Those who sent emissaries from Tehran to provincial areas likely failed to anticipate these issues. In their report on Tudeh activities up to its first conference, Reza Rusta and Ardashes (Ardeshir) Ovanessiyan attributed the party's success vis-à-vis the local people of the northern provinces to the latter's higher cultural development, which they regarded as close to that of people in Tehran. Conversely, Rusta and Ovanessiyan regarded the Arab tribesmen near Abadan—an area of strategic importance for the Tudeh—and Lor and Baluch tribesmen as culturally underdeveloped.²²

There were also problems of the kind that could be defined as 'semi-objective,' a definition suiting the case in some provinces, particularly in the south, where British influence was strong. Such was the case in cities where the heads of local government identified with the British, or were subject to their influence, and discouraged Tudeh activity. This was not limited to cities, however, as the southern countryside—where the British kept good relations with local tribes, especially the Bakhtiaris—also shared this characteristic.²³

British diplomatic structure and its spread across Iran also played into the Tudeh's British challenge. In 1921, in addition to their main embassy in Tehran, the British held four consulates general, seven consulates, and eight vice-consulates throughout Iran, eighteen in total. By 1939, this number dropped to seven (probably due to Reza Shah's strong nationalist

¹⁹ The Iranian experience of a constitutional and democratic regime up to the Allied invasion of Iran during WWII was short-lived (1907–1908 and 1909–1911); and although both the parliament and the constitution from 1905–1906 were not abolished, they soon became a rubber stamp, mainly under the iron hand of Reza Khan/Shah (1921–1941). Thus, after the latter's fall in 1941, the term "democracy" still remained a fairly abstract concept to the majority of Iranian people.

²⁰ Tudeh Party headship to V. Molotov et. al., October 14, 1944 (top secret). See also the letter of Reza Rusta and Artashes Ovanessiyan, sub-title 3. Unfortunately, the first article of the above-mentioned document (which probably related to a different subject) and its details are lacking in the file. On the Soviet practice of taking out documents from their related files, see Volkov, "Fearing the Ghosts," 901–21.

²¹ Tudeh Party headship to Molotov et. al., October 14, 1944.

²² Sub-title 3.

²³ These relations were based on mutual interests, as the Bakhtiyari khans protected British interests—such as the Indo-European Telegraph, Lynch Road, and especially the AIOC in southern Iran. Digard, "BAKTĪĀRĪ TRIBE I."

policies and Iran's close relations with Nazi Germany), and rose once again after the Anglo-Soviet invasion during WWII. By 1947, there were only nine consulates. Usually, British consulates were located in Iran's major cities—such as Kermanshah, Isfahan, Shiraz, and Tabriz—with others opening and closing in additional locations according to British interests and prevailing circumstances. A constant British establishment was kept in Bushire, Iran's major port on the Persian Gulf, which the British maintained maritime control over up to its evacuation in 1971. Apart from these, the branches and installations of British companies, primarily the AIOC, also formed locations of potential friction with the Tudeh. Naturally, the fluctuations in the number of British establishments also affected their number of staff.²⁴

Existing research has already discussed, at length, most of the problems the Tudeh encountered in different parts of Iran; there is no need to discuss them further here.²⁵ What is not discussed, however, is the Tudeh's "British problem" referenced in correspondences between its leaders and the heads of the Soviet regime in the USSR.

From Rusta and Ovanessian's detailed report we learn that the party, in its first conference, was facing "reactionary elements" (as defined by Rusta and Ovanessian) in its ranks, challenging the party's leaders and platform. On the one hand, there were party members who forcefully demanded radicalization of the party's political line and, on the other, there were members who demanded exactly the opposite. The latter claimed that, sometime after the Allied invasion of Iran (August 25, 1941), a process of democratization was ignited in the country and positive processes began in the Majlis; processes they believed would result in promoting workers' relief alongside tax and land reforms with the potential to introduce improvements for laborers, workers, and farmers—the Tudeh's main target audiences. These issues were a central part of the Tudeh platform. The contention of this latter group of party members was that intervention in such matters could harm the process already begun in the Majlis, because some who promoted these reforms did not want their names linked to the Tudeh. Thus, according to their reasoning, if part of the Tudeh platform was already being promoted by others in the Majlis, then the party should concentrate on promoting other important issues. However, Rusta, Ovanessian, and their supporters did not share this position, as it was clear to them that those who introduced and discussed reforms in the Majlis had no intention of implementing them. Thus, they regarded Tudeh members who suggested refraining from promoting such reforms as people intent on derailing the Tudeh.²⁶

Apart from the activities of those moderate elements within the Tudeh Party, there were also some opportunistic elements focused on personal gain and privilege, with no interest in the party itself.²⁷ Pro-Western elements also infiltrated the ranks of the Tudeh, acting as Trojan horses to harm the party from within, loosen its unity, and then upend the discipline of its members: the very things the Tudeh leadership wished to strengthen. One of the aims of introducing pro-Western elements was to provoke rifts among the ranks, thus creating the image of a radicalized Tudeh party; indeed, gradually the Tudeh began to appear as such in the Iranian press.²⁸

The shah was more specific as to who he believed these "pro-Western" elements were. He pointed at the British, believing they were so involved in the Tudeh that he actually thought they had "helped found" it. In supporting this thesis, the shah stated that Mostafa Fateh—a British-educated economist and leading figure in the Hamrahan (Comrades) Party—whom he described as "an employee of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and a known British agent,"

²⁴ For a detailed account of British diplomatic and other establishments in Iran see Arbuthnott, "Iran," 3–77 and Wright, *The English*.

²⁵ For a discussion of such problems see Abrahamian, "Social Bases," 209, 271–79.

²⁶ Sub-title 3.

