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Seyyed Hassan Taqizadeh: a political biography

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Chapter Nine

Minister, Diplomat, Scholar and Senator

The previous chapter covered almost a decade of Taqizadeh's life, most of it spent outside Iran. At the start of this decade Taqizadeh had still believed that the establishment of a constitutional government would bring about favourable changes and would lead to modernisation, sovereignty and prosperity for Iran. Like many other intellectuals of the time, he was disappointed by the results. With the failure of the Democrat Party, Taqizadeh had had to accept that change through political process seemed impossible. The outbreak of the Great War brought new hope for Taqizadeh and this time he was optimistic that by taking advantage of the opportunities that the Great War had provided, Iran would be able to prosper, aided by its co-operation with the Germans. The war ended in defeat for the Germans and Taqizadeh was again disappointed not to see his hopes realised. This decade was key in the development of Taqizadeh's intellectual life. As he spent the war years working with the Germans, it had allowed him financial security and peace of mind whilst also providing opportunities for him to study and cogitate. Living in Germany, a country well on its way down the route of modernisation, had left Taqizadeh with strong ideas about how Iran might also be steered in the same direction. Seeing the advances of Germany utilising science, Taqizadeh was further convinced that a scientific approach was the only solution for the maladies of Iran. As he had always done whilst living outside Iran, Taqizadeh managed, through different means, to keep abreast of affairs in Iran. Publication of *Kaveh* was a turning point; it introduced a powerful discourse, laying out a roadmap for the modernisation of Iran. *Kaveh's* editorial had brought together some of the best minds of the Iranian diaspora. This together with his close contact with eminent European Orientalists also helped Taqizadeh to mature his thoughts and ideas.

Disillusioned by the inability to create change through politics, this time Taqizadeh shifted his focus to the education of the masses. Living in industrial Germany and influenced by the eugenics theory he was becoming more convinced that the country could be likened to a machine; and like the cogs in a machine that must all be well maintained in order for optimum performance to be achieved, all sectors of society needed to be in the

best shape for the country to be functioning successfully. Reflected in *Kaveh*, his theory was that until the masses were educated and understood the benefit of modernity, there was little hope of Iran making any progress towards modernity through political means.

With the ending of the Great War and the temporary cessation of the Russian interference in Iranian affairs, Taqizadeh, who had always felt that Russia was a bigger threat to Iran than Britain, believed that diplomacy could resolve Iran's problems with Britain. The coming to power of Reza Khan, who successfully brought some order and stability to the country, restored Taqizadeh's hope that the education of the masses could be achieved by a strong central government. The means to achieve this goal lay with schooling, the press and a focus on a unifying national language.

Taqizadeh was in favour of an independent government committed to and capable of organising and launching political and social reforms by lawful means. A powerful central government, he believed, could establish nationwide security, repair roads, boost trade, build factories and devote the lion share of the budget to education and the overall development of the country.¹¹⁷⁵ Thus, despite his disapproval of the deposing of Ahmad Shah and the ending of Qajar rule, he believed that with the coming to power of Reza Shah these changes could be materialised. As Abbas Zaryab Khoei put it, Taqizadeh was aware of the nature of both Oriental despotism and Western democracies and knew that the leap from three thousand years of despotism to a democracy, similar to that in Belgium on which the Iranian constitution was modelled, would be far from easy.¹¹⁷⁶ He hoped that a stable government equipped with organised institutions and written laws could eventually lead to the founding of a democracy in Iran by propagating public education and the building up of a strong economy. He knew that this was despite the fact that the government in Iran was lacking in such basics of Western democracies as the upholding of human rights and a free press.¹¹⁷⁷ Furthermore, almost concurrent with the establishment of a new regime in Iran, was the establishment by Ataturk of the new Republic of Turkey from the remnants

¹¹⁷⁵ Abbas Zaryab Khoei, "Taqizadeh Anchenan keh Man Shenakhtam [Taqizadeh as I knew him]," in *Yadnameh*, ed., Yaghmaei, 164.

¹¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

of the Ottoman Empire, launching the precise reforms that Iranian intellectuals such as Taqizadeh hoped for in Iran. The achievements of the reforms in Turkey may have convinced Taqizadeh that this was the path that Iran should also follow, with Reza Shah as a strong, authoritarian leader, just as Atatürk had demonstrated himself to be in Turkey. Discussing both Atatürk's and Reza Shah's leadership, leading scholars have commented that many of the "intelligentsia were prone to accept the view that only the ruling institutions co-ordinated by a potent and persuasive leader were able to instigate the overall needed change and reform in order to modernise the society".¹¹⁷⁸ All this likely convinced Taqizadeh to eventually decide to accept the governmental posts he was offered. Due to the increasing intervention of the government in the elections at that time, Taqizadeh was reluctant to become a Member of Parliament and the Shah was equally reluctant to have independent characters like Taqizadeh in the Parliament.

Against this background one should also consider that Taqizadeh's decision to co-operate with Reza Shah's regime was a gradual process and other elements such as his personal and financial situation also played a part in him accepting governmental positions. Following his return to Iran, Taqizadeh faced financial problems; when Reza Khan as the Prime Minister, had wanted to visit him, he was unable to provide facilities to host the leader and had no servants.¹¹⁷⁹ Later in life, he reflected on the fact that if he had been more financially secure, like Mosaddeq, he too would have been able to better maintain his dignity after voting against the ending of the Qajar dynasty.¹¹⁸⁰ Taqizadeh was still resentful that the coming to power of Reza Khan was not lawful and considered it unconstitutional. What can be understood from Taqizadeh's writings about this period of his life is that he was not happy with the change of the dynasty in Iran. But, despite all this, as mentioned, Reza Shah did bring about reforms that Taqizadeh also favoured. Taqizadeh would, in fact, as we will see, accept positions in Reza Shah's government, though he would later find Reza Shah's authoritarian rule unbearable. And when he found himself in

¹¹⁷⁸ Touraj Atabaki and Erik J. Zürcher, *Men of Order: Authoritarian Modernization Under Atatürk and Reza Shah* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 4.

¹¹⁷⁹ Taqizadeh, *Tufani*, 174.

¹¹⁸⁰ Taqizadeh to 'Ala, 26 February 1944, in *Nameh-hay-e Landan*, ed., Afshar, 131-7.

a perilous position, Taqizadeh would choose to distance himself from the leader and reside abroad.

It is also important to mention that, although Reza Shah's authoritarian rule could not satisfy a person like Taqizadeh in terms of the constitutionalism, it had achieved much that Taqizadeh and other like-minded people could not have easily imagined would have been possible to achieve in such a short period. Under the authoritarian rule of Reza Shah, the country was rapidly transforming itself along the lines of European social patterns. The military reforms of Reza Shah had resulted in the building of a strong unified army which had established order and security and which guaranteed the authority of the central government. The army was transformed into a well-ordered and better educated fighting force, with some soldiers being sent abroad for training. Additionally, compulsory conscription had been introduced in 1925.¹¹⁸¹ As was previously referred to, having a strong army was, for Taqizadeh, one of the key elements necessary for a strong, independent country.