²⁷ Tudeh Party headship to Soviet Communist Party's Central Committee, n.d.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

was actually the one who “financed the Tudeh newspaper, *Mardom* [The People].” He further added: “it was and is their [British] policy to have their people everywhere, hoping to exercise some control no matter what happens.”²⁹ “Specifically,” the shah continued, “they hoped to infiltrate their agents among the workers in Abadan and in the refineries and oil fields of the south,” which were affiliated with the Central Council of Federated Trade Unions, established in Iran by the Tudeh.³⁰

Azimi mentions other measures taken by the British and their Iranian proxies to check the Tudeh’s popularity and growing strength. One such measure was engaging in a smear campaign against the Tudeh aimed at, and succeeding in, blackening this pro-Soviet party’s image among many Iranians.³¹ This was in tandem with pro-British propaganda that continued after the end of WWII and aimed to engender positivity and openness to the British presence in Iran in the wake of the war, presenting British political institutions as models for Iran to follow to become modern.³²

However, the important role of propaganda had already intensified during WWII, after the Nazis were checked at the ‘Battle of Stalingrad’ in 1943, a point at which the three Allied governments began to think about their future relations in general and in Iran in particular.³³ Some individuals and groups in Iran shared British interests in containing the Tudeh. One such group were landowners who regarded the Tudeh as an enemy (especially given the latter’s promotion of land reform) and took organized political action against them. A considerable number gathered around Sayyid Zia al-Din Tabatabâi, a well-known and staunchly pro-British figure in Iranian politics, broadly hated by both the Tudeh and Soviet leadership.³⁴

The Soviet Solution to the Tudeh’s “British Problem”

With regards to Tabatabâi, a very important document was compiled on December 15, 1943, which refers to the years 1942–1943. According to this document, both the Soviets and Tudeh were well aware of the obstacles the British were piling up against the Tudeh as early as 1943, and Tabatabâi—acting on behalf of the British and the landlords—was understood to be behind these. Attached to this document is an appendix that addresses not only Tabatabâi’s distant and rich political past, but also his contemporary activity (referring to the years 1942–1943) and British expectations of him regarding the promotion of their current and future interests in Iran.³⁵

According to the Soviets, the British wanted Tabatabâi to return to Iran because of “his extraordinary political skill” and his being “a distinctly pro-British [Iranian] politician.” In light of the changing conditions for the British (namely the process of Iranian democratization), his services were required to help deepen their grip on Iran’s economic and socio-political spheres. The British promised Tabatabâi—then exiled in Palestine—that

²⁹ Pahlavi, *Answer to History*, 72–3; idem., *Mission for My Country*, 73. According to Abrahamian, although an anti-communist, Fateh indeed “coedited *Mardom* with the Tudeh leaders in a short-lived united front named the Anti-Fascist Society.” Abrahamian, *Iran Between*, 188, 319–20. As another example of British involvement in communist parties, the shah stated that trade-union leaders in Aden “were all educated in England, at the London School of Economics,” believing that “having several people who pretended to be anti-British would give them control of the nationalist movement.” Pahlavi, *Answer to History*, 73–74.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 74.

³¹ Azimi, “Elections i.”

³² Abdul-Razak, “But what,” 825–826.

³³ Abdul-Razak, “Convenient Comrades,” 283.

³⁴ Tabatabâi himself was a pro-British journalist who, following the coup on February 21, 1921, was appointed to the post of Iran’s prime minister, but was ousted after few months. After more than two decades out of Iran, including six years in Palestine, he returned and established the Fatherland [Vatan] and the later National Will [Eradeh-ye Melli] parties (with British support), mainly to counter Tudeh and Soviet influence. See “Chera Hezb-e Eradeh-ye Melli.”

³⁵ Manuil’sky to Molotov, December 15, 1943 (top secret), 8.

they would use their influence to secure a senior position for him in the Iranian government, a position they could then use to further their own interests. This Soviet document further mentions that in 1942, in order to prepare the ground for Tabatabâi's return, a newspaper reporter from Iran was sent to Palestine to interview him. The interview was published in *Iqdam* newspaper's issue no. 166 of 1942. In this interview, the Soviet document highlighted the following points: first, Tabatabâi stated that his views were close to those of the Communists; second, that he was a true friend of the USSR; third, that he supported the Tudeh; and fourth, that he even sought to convey his regards to its leadership as a sign that he sincerely valued it. To the Soviet leadership, however, it was quite clear that Tabatabâi and his British supporters were only trying to throw sand in their eyes.³⁶

The diaries of Reader W. Bullard, the British ambassador in Iran during the Allied occupation, reveal that the British were considering Sayyid Zia al-Din Tabatabâi as a possible candidate for the post of Iranian prime minister. In late 1941, Bullard wrote to the Foreign Office in London as follows:

If we begin Cabinet making [in Iran], the Soviet Embassy may have views very different from ours...Nevertheless it may be necessary to find a Prime Minister with more energy and determination than [Mohammad-'Ali] Foroughi.³⁷ There is no other candidate in this country at present. Taqizadeh³⁸ or Sayyid Zia [Tabatabâi] might do, but it would be fatal to either if it appeared that he [Tabatabâi] had been brought back [to Iran] by us.³⁹

By the beginning of February 1942, Bullard believed: "there is no demand for Sayyid Zia, such as to justify his return at present. Most Persians seem to have forgotten him."⁴⁰ But this changed a year later, as Bullard reported that "movement in favour [sic.] of Sayyid Zia which was at first insignificant seems to be growing."⁴¹

In the above-mentioned Soviet document dated December 15, 1943, there is also mention of the Tudeh leadership's analysis of Tabatabâi's return. The Tudeh believed the shah feared that Tabatabâi's return was a British move that endangered his own rule. They also believed that Tabatabâi's return was related to the elections for the Fourteenth Majlis, which began in 1943 and ended in 1944, and was intended, more precisely, to promote Tabatabâi to the position of prime minister.⁴² The Tudeh leadership believed the young shah's fears were not wholly without warrant, as, after his father's fall from power, his own position remained weak and he may have feared that British success in appointing Sayyid Zia as prime minister might eventually turn him, the shah, into a British puppet.⁴³

As of the end of 1943, the Soviets were taking note of the British and their ability to advance their supporters to key positions through the Iranian election process. During the elections for the Fourteenth Majlis, the Soviets noted that British influence in Iran

³⁶ Ibid., 10–11.

³⁷ Mohammad-'Ali Foroughi Zoka al-Molk was a writer, diplomat, and politician who served three terms as Prime Minister of Iran (1925–1926, 1933–1935 and 1941–1942). Azimi, "FORÛĞĪ, MOĤAMMAD-'ALĪ ĐOKĀ'-AL-MOLK İ."

³⁸ Sayyid Hasan Taqizadeh (1878–1970) was an Iranian intellectual, parliamentarian, and diplomat who held a number of official posts. See Katouzian, "Seyyed Hasan Taqizadeh," 195–213.

³⁹ Reader W. Bullard to FO, October 24, 1941, in Bullard, *Letters from Tehran*, 90.

⁴⁰ Bullard to FO, February 2, 1942, in Bullard, *Letters from Tehran*, 115.

⁴¹ Bullard to FO, February 14, 1943, in Bullard, *Letters from Tehran*, 177.

⁴² Manuil'sky to Molotov, December 15, 1943, 9.

⁴³ See Abrahamian, *Iran Between*, 176–77; Azimi, *Iran: The Crisis of Democracy*, 90. It should be mentioned that in 1941, and in order to serve their own interests in Iran, the British briefly considered Prince Hamid Mirza Qajar—who was a British citizen named David Drummond at the time—as a replacement for Reza Shah. Wright, *The Persians Amongst the English*, photo between pages 196–97.

was paramount and they resorted to any means necessary, even threatening and forcing people to vote for their candidates, especially in the city of Yazd, where Tabatabâi was a candidate. In the Soviet document, it was further stated that, since the right to vote was only given to men aged twenty and over, not involved in crime, and who could present sugar purchase vouchers (a means to manage the sugar shortage in Iran), the number of voters was greatly reduced. This was believed to have played into the hands of the British, who could ensure that most of their supporters exercised their right to vote. It was further emphasized that poor Iranians preferred to drink tea with raisins, which were cheap compared to sugar, and would often sell their sugar vouchers. It was therefore possible to purchase vouchers in large quantities and give them to the poor so long as they were willing to make the "right choice" at the ballot box. Thus, long before the election results were announced, the Soviets predicted, with almost absolute certainty, that Tabatabâi would be elected as a member of the Fourteenth Majlis.⁴⁴ This raised concerns among the Soviet leadership about the future of the Tudeh. It was therefore necessary to take steps to raise the Tudeh's popularity and pave the way for its success in the upcoming elections. To this end, the Soviets made an unprecedented move, taken by Josef Stalin himself in late 1943, during a meeting of the three Allied leaders in Tehran. To the best of the Soviets' own understanding, this move shocked the Iranian political system.⁴⁵ However, it should be noted that this course of action was already planned in October 1943.⁴⁶

During his stay in Tehran, Stalin visited the shah with the aim of, among other things, improving the Tudeh's chances in the upcoming elections and countering the British smear campaign. Stalin's visit moved the shah so much that he publicly declared his support for the Tudeh and asked Soheili to do the same.⁴⁷ In the shah's own words,

While my calls on Churchill and Roosevelt were perfunctory and without real significance, my meeting with Stalin was entirely different. For one thing, he was the only participant [in the Tehran Conference] who bothered with protocol and called on me, rather than summoning me to the [Soviet] embassy as the other two had done. For another, he was polite, well-mannered, and respectful...⁴⁸

The shah's statement was a kind of heavy-weight counter propaganda to the propaganda and activities of the pro-Western (mainly pro-British) elements in Iranian politics, who were acting against the Tudeh. Moreover, the shah spoke with Prime Minister Soheili and publicly asked him to support the Tudeh in the upcoming elections. The shah then sent Ahmad-'Ali Sepehr (Movarrehk al-Dauleh), the Deputy Industry Minister, to meet with the Tudeh leadership, a meeting from which Sepehr returned with a statement of support for that party, condemning pro-Western elements in the government such as Industry Minister Mahmud Badr and Interior Minister Sayyid Mohammad Tadayyon, who both acted against the Tudeh and USSR.⁴⁹ It was Sepehr who hinted that it would only take a word from the Soviet representative in Iran for the shah to remove these ministers from the Soviets' path.⁵⁰

The impact of Stalin's move and the shah's support for the Tudeh made a significant mark on the election results of the Fourteenth Majlis; the Tudeh sponsored 23 candidates, who won 200,000 votes in total, obtaining more than 70 percent of votes cast in their

⁴⁴ Manuil'skiy to Molotov, December 15, 1943, 2–3.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁴⁶ Lota, "Sekretnyy Voyazh."

⁴⁷ Manuil'skiy to Molotov, December 15, 1943, 8.

⁴⁸ Pahlavi, *Answer to History*, 72–73; *idem*, *Mission for My Country*, 80.

⁴⁹ Mahmud Badr (1892–1968) was a prominent figure in the Iranian ministries. See "Mahmud Badr." Mohammad Tadayyon (1881–1951) was a minister of education and later of interior. See Soltani Moqaddam, "Sayyid Mohammad Tadayyon."