Reza Shah also managed to build a railway network which connected the south of Iran to its north. This was the dream many constitutionalists had had for Iran but it had never been actualised. Reza Shah had taken big steps in terms of educational institutions, establishing schools based on European models and the first university in Iran. This was of the utmost importance for intellectuals like Taqizadeh who believed that in the process of modern state building individuals should be developed and educated to have love and respect for Iran as a nation. The legal system of Iran was also changed which, as well as making it more secular, would take the legal system out of the hands of the clergy. It was the clergy who had traditionally controlled the legal system and who were among the strongest forces against Reza Shah.¹¹⁸² Reza Shah had managed to decrease the authority of the clergy in general. A British diplomatic report gives a picture of the situation in Iran

¹¹⁸¹ At the time of its implementation, compulsory conscription incited the public and protests were rife. Although in favour of a strong national armed force, Taqizadeh was opposed to the conscription law. *Tufani*, 185.

¹¹⁸² For more information about the legal reforms during this period see: Hadi 'Enayat, *Law, State, and Society in Modern Iran: Constitutionalism, Autocracy, and Legal Reform, 1906–1941* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

and gives a sense of the diminishing respect for the clergy in 1933 at the peak of Reza Shah's rule: "Forty years ago the Shia divines, both in Persia and Iraq, were men whose saintly lives commanded respect for their cloth, but, recently, they have been merely turban rascals, whose notorious manner of living has destroyed the respect of their flocks."¹¹⁸³ This was a great achievement in the eyes of the intellectuals who considered the clergy to be a huge obstacle to the modernisation of Iran.

Providing official education for women resulted in the emancipation of women and development of women's political movements.¹¹⁸⁴ Taqizadeh was an avid supporter of mass literacy which included both sexes.

The maintenance of security in the country also helped to improve communication networks and the building of and expansion of the road network and transportation system. This was overseen by the newly established Roads and Highways Ministry of which Taqizadeh was the first minister. As a result of the improved transport system, a more regular postal service had developed along with extended telegraph and later telephone communication and radio broadcast services which all extended the authority and control of the central government. An aviation transport system was also established with the help of a German company, Junkers, which under a five-year contract executed postal services between Tehran, Baghdad, Bushehr and Anzali.¹¹⁸⁵ It appeared that Iran was becoming a more modernised nation. Taqizadeh, now wearing the attire of a statesman, was more convinced than ever that authoritarian modernity could be practiced in Iran.

Along with the practical development of networks of roads, Taqizadeh also turned his attention to more cultural networks which he believed would help to unify the linguistically and culturally diverse population of Iran.¹¹⁸⁶ During the Reza Shah period, we witness

¹¹⁸³ Mr. Mallet to Sir John Simon, 1 August 1933, in *Iran Political Diaries 1881-1965* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997): 434.

¹¹⁸⁴ For more on women's political movements in Iran during this period see: Parvin Paidar, *Women and Political Process in Twentieth-Century Iran* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

¹¹⁸⁵ Wipert Von Blucher, *Safarnameh-e Blucher* [Blucher's Travel Account], trans. Keykavous Jahandari (Tehran: Kharazmi, 1990), 152.

¹¹⁸⁶ Proceedings of the Eighth Parliament, session 102, 30 August 1932.

Taqizadeh's focus on issues such as language policy. Taqizadeh was trying to help to build an Iran whose identity was not based on religion and Shiism but based rather on Iranian culture, history and civilisation. This identity predominantly took Iranian ancient pre-Islamic history and the Persian language as a reference point. Now as a statesman he could actualise what he had previously professed in *Kaveh*, concerning making Ferdowsi the Iranian national poet. He supported a plan for building a mausoleum in Tus, Ferdowsi's birthplace and organising an international conference as a memorial to him. Some believed that the mausoleum was an attempt to rival the nearby shrine of the eighth Shiite Imam, Imam Reza.¹¹⁸⁷

This chapter continues to follow Taqizadeh's life and career from his trip to Philadelphia until his death. This period was a turbulent period for Iran; it includes the occupation of Iran by the Allies, Reza Shah's loss of power and the coming to power of the young crown prince, Mohammed Reza as the new Shah. The two key events of this period in which Taqizadeh himself played a significant role are the signing of the 1933 oil agreement to which Taqizadeh's name is inexorably linked and Taqizadeh's activities as Iranian Ambassador in London during the Second World War. After his return to Iran to take up a post as Member of Parliament, he faced strong opposition from the leftist movements in Iran. This, together with his advancing age and imminent retirement, marginalised his position in Iranian politics despite the fact that he held high profile positions such as Speaker of the Senate. Similar to the previous chapters, the aim of this chapter is to highlight and trace the developments of Taqizadeh's ideas for making Iran a modern and independent country, whilst at the same time focusing on his private life and its potential effects on his political career. Later in his life, despite holding important positions, Taqizadeh's role as an influential policy maker diminished although he was relatively well respected. Thus, after the Fifteenth Parliament, events in Taqizadeh's life are analysed in lesser detail.

In the aftermath of the Great War when Taqizadeh returned to Iran, he was a married man who was more interested in settling down and securing a comfortable life. It was also

¹¹⁸⁷ Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, 87.

important for him to have a respectable job. After Reza Shah declared himself the Shah, Taqizadeh was still reluctant to accept governmental jobs and preferred to take up posts outside Iran. He was still hopeful about continuing publishing *Kaveh* abroad and thus accepted the invitation to go to United States as the Iranian general commissioner for the Philadelphia exposition.

9:1 The Sesqui-Centennial International Exposition in Philadelphia

After the coming to power of Reza Khan and the establishment of improved stability in the country the time was now ripe to work on an image of Iran that many reform-minded Iranian intellectuals had dreamed of and aspired to; the image of a new country which looked towards the west as its role model, proud of its culture and pre-Islamic heritage and eager and ambitious to represent this image on the international world stage. The end of the Great War had begun a new era of global reawakening and reforming of many nations and ideologies. Now was the perfect opportunity for Iran to propagate this image particularly in more distant countries such as the United States. The United States was far less familiar with the history and cultures of Iran, had had far fewer dealings with the country and fewer preconceptions of Iran as a developing society than some of Iran's neighbouring regions and, thus, might be able to assist Iran in its journey towards modernisation. Iranian intellectuals and others considered the USA a neutral country which could help Iran and which, importantly, seemingly had no vested interests. This was particularly appealing for the new Iranian authorities. The Sesqui-Centennial International Exposition taking place in the USA was an event that would prove to be an excellent opportunity for Iran to show itself as a forward-looking nation, ready to become a player on a more international stage. Since Taqizadeh was a prominent figure connected to this event which was one which lay the groundwork for later business and political interactions between the two countries, it is necessary to look at this event in some detail.

The Sesqui-Centennial International Exposition was organised to celebrate the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence of the United States of America. Since the key events of the independence had taken place in Philadelphia, it was decided that Philadelphia would host the event. The primary purpose

of the exposition was “to afford the people of the United States and the people of the world an opportunity to meet in solemn celebration of one hundred and fifty years of American independence”.¹¹⁸⁸ Thus, invitations were sent to many other nations by the president of the United States, Coolidge, inviting them to participate in this exposition. Among the nations invited was Iran.

It was in the early months of 1926 that the Iranian government decided to participate in the international Exposition of Philadelphia.¹¹⁸⁹ Reza Khan had recently seized power in Iran, ending the rule of the Qajar dynasty, putting himself forward as the new Shah of Iran with plans to bring about the rapid modernisation of Iran. For the newly established regime, supported by a considerable number of intellectuals, this international exposition could be considered as a great opportunity to introduce the new face of Iran which was embracing its pre-Islamic heritage whilst also combining its existing Islamic identity with ambitions to progress as a nation. Thus, the government went to great lengths to ensure that the exposition was as big a success as possible.¹¹⁹⁰ For example, the cabinet had approved that any objects sent from Iran to the exposition would be exempt from customs duty and only those which were sold or remained there to be sold would be charged a custom fee.¹¹⁹¹

By participating in this exposition, the government was not so focused on short-term goals. It was hoped that in the long term it would benefit trade relations between Iran and the United States. The Iranian government believed participation in this international exhibition, taking place during the 150th anniversary of the United States of America’s independence, would allow US citizens to learn more about Iran. Iran was not very well known in the USA at that time and there were very few Iranian businessmen trading on a large scale with the United States. This exposition was important for Iran as it had the

¹¹⁸⁸ Erastus Long Austin, ed., *The Sesqui-Centennial International Exposition: A Record Based on Official Data and Departmental Reports* (Philadelphia: Current Publications, 1929), 10.

¹¹⁸⁹ Baqer Kazemi, 2: 360.

¹¹⁹⁰ Although the invitation had been given two years earlier, the Iranian government had acted with delay. See: Taqizadeh, “Amrika,” [America] in *Maqalat-e Taqizadeh* (Tehran: Tus, 2014), 12: 143.

¹¹⁹¹ The government's bill for the Philadelphia Exposition was submitted to the Fifth Parliament and a budget request of 75 thousand Tomans was put forward. The government's proposal was approved, but due to the large number of other pressing issues which the parliament had to deal with, the proposal could not be enacted before the end of the Fifth Parliament. When the time came for the exposition to take place, the government allotted the amount from its own budget.

potential to strengthen Iran's business and political ties with the United States, a new global power.¹¹⁹² Preliminary steps had been taken to broaden relations between the two countries earlier. In late 1910 the Iranian parliament considered inviting American financial experts to organise the chaotic Iranian treasury. This was to encourage the hiring of experts from countries not influenced by the European powers which were involved in Iranian affairs and thus with no vested interests in Iran. As a result, a group of American advisers headed by William Morgan Shuster came to Iran in Spring 1911. Despite their positive performance and public approval, they soon had to leave Iran in December 1911 as a result of a Russian ultimatum. Later, in the early 1920s, when Hossein 'Ala', a close friend of Taqizadeh, was the Iranian Ambassador in Washington, he had tried to expand the relationship with the United States in different fields especially encouraging the oil industries there to invest in Iran's oil fields.¹¹⁹³ The decision was taken to expand the relationship with the United States in the hope of decreasing the monopoly that Russia and Britain had over the economy of Iran. Taqizadeh's acceptance of this mission to the Philadelphia exposition was with this hope in mind. Taqizadeh's favourable attitude towards the United States at this point made him a suitable candidate for this position.

And thus, the Iranian government selected Taqizadeh as the man to be sent to the United States as the Iranian general commissioner for the exposition to supervise the Iranian Pavilion. Baqer Kazemi who was the counsellor of the Iranian Embassy in Washington was responsible for its organisation and the assigning of a suitable place for the Iranian Pavilion.¹¹⁹⁴ According to Taqizadeh, Arthur Millspaugh, the American Administrator-General of Finances of Iran had suggested Taqizadeh for this post.¹¹⁹⁵ Iran had already expanded its co-operation with the United States by hiring an expert for mines and another for road construction. Taqizadeh was considered suitable for the post as he was an experienced politician and scholar familiar with the politics, business affairs, culture and history of Iran with connections to a wide network of people who could promote Iran in

¹¹⁹² Proceedings of the Sixth Parliament, Session 42, 16 December 1926.

¹¹⁹³ This was only in the five northern provinces of Iran which were exempt from the D'Arcy Concession of 1901. *Azar*, May 27, 1924.

¹¹⁹⁴ Baqer Kazemi, 2: 363.

¹¹⁹⁵ Taqizadeh, *Tufani*, 205.

the United States. He had also gained experience conducting the trade talks between Iran and the Soviet Union. Taqizadeh had a positive attitude towards the United States and saw it as a nation which could help to liberate Iran from the dominance of Russia and Britain. Following the defeat of Germany in the Great War, Taqizadeh had hoped that the United States would be the country to rely on to help modernise Iran. In a letter to Mahmoud Afshar, he expresses his positive opinion about the hiring of American financial experts in Iran and suggests that inviting the Americans to Iran with the offer of managerial positions was the right thing to do.

In addition to these reasons, Taqizadeh, who was in favour of the reforms launched by the new regime but had voted against the change of dynasty and of Reza Khan's appointment as Shah, was hesitant about remaining in Iran. Here was an opportunity for him to look to his future and consider whether he wanted to stay abroad or return to Iran where he would have to co-operate with the newly-established regime. Furthermore, it was now that the Fifth Parliament came to an end. And preparations for the elections for the next parliament in Tehran, which Taqizadeh had been monitoring, were also about to end. Taqizadeh had already planned to go to Berlin on personal business. Taqizadeh's father-in-law had died in Germany, his wife was not feeling well, and Taqizadeh preferred to be out of Iran for a while. In a speech Taqizadeh made following his return to Iran from the United States he mentioned that at first, he had been reluctant to accept the post because of the length of time he would have to reside in Philadelphia. In response the government had assured him that he could go after the official opening and return earlier on condition that he would accept the post.¹¹⁹⁶ Thus, Taqizadeh departed from Tehran on 20 April 1926, staying a short time in Berlin before setting off on his voyage to the United States. In his autobiography, Taqizadeh writes that even before he had been assigned the post for the exposition, he had already decided to leave Iran and go to Berlin. It was during his stay in Berlin that he received a telegraph informing him that he had been made Foreign Minister in the newly formed government. Taqizadeh did not, however, accept the post and continued his trip.¹¹⁹⁷ One reason that he did not accept the post was that he had already

¹¹⁹⁶ Taqizadeh, "Amrika," in *Maqalat-e Taqizadeh* (Tus), 12: 143.

¹¹⁹⁷ Taqizadeh, "Kholasaei az Sharh-e Hal-e Seyyed Hassan Taqizadeh [Summary of a Life Story of Seyyed Hassan Taqizadeh]," in *Maqalat-e Taqizadeh*, 2: 263-4

been nominated as the Deputy of Tehran in the Parliament.¹¹⁹⁸ He chose to sit in parliament rather than working in a post for the government which he initially did not consider legitimate. Taqizadeh was a strong advocate for the Parliament and Constitution. From the very beginning he himself had helped to promote parliamentarism in Iran and still preferred to carry on his political life in the Parliament. Although he now wanted to continue his career as a Member of Parliament, he was of the opinion that MPs should be independent from the government. He saw it as a threat to the constitution and democracy that a Member of Parliament might be financially dependent on the government as this could lead to that MP being unable to openly oppose the government in the Parliament.¹¹⁹⁹ During the elections for the Sixth Parliament Taqizadeh had also witnessed the intervention of the government and this was a matter a concern for him as was the independence of the Parliament. Despite this, however, he still preferred not to work as a member of the cabinet. The invitation to represent the government in Philadelphia gave him the chance to weigh up all his options and, having done so, he decided it would allow him to continue in a more neutral position than if he had been directly involved in the Parliament.