⁵⁰ Manuil'skiy to Molotov, December 15, 1943, 8–9.

constituencies (mostly in the northern part of Iran), which formed over 13 percent of the votes cast in the entire country, more than twice as many as any other political party.⁵¹ It seems that the shah's public intervention helped the Tudeh, who began to accumulate political power and capital. It also gave the Tudeh greater freedom to propagate Soviet interests, at least those that could be presented as favoring the Iranian nation and people, especially its workers and laborers. Tudeh propaganda soon garnered many hearts, and the party extended its reach from northern Iran and the capital Tehran to additional districts, including in southern Iran. Apart from propagating workers, laborers, farmers, and women's rights, Tudeh propaganda also included cultural activities, such as setting up clubs and staging theater performances.⁵²

While the Tudeh made inroads into southern Iran, where the British behaved as homeowners and suppressed the local labor force employed in their factories, the British remained focused on taking over Khuzestan.⁵³ Thus, they forbade representatives of the Iranian regime and its military officers (of the Tenth Division of the Iranian army) to speak with Soviet representatives and/or their local representatives (namely, the Tudeh or representatives of the Workers' Union, which the Tudeh set up). A letter sent by Tudeh Party leadership to their Soviet counterparts, dated October 14, 1944, discusses Tudeh activities in southern Iran. Although there is no mention of when such activities actually began, it should be noted that this required planning and preparation, especially in an area under British influence. The leaders of the Central Committee of the Tudeh Party explicitly emphasized that British actions were working against Tudeh activities in southern Iran. It was further noted that, while the Tudeh began strengthening its organizations in the south, the British formed their own local allies, mainly those in the religious circles, for the propaganda struggle against the Tudeh, whose ideology was principally atheist. The above-mentioned letter provides details about previous Tudeh activities in southern Iran, which continued with greater intensity immediately after the elections for the Fourteenth Majlis.⁵⁴ Thus, Tudeh activities in southern Iran did not happen overnight; indeed, such had started much earlier as part of a struggle for influence, regardless of British war efforts against Nazi Germany.

In spite of the British, their proxies, and especially Tabatabâi, the Tudeh also succeeded in the Majlis, managing to place thirteen candidates, each of whom supported the prime ministerial candidate Morteza-Qoli Bayat, who attacked Western imperialism and was especially against Tabatabâi's pro-British candidacy.⁵⁵ Sometime later, however, the Tudeh representatives in the Majlis switched their support to Ahmad Qavam (Qavam al-Saltaneh), who, according to Reza Radmanesh, made progressive statements such as: "the solution to the problem in Iranian Azerbaijan⁵⁶ is by way of peace" and called for "improving the relationship with the Soviet Union."⁵⁷

The Tudeh's success continued through the end of 1945 and beginning of 1946. In his evaluation of local conditions from November 1945 to May 1946, Alan Charles Trott, the British consul-general in Ahwaz, admitted that the Tudeh's success was keenly felt in southern Iran. According to Trott:

⁵¹ Abrahamian, *Iran Between*, 291–92.

⁵² Tudeh party headship to Molotov et. al., October 14, 1944.

⁵³ On British behavior in southern Iran, see Aliyev, *Istoriya Irana*, 206.

⁵⁴ Tudeh party headship to Molotov et. al., October 14, 1944.

⁵⁵ From the Kurdish Bayat tribe, Morteza-Qoli Bayat was Prime Minister of Iran (November 25, 1944–May 13, 1945). Azimi, *Iran: The Crisis of Democracy*, 113–17.

⁵⁶ This reference is to the crisis following the establishment of the pro-Soviet Autonomous Government of Azerbaijan in December 1945. See Kuniholm, "AZERBAIJAN v."

⁵⁷ The text of Radmanesh's speech at the Second Tudeh Party Congress (April 1948), enclosure in Sichiov to Baranov, June 12, 1948 (secret). Ahmad Qavam (1873–1955) was a leading political figure. See Shokat, *Caught in the Crossfire*. Reza Radmanesh (1905–1983) was of the most prominent members of the Tudeh Party. See "Tudehi-ye Mozabab."

The poison of Tudeh's propaganda has spread with astonishing speed throughout the [Khuzistan] province; the sorry spectacle of thousands of human beings, who after all have a religion and a sort of culture of their own, suddenly turning communist like sheep following their leader.⁵⁸

The Tudeh's Pyrrhic Victory in the Background of the Soviet Troop Withdrawal from Iran

After the Red Army's departure from Iran in May 1946, the Tudeh's political power began to recede, with old problems—such as division into reactionary, moderate, and opportunistic elements discussed earlier—resurfacing. According to Reza Radmanesh, who replaced Eskandari as Secretary-General of the Tudeh in 1946, in the weeks following the Soviet occupation forces' withdrawal from Iran, "pogroms [sic.]" took place against Tudeh branches, first in the provinces and later—after the Tudeh left the Qavam cabinet (October 1946)—even reaching Tehran. Eskandari and several other senior party officials felt so threatened that they saw no alternative other than leaving Iran. The branches of the Tudeh Party, as well as its Workers' Union, began to close one after another, and by the end of 1946, the Tudeh had practically become a partially legal party.⁵⁹

The British had acted vigorously and effectively against the Tudeh, instigating riots against them and managing to bring the party to the verge of fracture. In early 1947, to prevent such a split, the Tudeh set up a new and temporary Central Committee in order to please some party members by promoting them to leadership positions. However, some such members, led by Khalil Maleki, began adopting a more socialist line, which, according to Radmanesh, did not align with Tudeh principles. He described them as "opportunists who are cooperating with the British," leading to the cancellation of their Tudeh Party membership. This was part of a process of cleaning the party ranks, which was left with only 3,000 members; there were 25,000 members in the 1944–1946 period.⁶⁰