And so Taqizadeh took the *Columbus* ocean liner from Hamburg to New York at the end of June on his way to the Philadelphia exposition. At this time Abd al-Hossein Taymourash had been assigned the role of Court Minister and had persuaded Foroughi, the Prime Minister, to resign. Mostufi al-Mamalek had taken his place under orders from the Shah. Mostufi had made public the fact that Taqizadeh was his Foreign Minister but, as Baqer Kazemi has mentioned, when he sent a telegraph to Taqizadeh during the voyage to enquire whether or not he would visit the United States in an official capacity, Taqizadeh had replied that he would attend only as the general commissioner for the Philadelphia exposition. Taqizadeh rejected the position of Foreign Minister, despite the fact that some American newspapers reported that he had in fact taken up the post.¹²⁰⁰ Kazemi, however, had arranged to introduce Taqizadeh to the President and Foreign Minister of the United States. Kazemi had prepared a room for Taqizadeh in the Iranian Embassy in New York

¹¹⁹⁸ Mojtehedī, 210.

¹¹⁹⁹ Proceedings of the Fifth Parliament, 13 September 1925.

¹²⁰⁰ After Taqizadeh rejected the post, Moshaver al-Mamalek became Foreign Minister.

and on 1st July, 1926 went with Dr Arthur Upham Pope to welcome Taqizadeh.¹²⁰¹ Kazemi's impressions of meeting Taqizadeh for the first time are noteworthy; his impression was very positive. Having previously seen Taqizadeh in the First Parliament wearing the traditional attire of the clergy, Kazemi now witnessed the great transformation that Taqizadeh had undergone; here he now was dressed in western clothing and clean-shaven. Different from his first visit to the United States when he had had little money nor hope for the future, Taqizadeh now held an official position. He was now, in contrast, full of self-confidence and far more positive about the future of Iran.

What was particularly interesting for Taqizadeh about the exposition was the opportunity which it provided to introduce Iran as a homogenous country with a long history as a nation. It was an opportunity to unite the ancient glorious past of Iran with present-day Iran. Pope, as a leading American scholar of the Arts, an archaeologist and a historian of Iranian Arts, had a deep interest in and familiarity with both pre-Islamic and more contemporary Iranian art and architecture. He had previously met Reza Khan, when he was the Prime Minister and had impressed him.¹²⁰² Choosing Pope to design the "Persian Pavilion" in Philadelphia was a good choice for Taqizadeh. Together with Carl Ziegler a local architect, Pope designed the "Persian Pavilion" modelled on the Masjed-e Shah in Isfahan.¹²⁰³ Pope would go on to become Special Commissioner.¹²⁰⁴

As planned, together with Pope and Kazemi, Taqizadeh visited the Iranian Pavilion whilst it was under construction. But, probably the most notable event for Taqizadeh upon his arrival was his meeting the President of the United States. Taqizadeh was taken by Kazemi to meet President Coolidge on 3rd July. According to Kazemi, the President inquired from Taqizadeh about agriculture affairs in Iran and sent greetings to the

¹²⁰¹ Arthur Upham Pope (1881-1969), an American, was a leading scholar of arts, an archaeologist and historian of the Iranian arts. His most notable work was *A Survey of Persian Art* in six volumes. Pope influenced Reza Shah and this influence is manifested in the buildings constructed during the Reza Shah period, most importantly the building of the Mozehe-e Iran-e Bastan (Museum of Ancient Iran). See: <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/pope-arthur-upham>.

¹²⁰² Noel Siver, "Pope, Arthur Upham," *Encyclopedia Iranica*, online edition, 2005, available online: <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/pope-arthur-upham> (accessed 5 June, 2019).

¹²⁰³ Yuka Kadoi, ed., *Arthur Upham Pope and A New Survey of Persian Art* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 84.

¹²⁰⁴ Austin, 83.

Shah. Taqizadeh met the Foreign Minister, Kellogg on the same day.¹²⁰⁵ He also visited the Congress and the Senate before going to Philadelphia to organise the Persian Pavilion.¹²⁰⁶ Taqizadeh stayed in the United States for about seven months.¹²⁰⁷

We do not know much about other possible activities of Taqizadeh during his stay in the United States but his activities in terms of the exposition were successful and consisted of many public and social appearances. The official date of the opening of the exposition was 31 May. International participants came from 19 Nations and 4 Colonies. There were highlights in the show. Most thought the Persian Pavilion stole the show.¹²⁰⁸ The Persian building was officially opened on October 6, 1926, with Taqizadeh acting as the commissioner general of the Iranian government.¹²⁰⁹ From the 4500 Americans and foreigners who were invited to attend the ceremony, about 1300 people turned up which, according to Taqizadeh, made it a great success in the United States.¹²¹⁰ A book about the exposition describes the Iranian building as one of the most beautiful and artistic buildings on the ground. Mirza Ali Akbar Kashef was assigned as honorary Commercial Attaché. He planned that all the antique objects would be collected by the Kashef trading company and sent to the United States.¹²¹¹ Kashef became the assistant of Taqizadeh in Philadelphia. Taqizadeh, Kashef and Kazemi sponsored Pope to also organise several art expositions in Philadelphia.¹²¹² The Iranian Pavilion was open for three months; Taqizadeh being present for one and half months. According to Taqizadeh, the Iranian products such as carpets and rugs in particular and silk products sold well, making a total of approximately 130,000 dollars before Taqizadeh's departure. One of Taqizadeh's biggest achievements was the fact that he managed to arrange for the Iranian Pavilion to be exempt from paying tax on what they sold. According to Taqizadeh, Iran managed to save 150,000 dollars because of that. He also emphasised that the total costs incurred while he was there were less than half

¹²⁰⁵ *New York Times*, July 5 1926.

¹²⁰⁶ Baqer Kazemi, 2: 387.

¹²⁰⁷ Taqizadeh, "S. H. Taqizadeh," in *Maqalat-e Taqizadeh*, 7: 767.

¹²⁰⁸ <https://americasbesthistory.com/wfphiladelphia1926.html>

¹²⁰⁹ *Evening star*, October 5, 1926.

¹²¹⁰ Taqizadeh, "Amrika," [America] in *Maqalat-e Taqizadeh* (Tus), 12: 151.

¹²¹¹ Baqer Kazemi, 2:366.

¹²¹² Kadoi, 84.

this amount.¹²¹³ That is to say, in his report Taqizadeh is at pains to emphasise that he had not initially been involved in the costs of this exposition for Iran. In fact, the costs were high and criticised by many for being excessive. However, Taqizadeh considered his mission to have been successful and believed it raised the profile of Iran in the United States.

One other person who was drawing the attention of the press in the United States was Zahra Khanoum Heydari. She was a native Iranian living in the United States who served her country as a member of staff for the Persia Building at the Sesqui-centennial. She had even gone to Washington as the guest of the National Education Association. She was the guest of several women's clubs and spoke for them.¹²¹⁴ Her particular work there was to install in the Persia Building examples of women's work in Iran. "She had the distinction of being the first Iranian woman to ever hold an official position in Iran. Zahra Khanoum's first position was that of an official in the department of public works, a department resembling the Department of the Interior in our country."¹²¹⁵ We do not know exactly whether Taqizadeh had played any role in the appointment of Zahra Khanoum but if what the United States' newspapers claimed was the case, then the first woman who had an official job in Iran in fact worked for Taqizadeh. One newspaper wrote that Zahra Khanoum "was introduced as the first woman of Persia to be permitted to go about the streets unveiled and the first woman to be dispatched by the Persian government to any country as a representative. She declared that the greatest need of Persian women is education. It is her desire to help establish schools for women and to create a market for work done by Persian women".¹²¹⁶ As is clear from this quotation, what is expressed here is in line with Taqizadeh's emphasis on education and the establishment of schools.¹²¹⁷ It is also representative of Taqizadeh's liberal attitude towards women as has been previously highlighted.

¹²¹³ Taqizadeh, "Amrika," in *Maqalat-e Taqizadeh* (Tus), 12: 151.

¹²¹⁴ *Evening Star*, October 17, 1926.

¹²¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, October 21, 1926

¹²¹⁷ Taqizadeh, "T'alim va Tarbiyat-e Nesvan" [The Education of Women] in *Maqalat-e Taqizadeh* (Tehran: Tus, 2013), 76.

From a report Taqizadeh has written about his trip, it is clear that Taqizadeh had closely observed and reflected on the situation of women in the United States:

I must say that nothing made a stronger impression on me than the situation of women and I consider this to be the zenith of United States' civilisation. In my opinion, there is no other country comparable to the United States where women have achieved such a well-deserved and independent position. I know that some believe Russian women have progressed greatly, which is in fact true in its own way. However, the progress in each of these countries is significantly different in many aspects. In the United States women are afforded every human right, meaning they benefit from every political, social or economic rights. In particular, their independence and the fact that they are in employment and their participation in social, ethical, religious, political, scientific and literary activities is very noticeable. This independence in thought in combination with some degree of economic independence on one hand and moral and religious strength on the other hand have played a significant role in women's chastity and morals. In my opinion, family morals in that country are relatively stronger than in the other parts of the world.¹²¹⁸

This short passage reveals the importance that Taqizadeh assigned to the independence of women and their role in society. It is evident that Taqizadeh was at pains to highlight the fact that the independence of women did not necessarily equate to sexual freedom or promiscuity, but in fact could even strengthen family relationships and marriage. After his return to Iran, when he held governmental positions Taqizadeh was considered a supporter of and adviser for the women's movement. He was invited to social gatherings and delivered speeches about the role of women in society and their emancipation and pressed for women's education. Taqizadeh believed that each gender had a specific role and

¹²¹⁸ Taqizadeh, "Amrika," in *Maqalat-e Taqizadeh* (Tus), 12: 159- 60.

responsibility in society. Taqizadeh left New York on 18 November on the Hamburg-American liner, Cleveland.¹²¹⁹ He stayed in Berlin until March 1927.



Figure 20: 1926 Persia Building, Sesqui-centennial International Exposition¹²²⁰

¹²¹⁹ *The New York Times*, November 18, 1926.

¹²²⁰ <https://www.phillyhistory.org/PhotoArchive/Detail.aspx?assetId=93110>



Figure 21: Taqizadeh in front of the Persia Building, raising the flag of the United States, Dedication Ceremony, 6 October 1926 ¹²²¹

9:2 Return to Iran

After returning to Berlin and joining the family of his wife there, Taqizadeh writes in his autobiography that he was reluctant at this point to return to Iran.¹²²² This might primarily have been because Taqizadeh had previously witnessed the seeming lack of independence of the Fifth Parliament and seen that the members were chosen by the government. He was an observer for the elections of the Sixth Parliament and knew that the elections were rigged and did not want to be part of such a parliament.¹²²³ But, at the same time, it was not easy for him to find employment abroad. According to Taqizadeh, Hossein ‘Ala’ had written to Taqizadeh telling him that he was missed in Tehran and Iran was bereft without him. Taqizadeh finally decided to return by plane to Iran, reaching there

¹²²¹ <https://www.phillyhistory.org/PhotoArchive/Detail.aspx?assetId=92623>

¹²²² Taqizadeh, *Tufani*, 208.

¹²²³ Reza Shah “personally determined the outcome of each election and thus the composition of each Majles– from the Fifth to 1926 to the Thirteenth in 1940”. Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, 75.

on 21 March 1927. As he writes, not knowing where to go upon his return, he went to a hotel. After staying one night he wrote to a good friend, Hossein Parviz, to ask for advice about where to stay. Parviz suggested Hossein 'Ala's place where Taqizadeh would be able to invite people and talk to them. As Taqizadeh's wife, Edith, had not accompanied him to Iran it was easier for him to take up that suggestion. After staying there for a while, Edith, also arrived and they rented a house for themselves.¹²²⁴ As the new parliamentary elections approached, court interference increased greatly. Reza Shah was determined not to allow into the Parliament even one member who opposed him. Taqizadeh voiced his criticism of such acts in the Parliament, resulting in the police once again monitoring his movements.¹²²⁵

9:3 Financial Hardship

For almost seven months Taqizadeh sat at home without any source of income, waiting for an opening in his life. He describes this period of his life as being one of the most difficult in terms of financial hardship. He mentions that he had no income and no assets and when a guest arrived, he was forced to offer his gold watch as a pledge in order to be able to provide food for the guest.¹²²⁶ In his autobiography he admits that he had hoped that he might earn some money by arbitrating between a German businessman and Iranian merchant but this had brought nothing for Taqizadeh.¹²²⁷ During this period Taqizadeh with some of his like-minded friends, such as Hakim al-Molk, Hossein Qoli Navab, Hossein Parviz and Khalkhali Najm al-Molk had established a political party called Taraqqi [Progress]. Baqer Kazemi with the advice of Taqizadeh had also joined this party.¹²²⁸ The members of this party regularly gathered together. Taqizadeh sometimes gave talks about the forthcoming elections for the parliament at the gatherings of this party.¹²²⁹ According to Baqer Kazemi, the party soon faced difficulties when Teymourtash together with Ali Akbar Davar, Morteza Khan Firuz Mirza established a party called Iran-e Now which

¹²²⁴ Taqizadeh, *Tufani*, 208-9.

¹²²⁵ *Ibid.*, 182.

¹²²⁶ *Ibid.*, 183-4

¹²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 184.

¹²²⁸ Baqer Kazemi, 2: 416.

¹²²⁹ Baqer Kazemi, 2: 447.

sabotaged the success of the Taraqqi Party and forced the governmental employees to join their party.¹²³⁰

Taqizadeh, who was less involved in politics during this time and had more time for research, in the hope of earning some money signed a contract with the Ministry of Education to compile the short history of Iran from the Islamic period to the contemporary period. This was to be used as a textbook for high schools. Taqizadeh only finished a small section of this work. This was later published under the title of *Az Parviz ta Changiz* [From Parviz to Changiz]. It was not long before Taqizadeh returned to the world of politics once again.