As mentioned above, the Tudeh's fall began in provincial areas following the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Iran. Still, it should be borne in mind that, from early August to mid-October 1946, the Tudeh Party was part of Qavam's coalition government. At precisely the time when the party was suffering from riots, its senior officials in the capital were gaining new powers to bring about reforms according to the party's political platform. Radmanesh himself acknowledged this, noting that in the years before the Tudeh joined the government, its Majlis members tried to implement the party's platform through parliamentary work; even in cases where their proposals were approved, however, implementation frequently got stuck in government ministries. This situation changed only with the Tudeh's entry into the Qavam government and the beginning of its three ministers' tenure in that government. According to Radmanesh, these three ministers worked day and night and, without making many personnel changes in their ministries, were able, rather quickly, to change the implementation processes beneath them by infiltrating the ministries of those who identified with the Tudeh.⁶¹

Although the Tudeh Party managed to advance reform in Iran through its ministers' membership in Qavam's 1946 coalition government, this proved to be a Pyrrhic victory. The formation of the Autonomous Government of Azerbaijan (in Iranian Azerbaijan, December 10, 1945) and the Republic of Mahabad (January 22, 1946), combined with Tudeh membership in the Iranian government, raised British fears to new heights. They concluded that the Soviets could use the implicit threat of the annexation of Iranian Azerbaijan to gain oil concessions in northern Iran. The British also feared that, after the withdrawal of

⁵⁸ Shaw, "Strong, United and Independent," 512.

⁵⁹ Radmanesh's speech in Sichiow to Baranov, June 12, 1948.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

their own forces from Iran, the Soviets would find an excuse to return, not only for oil concessions and interests in northern Iran, but also to take advantage of the British forces' absence and gain oil concession in southern Iran as well. They also feared that the Tudeh's power might increase even more in the next Majlis, the Fifteenth, for which the elections were moved to early 1947. If this were to happen, that Majlis might even become more pro-Soviet than pro-Western. With such fears in mind, the British hurried to support and encourage separatist aspirations among the tribes in southern Iran—such as the Qashqai, Bakhtiari, Boyer Ahmad, the Arab Union, and Khamseh tribes—and unite them under the South Fars Movement (Nehzat-e Jonub-e Fars).⁶²

After the fall of Reza Shah's iron-fisted rule, which had weighed against the tribes,⁶³ they regained much of their freedom, and British support for their autonomous aspirations within the South Fars Movement formed an anti-Tudeh (and anti-Soviet) protection belt for the British in the south.⁶⁴ In the existing research literature, there are claims that the British could have successfully dealt with the Tudeh on their own.⁶⁵ There are, however, also contradicting views. Shaw, for example, claims that, in British eyes, the Tudeh's strengthening in Khuzestan—the most important province of AIOC activity—was expressed in its leading of the AIOC workers' strike on July 14, 1946. For the British, there was a serious threat that Soviet and Tudeh activities in Iran might finally result in placing Iran on the Soviet side of the 'Iron Curtain.' To prevent this, the British sought American assistance.⁶⁶

Indeed, Radmanesh began speaking of the Americans as those who vigorously and openly acted against his party through applying pressure, in addition to that of the British, on Ahmad Qavam to politically castrate the Tudeh ministers in his cabinet.⁶⁷ One can recognize the change in the language Radmanesh used during his speech at the Tudeh Second Party Congress about those behind anti-Tudeh conspiracies: up until the Tudeh joined Qavam's government, he pointed to the British as being behind these conspiracies, but after, he began speaking of an Anglo-American conspiracy against the Tudeh. In this speech, Radmanesh did not explain exactly what Anglo-American pressures were exerted on Qavam, but he gave an explanation as to its aim: shifting the balance of power (which, in Radmanesh's eyes, was created in the summer of 1946) back to the British, with American assistance. For their help, the British were ready to increase American influence in Iran in a number of areas where British influence was paramount. The combined British-American pressure on Qavam, and their threats to act against him through their influence on other parties in his coalition government, eventually bore fruit. Thus, Qavam was forced to maneuver and withdraw from his accord with the Tudeh, take advantage of its coalition commitments to him, and harden his position towards its activists in Khuzestan.⁶⁸

At the same time, influential local elements in Khuzestan encouraged the masses to riot against the Tudeh and its local Workers' Union, while the military government that allegedly intervened to calm the situation also acted against them. Similar riots against the Tudeh and Tudeh-related organizations were also encouraged in Fars province. The three Tudeh ministers complained about the deliberate harm done to military personnel in Fars province who identified with them.⁶⁹ They also stood against the decision to prevent Tudeh

⁶² Shaw, "Strong, United and Independent," 508–10, 521.

⁶³ For a detailed account of Reza Shah's policies vis-à-vis the tribes, see Naqib-zadeh, *Daulat-e Reza Shah*.

⁶⁴ See Mo'ini Rudbali, Barzin and Najafi Kashkuli, "Vakavi-ye Jonbesh-ha," 101–20.

⁶⁵ See, for example, Abdul Razak, "British Policy," 213; Abdul Razak and Elling, "Oil, Labour and Empire," 157.

⁶⁶ Shaw, "Strong, United and Independent," 508–10, 521.

⁶⁷ This was after Qavam's demand that the Tudeh leadership and Workers' Union in Khuzestan delay the AIOC workers' strike (in July 1946). See Atabaki, "Chronicles of a Calamitous Strike," 116–17; Abrahamian, *Iran Between*, 237.

⁶⁸ Radmanesh's speech in Sichiov to Baranov, June 12, 1948.