Finally, whilst attending a funeral ceremony, Taqizadeh met Abdol Hossein Teymourtash the Court Minister of the Shah who had played a major role in Reza Shah's rise to power and was considered the second most powerful man in the country who offered him the post of governor of Khorasan. Taqizadeh initially refused the offer and said that he would not take up a governing position. Taqizadeh was advised by his friends, General Sheybani, who was close to the Shah and Mostofi al-Mamalek, to accept the job since not accepting it would insult the Shah who would think that Taqizadeh was reluctant to work with him.¹²³¹ The fact that Taqizadeh elaborates on his hesitancy to initially accept the role of governor, highlights his reluctance to co-operate with Reza Shah.¹²³² However, Taqizadeh eventually accepted the job, going to Mashad to take up the governorship of Khorasan.

9:4 Governorship of Khorasan

Taqizadeh went to Khorasan with full authority and acted as governor there.¹²³³ During his time in the governorship post he oversaw important cultural, administrative and security developments such as the construction of high schools and the implementation of

¹²³⁰ Ibid., 435.

¹²³¹ Taqizadeh, *Tufani*, 185.

¹²³² Ibid., 184-6.

¹²³³ In his autobiography Taqizadeh states he was in Khorasan for six or seven months from February 1929 until August 1930. This would appear to be an inaccuracy. *Tufani*, 187

restrictions on the use of opium. He succeeded in suppressing the riots of Zolfaqar (Zolfo) and Qanbarali and importantly managed the affairs of the victims following the major earthquake which occurred during his time as governor of Khorasan.¹²³⁴

On 1 May 1929, an earthquake caused widespread destruction in Khorasan. The earthquake caused damage over a vast area and 160 villages were affected.¹²³⁵ An official report announced the death toll to be 2618 with many more injured and a large loss of villagers' sheep and cattle.¹²³⁶ On 5 May, Taqizadeh at the head of a group of officials of the province left Mashad in order to survey the damage and offer assistance to the victims in the affected villages. Taqizadeh had wide ranging jurisdiction over Khorasan.¹²³⁷ He took a team of physicians with him and distributed much needed provisions, in particular wheat, among the villagers.¹²³⁸ Taqizadeh also helped to establish a fund-raising committee to help the victims and collected a substantial amount of money.¹²³⁹ He had also sent groups of construction workers such as masons and carpenters to help with the rebuilding of the area.¹²⁴⁰ Together with The Red Lion and Sun Society of Iran, he organised a garden party to raise money for the victims.¹²⁴¹ Taqizadeh's visit to the victims of this natural disaster had a very positive effect.¹²⁴² Reza Shah had commented that the people of Khorasan were lucky that Taqizadeh was the governor at the time of the earthquake.

Probably working in Khorasan and visiting the different villages of that province further convinced Taqizadeh of his opinion that he had previously expressed in *Kaveh* that one of the major maladies of Iranians which hindered modernisation in Iran was the problem of addiction to opium. This harmful daily habit was extremely prevalent in Khorasan and most villages of the province. It was not only men but also women and children who were

¹²³⁴ Akram Sheybani, *Khorasan va Naqsh-e Ostandaran dar Doreh Pahlavi-e Aval* [Khorasan and the Role of the Governors during the First Pahlavi Era] (Mashad: Ahang Qalam, 2013), 149-59.

¹²³⁵ Abbas Masoudi, *Zelzeleh-e Shirvan 1308 Khorshidi: Yaddasht-hay-e Mosaferat-e Khorasan* [The Earthquake of Shirvan, 1308: Notes of Travel to Khorasan] (Mashad: Ansar, 1980), 155.

¹²³⁶ *Ibid.*, 156.

¹²³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²³⁸ *Ibid.*, 73.

¹²³⁹ *Ibid.*, 75.

¹²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 157.

¹²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 211.

¹²⁴² *Ibid.*, 198.

affected.¹²⁴³ This problem probably further highlighted for Taqizadeh the gap between the provinces and the capital and convinced him even more that, as he previously believed, education should be prioritised.

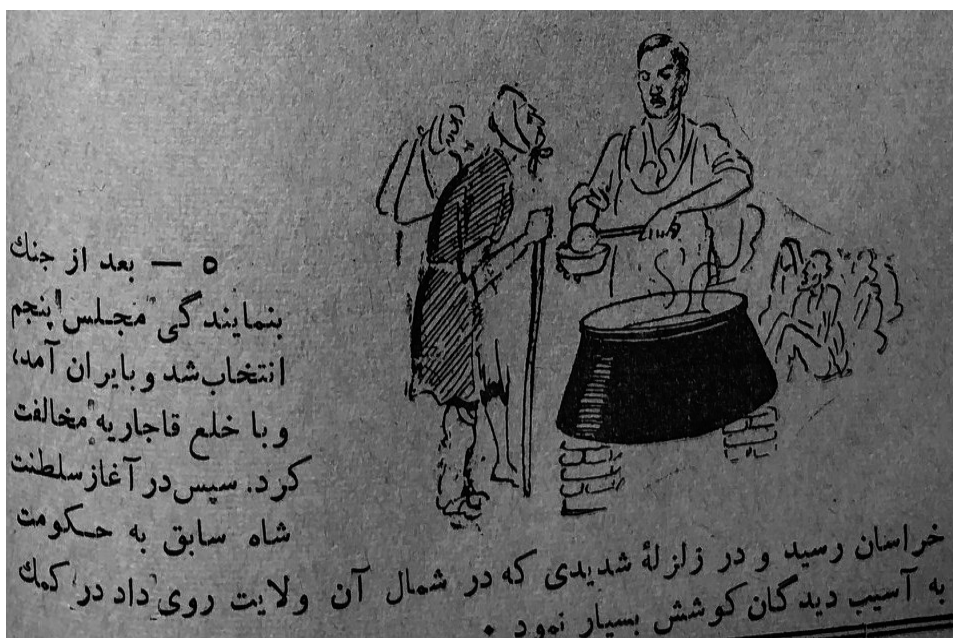


Figure 22: Taqizadeh depicted in a drawing, helping the victims of the earthquake in Khorasan¹²⁴⁴

9:5 Iranian Minister in London

On 3 June 1929, whilst Taqizadeh was still governor of Khorasan, Teymourtash wrote a confidential letter addressing Taqizadeh. In this letter, Teymourtash suggests that since it was highly likely that a Labour Government would come to power in Britain which would benefit Iran, it would be expeditious for Taqizadeh, as an experienced and wise diplomat, to go to London. Since Taqizadeh had had previous contact with the Labour Party, he already knew some of their politicians. Teymourtash requested that Taqizadeh go

¹²⁴³ Ibid., 243.

¹²⁴⁴ Hossein Bana'i, *Chand Pardeh az Zendegani-e Rejal-e Maruf-e Iran* [Some Episodes from the Life of the Famous Iranian Statesmen] (Tehran: Ruznameh-e Omid, 1945), 56.

to Tehran and make preparations for his new mission.¹²⁴⁵ But, before leaving Khorasan, Taqizadeh once again went and visited the earthquake-affected areas.¹²⁴⁶

Taqizadeh does not give further information in his autobiography about this mission in London, other than to mention that Reza Shah was hopeful that Taqizadeh could “prevent the British”.¹²⁴⁷ There is, however, a document remaining from him which gives the report of his meeting with Ramsey MacDonald, the British Prime Minister, in London on 2 September, 1929. Taqizadeh wrote that in the twenty-minute meeting, although the senior officials and the Prime Minister had good and sincere intentions concerning Iran, some of the more junior staff had an old-fashioned prejudice towards oriental people. Taqizadeh mentioned to the Prime Minister that issues concerning Iran should be given special attention and not left in the hands of those junior politicians. According to Taqizadeh, MacDonald called his Foreign Minister and recounted Taqizadeh request.¹²⁴⁸ It would seem that Iran wished to expel some British officials working in Iran who did not appreciate Reza Shah’s reformist endeavours. Taqizadeh had been sent to discuss that matter with the highest British authorities.

Interestingly, the *Manchester Guardian*, giving the news of the appointment of Taqizadeh as Iranian Minister in Britain, refers to his Turkish Azerbaijani origin and describes him as “a protagonist of transliteration of Persian into Latin characters”.¹²⁴⁹ In April 1931, Taqizadeh came back to Iran and was initially offered the position of Minister of Finance but, as Reza Shah realised, he was not eager to accept that position, the post of Minister of Roads and Highways was offered to him.¹²⁵⁰

9:6 The Minister of Roads and Highways

The Ministry of Public Benefits was divided into two separate departments, the Ministry of Roads and Highways and the Ministry of Finance. Taqizadeh was recalled from London

¹²⁴⁵ Teymourtash to Taqizadeh, 3 June 1929 in *Nameh-hay-e Tehran*, ed., Afshar, 132-4.

¹²⁴⁶ Masoudi, 153.

¹²⁴⁷ Taqizadeh, *Tufani*, 189.

¹²⁴⁸ Taqizadeh, *Tufani* (‘Elmi), 547-49.

¹²⁴⁹ The *Manchester Guardian*, July 31, 1929.

¹²⁵⁰ Taqizadeh, *Tufani*, 189.

and Foroughi from Ankara to lead these two ministries; on 16 April 1930 Taqizadeh was officially appointed as Minister of Roads and Foroughi as Finance Minister.¹²⁵¹ The Minister of Roads was a key position, considering the fact that, for Reza Shah, building new roads and especially the construction of the railway project was his priority. One of the first and most important tasks of Taqizadeh during this period was to deal with the railway construction project and with the German companies which were hired to carry out the construction. This resulted in the signing of two agreements on 31 July, 1930 with representative of the companies.¹²⁵² Taqizadeh held the position of Minister of Roads for a couple of months until, in Taqizadeh's own words, Reza Shah insisted that he accept a position in the Finance Ministry on 6 August 1931. For a short period Taqizadeh had to run two offices simultaneously but later dropped the post of Minister of Roads.

9:7 The Minister of Finance

Taqizadeh, as a member of the First Parliament had always advocated the modernisation of the finance system of Iran. He had supported the presence in Iran of American financial experts such as Morgan Shuster and Arthur Millspaugh. He was opposed to ending the mission of Millspaugh, believing that with his help, the country was well on the way towards modernisation of the financial system of Iran. On 1 August 1927, Taqizadeh requested in the Parliament that Millspaugh continue in his role. The efforts of Taqizadeh and other like-minded people were unsuccessful and Millspaugh had to leave the post. The position of Finance Minister was then given to Mirza Firuz Farmanfarma who was later tried and sentenced to death. Taking the position of Minister of Finance, Taqizadeh respected Millspaugh's legacy and still continued to advocate for receiving advice from foreign financial experts. Taqizadeh had no experience in finance, as a British diplomatic document boldly states, "Taqizadeh knows nothing of finance and his only qualification is his reputation for honesty and integrity. The appointment can then be for the sake of appearance and to give the Ministry a responsible head to whom the details of its internal

¹²⁵¹ Baqer Kazemi, 3: 146.

¹²⁵² For detailed information about the agreements of this period while Taqizadeh was Minister of Roads see: Baer Kazemi, 3: 216-51.

affairs can be referred for settlement”.¹²⁵³ Despite his lack of experience, though, as with all the roles he took on, Taqizadeh took the reins confidently. He diligently set about putting in place new reforms. Taqizadeh had already requested total control over Finance Ministry affairs which the Shah had agreed to.¹²⁵⁴ By doing this, Taqizadeh hoped the Court Minister, Teymourtash, would not interfere in the affairs of the Finance Ministry.¹²⁵⁵ As Minister of Finance, Taqizadeh strictly controlled the purse strings and completely overhauled how the Ministry operated. He ensured that work was carried out effectively, efficiently and cost-effectively. Taqizadeh himself points out that he had been so careful with the expenses that such a level of frugality had never been seen before in Iran.¹²⁵⁶ It was also during Taqizadeh’s tenure as Minister of Finance that Reza Shah ordered him to take back the money the British had paid to some Iranian officials to oil the wheels for the 1919 agreement. Taqizadeh followed the order and returned this money to the coffers.¹²⁵⁷ Taqizadeh, in a later lecture outlining the achievements of the Reza Shah period, referred to his role in maintaining stability and a balanced budget in Iran during his time as Minister of Finance:

I succeeded with the Shah’s unfailing support not only in paying regularly all the necessary public expenditures but also paying back and liquidating the Iranian foreign loans contracted before the constitutional period with one exception which had been contracted in 1910 with the approval of the parliament and which was being amortized regularly with reasonable

¹²⁵³ Coll 28/39 ‘Persia: Printed Correspondence 1929-1936’ [509v] (1029/1174) in *The Qatar Digital Library*: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100055143738.0x00001e (accessed 8 April, 2020).

¹²⁵⁴ From the office of the Prime Minister to all the Ministries, 18 August 1930 in *TINA*: 310000449.

¹²⁵⁵ According to Ebrahim Safa’ei, upon the recommendation of Teymourtash, Taqizadeh had to give the monopoly of opium to Amin al-Tojar-e Esfahani who benefitted greatly from it. Ebrahim Safa’ei, *Tarikh-e Mashrutiyyat be Ravayt-e Asnad* [History of the Constitution based on Documents] (Tehran: Iranyaran, 2001), 715-16.

¹²⁵⁶ Taqizadeh, *Tufani*, 191.

¹²⁵⁷ The British had paid 400,000 Toman (120,000 Lira) to three people: to Vosouq al-Dowleh 200,000 Toman, to Saram al-Dowleh and Nosrat al-Dowleh 100,000 Toman each. See: Ibid, 171. The British had already received compensation for the cancellation of this agreement. See: Safa’ei, *Tarikh-e Mashrutiyyat be Ravayt-e Asnad*, 715.

interest and sinking fund. We also saved and gathered a substantial amount of gold as a reserve for the Iranian Bank notes.¹²⁵⁸

Since Taqizadeh was interested in history and culture, he was able to procure a large donation from a wealthy businessman who had made large sums of money from the government, preventing strain on the budget of the government. He handed over this money for the restoration of historical buildings in Isfahan.¹²⁵⁹ According to the German Ambassador in Iran who had personally met Taqizadeh, when he held the post of Finance Minister, Taqizadeh was without doubt the most capable man in the cabinet.¹²⁶⁰ But, some did not have the same favourable opinion. This period of his life was not without blemish; the oil agreement of 1933 would prove to be his “Achilles’ heel”.