⁶⁹ The Tudeh's military network was established by 'Abd al-Samad Kambakhsh, a member of the Central Committee in the First Tudeh Party Conference, who began developing contacts within the Iranian military in early 1944. The network was exposed in August 1954. For a detailed account of Tudeh's military network, see Miyata, "The Tudeh Military Network," 313–28.

representatives from serving on the inquiry committee into the Fars events, as the number of Tudeh affiliates among the casualties was considerable, a fact they believed demonstrated that the riots were deliberate. The Tudeh ministers resented the fact that the commission of inquiry was biased and expressed dissatisfaction with its work. Thus, after seventy-three days of membership, the three Tudeh members resigned from Qavam's government, as they (and the Tudeh leadership) viewed Qavam as willing to sacrifice anything for his survival as prime minister. Demonstratively, the three ministers decided not to show up for a cabinet meeting on October 16, 1946, which in practice meant resigning from the Qavam government. Qavam submitted his resignation the following day.⁷⁰

Shortly after retiring from the Qavam government, the persecution of the Tudeh reached Tehran, including the three former Tudeh ministers themselves.⁷¹ Thus ended the period of dissonance, during which, on the one hand, Tudeh members in the provinces suffered persecution and violence, while on the other, their three ministers held unprecedented positions of influence; neither the Tudeh nor its members ever held such power before or after 1946.

Conclusions

It is clear from the documents discussed here that senior members of the Tudeh Party and senior officials in the USSR knew, at least as early as 1943, of British attempts to undermine and contain the Tudeh. In light of this, it is neither possible to claim that the Tudeh deferred to British interests in Iran during WWII nor accept the argument that, because Britain was involved in a joint war effort with its allies against Nazi Germany, the Tudeh refrained from operating in southern Iran, where the British AIOC had its main oil installations, key to the war effort. In a comparative examination between the time the Tudeh was barely able to operate in southern Iran and the time it was able (especially by supporting the local AIOC oil employees, who were more or less powerless in front of their British employers), it is clear the Tudeh were not waiting for Nazi Germany's capitulation, but instead hurried into Iran's southern parts as soon as they had grounds to do so, immediately after the elections for the Fourteenth Majlis.

We have also seen that many difficulties prevented the Tudeh from developing and succeeding politically, especially in its first two years, which were beset by anti-Tudeh intrigue and British plots. Soviet sources regard Stalin's intervention against these plots and intrigue, followed by the shah's support for the Tudeh (against the pro-British *Tabataba'i*, whom he regarded as a threat to his own position), as factors that gave the Tudeh a crucial boost, with positive results.

From a 'containment-encouragement' framework, the shah's public support for the Tudeh and his emissaries' activities in its favor, both contributed to the Tudeh's electoral success and enabled it to extend its activities to other parts of Iran, even to the center of British power in the province of Khuzestan. Following the elections that led to the Tudeh's entry into parliament, its political influence increased, peaking in 1946 when three of its senior members became ministers in Qavam's coalition government. According to the Tudeh leaders, in that year and during the Tudeh's membership in the Qavam government, a balance was struck between Tudeh influence and that of the British in Iranian politics.

This situation, however, did not serve British interests, and they sought to tilt the balance back in their favor, using every possible means including American assistance. It was Radmanesh himself who emphasized this issue, adding that the Americans had already begun to operate openly against the Tudeh, shoulder-to-shoulder with the British and their proxies in Iran, by summer 1946. Radmanesh did indicate that American assistance to their British ally was not free of charge, but he did not mention what they received.

⁷⁰ Sichiov to Baranov, June 12, 1944, appendix no. 7.

⁷¹ N. Pukhlov to A. Paniushkin, n.d.

At any rate, the combined Anglo-American pressure applied on Qavam to oust the Tudeh from his government ultimately succeeded.

The timing of the Tudeh's decline in Iranian politics could have been due to the withdrawal of Soviet military forces (May 1946); but Tudeh membership in Qavam's coalition government shortly afterwards raises doubts about this answer, making it only a partial reason at best. After all, the Tudeh reached the peak of its political power and ability to influence and introduce meaningful reforms when three of its members were heading three government ministries, took part in drawing up government policy, and oversaw implementation. In other words, during the time when the Tudeh only had members in the Majlis, its representatives were able to make proposals and suggestions but could not secure implementation; this changed only after membership in Qavam's coalition government.

Looking at the Tudeh's capacity and power through a 'containment-encouragement' framework provides us with a fascinating and simultaneous picture of both 'containment' and 'encouragement.' This was the reality from the summer to mid-October of 1946. Following the latter time frame, the Tudeh's containment and decline are clearer and more unequivocal. To paraphrase Radmanesh's remarks from the Second Tudeh Party Congress in 1948, while its "British problem" had been solved in late 1943 to early 1944, it was renewed in the summer of 1946 as an "Anglo-American problem."

Two key milestones need, therefore, to be emphasized: Stalin's visit to Iran at the end of 1943 and Qavam's exclusion of Tudeh ministers from the government in October 1946. The first point highlights the fact that Stalin intervened on behalf of the Tudeh, even though the relationship between the Tudeh and USSR was not binary. After all, the Tudeh also tried to make its way in Iranian politics on its own and, to that end, found possible points of cooperation with the British. In the end, however, the very fact that Soviet intervention (i.e., Stalin's visit) was necessary to achieving and overcoming the challenges and obstacles in the Tudeh's path clearly indicates to which of the powers—at the end of the Fourteenth Majlis elections in March 1944, at least—the Tudeh owed its progress and success. Up to the middle of 1946, senior Tudeh and Soviet officials regarded the British as their main challenge and obstacle in Iran. Stalin took the above-mentioned step despite the fact that defeating Nazi Germany was his main goal; a goal for which Britain's strength was a necessity, thus it was imperative not to hurt its soft underbelly in Iran, i.e., the oil industry in the south. After all, damaging British strength was to weaken its ally economically and politically.

As for the second point, the Soviet Union tried to delay, as much possible, the withdrawal of its forces from Iran, partly out of fear for the Tudeh's fate; and, indeed, it did until the end of May 1946, when there was no longer any excuse for the further postponement or prevention of this withdrawal. Once the Soviet forces evacuated Iran, it was only a matter of time before a pro-Soviet element like the Tudeh would be forced to vacate its position of strength, which it held from the spring of 1944 (its success in the Fourteenth Majlis elections) to the summer of 1946 (the evacuation of Soviet forces from Iran). The question of time was resolved in mid-October 1946, with Qavam's exclusion of the Tudeh from government; and so it was, at least in the eyes of Tudeh Party leadership and its Soviet patron, whose point of view stand at the center of this article's discussion.

Disclosure statement. No potential conflict of interest reported by the author.

References

- Abdul Razak, Rowena. *British policy in Iran: the role of the Tudeh Party, 1941–1946*, DPhil theses, University of Oxford, 2021.
- Abdul Razak, Rowena. "But what would they think of us?" Propaganda and the Manipulation of the Anglo-Soviet Occupation of Iran, 1941–46." *Iranian Studies* 49, no. 5 (2016): 817–835.
- Abdul Razak, Rowena. "Convenient Comrades: Re-Assessing the Relationship between the Soviet Union and the Tudeh Party during the British-Soviet Occupation of Iran, 1941–5." In *Russians in Iran Diplomacy and Power in the Qajar Era and Beyond*, edited by Rudi Matthee and Elena Andreeva, 276–296. London: I. B. Tauris, 2018.

- Abdul Razak, Rowena, and Elling Christian Rasmus. "Oil, Labour and Empire: Abadan in WWII Occupied Iran." *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 50, no. 1 (2023): 142–159.
- Abrahamian, Ervand. *A History of Modern Iran*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Abrahamian, Ervand. *Iran Between Two Revolutions*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982.
- Abrahamian, Ervand. "Social Bases of Iranian Politics: The Tudeh Party, 1941–53." PhD diss., Faculty of Political Science, Columbia University, 1969.
- Aliyev, Salekh. *Istoriya Irana XX vek*. Moskva: Kraft, 2004.
- Arbuthnott, Hugh. "Iran." In *British Missions Around the Gulf, 1575–2005: Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman*, edited by Hugh Arbuthnott, Terence Clark, and Richard Muir, 3–53 (ch. 1, "The Embassy") and 54–77 (ch. 2, "The Consulates"). Folkestone: Global Oriental Ltd, 2008.
- Atabaki, Touraj. "Chronicles of a Calamitous Strike Foretold: Abadan, July 1946." In *On the Road to Global Labour History*, edited by Karl Heinz Roth, 93–128 (Historical Materialism Book Series, vol. 148). Leiden: Brill, 2017.
- Azimi, Fakhreddin. "Elections i. Under the Qajar and Pahlavi Monarchies, 1906–79." *Encyclopædia Iranica* – online edition. Last modified December 13, 2011. <https://iranicaonline.org/articles/elections#i> (accessed February 9, 2023).
- Azimi, Fakhreddin. "FORŪĠĪ, MOĤAMMAD-‘ALĪ ĐOKĀ‘-AL-MOLK i. Biography." *Encyclopædia Iranica* – online edition. Last modified January 31, 2012. <https://iranicaonline.org/articles/forugi-mohammad-ali> (accessed 12 February 2023).
- Azimi, Fakhreddin. *Iran: The Crisis of Democracy*. London: I.B. Tauris, 1989.
- Bullard, Reader. *Letters from Tehran: A British Ambassador in World War II Persia*. Edited by E. C. Hodgkin. London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 1991.
- Chaqueri, Cosroe. "Did the Soviets play a role in founding the Tudeh party in Iran?" *Cahiers du Monde Russe* 40, no. 3 (1999): 497–508. Abstract. <https://doi.org/10.4000/monderusse.22>.
- Chaqueri, Cosroe. *The Left in Iran, 1941–1957: Revolutionary History*. London: The Merlin Press, 2011.
- "Chera Hezb-e Eradeh-ye Mellī Tāsis Shod." *Muassasah-ye Motale‘at-e Tarikh-e Mo‘aser-e Iran*. <https://www.iichs.ir/fa/news/8463> (accessed February 10, 2023).
- Digard, J. P. "BAĤTĪĀRĪ TRIBE i. Ethnography." *Encyclopædia Iranica* – online edition. Last modified December 15, 1988. <https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/baktiari-tribe> (accessed February 6, 2023).
- Eskandari, Iraj. *Khaterat-e Siyasi*. Edited by A. Dehbashi. Tehran: ‘Elmi, 1368/1989.
- Hopkirk, Peter. *The Great Game: The Struggle for Empire in Central Asia*. New York: Kodansha International, 1992.
- India Office Records, British Library, London, United Kingdom.
- "Administration Report of his Britannic Majesty’s Consulate for Arabistan, Mohammerah for the Year 1909." India Office Records (IOR), R/15/1/710.
- Ingram, Edward. *The beginning of the great game in Asia, 1828–1834*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979.
- Katouzian, Homa. "Seyyed Hasan Taqizadeh: Three Lives in a Lifetime." *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 32, no. 1 (2012): 195–213.
- Katouzian Homa. *Musaddiq and the Struggle for Power in Iran*. London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 1990.
- Kazemzadeh, Firuz. *Russia and Britain in Persia, 1864–1914: A Study of Imperialism*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968.
- Kozhanov, Nikolay. "The Pretexts and Reasons for the Allied Invasion of Iran in 1941." *Iranian Studies* 45, no. 4 (July 2012): 479–97.
- Kuniholm, B. "AZERBAIJAN v. History from 1941 to 1947." *Encyclopaedia Iranica* – online edition. Last modified August 18, 2011. <https://iranicaonline.org/articles/azerbaijan-v> (accessed February 14, 2023).
- Lota, Vladimir. "Sekretnyy Voyazh" [Secret Voyage]. *Russian Ministry of Defense portal*. https://mil.ru/winner_may/history/more.htm?id=11855957 (accessed February 12, 2023).
- Majd, Mohammad-Gholi. *August 1941: The Anglo-Russian Occupation of Iran and Change of Shahs*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America Inc., 2012.
- "Mahmud Badr." *Mo‘assasah-ye Motale‘at-e Tarikh-e Mo‘aser-e Iran*. <https://www.iichs.ir/fa/news/1068> (accessed February 13, 2023).
- Mamedova, Nina. "RUSSIA ii. IRANIAN-SOVIET RELATIONS (1917–1991)." *Encyclopædia Iranica* – online edition. Last modified July 20, 2009. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/russia-ii-iranian-soviet-relations-1917-1991> (accessed February 3, 2023).
- Marsh, Steve. "HMG, AIOC and the Anglo-Iranian Oil Crisis: In Defence of Anglo-Iranian." *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 12, no. 4 (2001): 143–74.
- Miyata, Osamu. "The Tudeh Military Network during the Oil Nationalization Period." *Middle Eastern Studies* 23, no. 3 (July 1987): 313–28.
- Mo‘ini Rudbali, Reza, Sayyid Saheb Barzin, and Fatimeh Najafi Kashkuli. "Vakavi-ye Jonbesh-ha-ye Mataqeh‘i-ye Iran dar Sal-ha-ye 1324–1325 sh. (Motale‘eh-ye Moridi: Ta‘thir-e Firqeh-ye Demokrat-i Azarbaijan bar Nehzat-e Jonub-e Fars)." *Jostar-ha-ye Tarikhi* 4, no. 1 (Bahar va Tabestan-e 1392/Spring and Summer 2013): 101–20.
- Naqib-zadeh, Ahmad. *Daulat-e Reza Shah va Nezam-e Eylī: Ta‘thir-e Sakhtar-e Daulat-e Qodrat-gara-ye Reza Shah bar Nofuz-e Qabayel va ‘Ashayer*. Tehran: Markaz-e Asnad-e Enqelab-e Eslami, 1379/2000.

- Pahlavi, Mohammad Riza. *Answer to History*. New York: Stein and Day, 1980.
- Pahlavi, Mohammad Riza. *Mission for My Country*. London: Hutchinson & Co., 1961.
- Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History, Moscow, Russia. (*Rossiyskiy Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Sotsial'no-Politicheskoy Istorii*) (RGASPI).
- Dmitriy Manuil'skiy (secretary of the Comintern's operation committee) to Viacheslav Molotov (USSR's foreign secretary), December 15, 1943 (top secret), RGASPI/82/2/1220.
 - N. Pukhlov (head of the Communications Department of the Cominform) to A. Paniushkin (deputy-chairman of the foreign policy office of the party central committee), n.d., RGASPI/17/128/176.
 - Radmanesh's speech at the Second Tudeh Party Congress. April 1948. Enclosure in S. Sichiov (head of Middle East section in USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs) to L. Baranov (deputy head of International Information section of Soviet Communist Party), June 12, 1948 (secret), no. 766, RGASPI/5/10/610.
 - Reza Rusta and Artashes Ovanessian. Sub-title 3. "The Tudeh until Party's First Conference." Letters, Messages... Decisions of the Tudeh Party Conference in October 1942..., RGASPI/5/10/817.
 - Tudeh Party headship to Soviet Communist Party's Central Committee. n.d. In December 1945, this address of the Tudeh's headship was tagged inside the file RGASPI/5/10/818.
 - Tudeh Party headship to V. Molotov, A. Micoyan, L. Beriya, G. Malenkov, A. Sherbakov, October 14, 1944 (top secret), RGASPI /5/10/818.
- Shaw, Alexander Nicholas. "Strong, United and Independent: The British Foreign Office, Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and the internationalization of Iranian politics at the dawn of the Cold War, 1945–46." *Middle Eastern Studies* 52, no. 3 (2016): 505–24.
- Shokat, Hamid. *Caught in the Crossfire: A Political Biography of Ahmad Qavam*. Translated by M. R. Ghanoonparvar. Bethesda, MD: Ibex, 2020.
- Soltani Moqaddam, Sa'ideh. "Sayyid Mohammad Tadayyon." *Pazhuheshkadeh-ye Baqer al-'Ulum*. <https://tinyurl.com/2ehvvh42> (accessed February 12, 2023).
- "Tudehi-ye Mozabzab: Negahi beh-Zendegi-ye Siyasi-ye Reza Radmanesh." *Mo'assasseh-ye Motale'at-e Tarikh-e Mo'aser-e Iran*. <https://www.iichs.ir/fa/news/16166> (accessed February 14, 2023).
- Volkov, Denis. "Fearing the Ghosts of State Officialdom Past? Russia's Archives as a Tool for Constructing Historical Memories on its Persia Policy Practices." *Middle Eastern Studies* 51, no. 6 (2015): 901–21.
- Wright, Denis. *The English amongst the Persians during the Qajar Period, 1787–1921*. London: Heinemann, 1977.
- Wright, Denis. *The Persians Amongst the English: Episodes in Anglo-Persian History*. London: I.B. Tauris, 1985.
- Zabih, Sepehr. *The Communist Movement in Iran*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1966.