9:8 The D’Arcy Concession and its Cancellation

The signing of the Oil Agreement of 1933 was one of the key historical events in Iran with which Taqizadeh is inextricably linked. Taqizadeh’s reputation suffered greatly because of this and the accusations aimed at him persist to this day. As Minister of Finance, as Taqizadeh himself mentioned, he had no other option but to sign the agreement; it is his signature which is written under the agreement. Signing an agreement which was not favourable to the national interests of Iran unleashed a storm of criticism against him in the summer of 1941 after the fall of Reza Shah. Before looking at this agreement in detail and Taqizadeh’s role in it, a brief background should be given.

On 28 May 1901, an exclusive concession had been granted to William Knox D’Arcy (1849-1917) for a period of 60 years for the exploration of natural gas and petroleum throughout Iran, an area covering 1,243,195 km² of territory.¹²⁶¹ In 1900, Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, a former British Minister to Tehran, had contacted D’Arcy about investing in Iranian oil exploration. At the beginning of 1901 D’Arcy sent an envoy to

¹²⁵⁸ Taqizadeh, “The History of Modern Iran: Lectures Given in Colombia University,” in *Maqalat-e Taqizadeh*, 8: 231.

¹²⁵⁹ Sadiq, in *Yadnameh*, ed., Yaghmaei, 6.

¹²⁶⁰ Von Blucher, 176.

¹²⁶¹ Mostafa Elm, *Oil, Power, and Principle: Iran's Oil Nationalization and its Aftermath* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1992), 6.

Tehran and in May a concession to search for oil was obtained. Although D'Arcy had agreed to finance the search, by the end of 1903 he had spent £150,000 but had found no oil and £225,000 by May 1905. He was by now in a desperate financial position, funds had been exhausted. He began to negotiate with the French branch of the Rothschild family hoping to sell the concession but luckily on 20 May the British Burmah Oil Co. offered to buy it. D'Arcy accepted the offer and in return received 170,000 Burmah Oil shares and monies to cover his previous expenses.¹²⁶² The company, after some failed attempts, finally struck oil in Masjed Soleyman in the south of Iran, on 26 May, 1908.

The project then developed rapidly between 1908-1914, a period in which thirty wells were dug in Masjed Soleyman. The oil company began buying land from the Bakhtiari chieftains in order to expand the oil fields and drew up agreements with them which ensured that the Bakhtiyaris would provide security for the oil industry.¹²⁶³ Housing was built for the staff and a pipe line was constructed to carry the oil to Abadan where a large refinery and a modern port was built from which crude oil could be shipped to other destinations.

On the eve of the First World War, the British government had decided to buy fifty-one percent of the share (over £2 million worth of stocks of the company) because of the increasing importance of the oil for the British navy and to guarantee uninterrupted supplies of oil for the fleet.¹²⁶⁴ The company was considered British since the majority of the shares were held by the British government. The British government had assigned two representatives to the board of directors who had the right to veto decisions made by the company. In this way the British government had control over the company and in fact the concession was handed over to the British government. As R.W. Ferrier put it, "Most governments, consciously or not, believed that the hidden hand of the British Government

¹²⁶² David Carment, "D'Arcy, William Knox," in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/darcy-william-knox-5882> (accessed 5 May, 2019).

¹²⁶³ Mostafa Fateh, *Panjah Sal Naft-e Iran* [Fifty Years of Oil in Iran] (Tehran: Chehr, 1956), 259-60.

¹²⁶⁴ Peter J. Beck, "The Anglo-Persian Oil Dispute," *Journal of Contemporary History* 9, no. 4, (October 1974): 123-151.

was to be detected behind most, not all, of the activities of the Company.”¹²⁶⁵ This was particularly a matter of concern for Russia which, together with Britain, had signed the Anglo-Russian agreement of 1907 relating to Iran.

After the Constitutional Revolution in Iran and the establishment of the Parliament dissatisfaction with the conditions of the oil agreement began to be voiced. The government's concerns grew as it became increasingly clear to more and more people that under the terms of the concession there was no possibility to change any of the articles of the agreement to make them more favourable to Iran's interests and, in fact, the oil company expressed no willingness to consider any amendments. As the increasing global value of oil together with the clearly unfavourable conditions of the concession became more evident to a wider public, the tension between the oil company and the Iranian government began to grow.¹²⁶⁶ This was not the only cause of increasing tensions between the Iranian government and the oil company.¹²⁶⁷ However, the major complaint of Iran over the D'Arcy Agreement was over Article 10 which specified that Iran should receive 16 percent of the net profit of the APOC. Iran's share was calculated by the company after deduction of various costs which were not related to Iran. This was the source of constant problems between Iran and the oil company. The Iranian Court Minister of Reza Shah, Teymourtash, spent four years conducting negotiations to solve this issue in a satisfactory manner but was unsuccessful.¹²⁶⁸ Three weeks after his appointment as the Minister of Finance, Taqizadeh joined the negotiations on 31 August, 1931.¹²⁶⁹

In 1932, APOC informed the Iranian government that the Iranian government's share of the oil revenue had been only three hundred and seven thousand Lira in the previous year, while in 1930 Iran's revenues had been four times that figure.¹²⁷⁰ On 26 July 1932,

¹²⁶⁵ R.W. Ferrier, *The History of The British Petroleum Company* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982) 1: 202.

¹²⁶⁶ Foad Rouhani, *Tarikh-e Melli Shodan-e San 'at-e Naft-e Iran* [History of the Nationalisation of the Iranian Oil Industry] (Tehran: Jibi, 1973), 59.

¹²⁶⁷ For more details about these issues see: R.W. Ferrier, *The History of the British Petroleum Company* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 1: The Developing Years 1901-1932.

¹²⁶⁸ Javad Sheikh al-Eslami, ed., *So'ud va Soqout-e Teymourtash* [The Rise and Fall of Teymourtash] (Tehran: Tus, 2000), 154.

¹²⁶⁹ Sheikh al-Eslami, *So'ud va Soqout-e Teymourtash*, 175.

¹²⁷⁰ Mostafa Fateh, 291.

Taqizadeh was questioned about this oil issue and the income of Iran. Ali Dashti, one of the deputies, asked Taqizadeh why the government did not inspect the income of APOC. Taqizadeh in reply mentioned that one of the shortcomings of the D'Arcy Concession was the method used to calculate the amount to be paid to the Iranian government. He said this was an issue to be concerned about, that they would continue negotiations aimed at solving it and, if that was not possible, a different solution would be sought. On the 27 November 1932, the Iranian government cancelled the Anglo-Persian concession held by APOC.¹²⁷¹ According to Taqizadeh, who was part of the negotiation team, this was an unexpected decision taken independently by the Shah. Taqizadeh hastily prepared the letter of cancellation and sent it to the company:

The Iranian government has repeatedly brought to the notice of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company that the D'Arcy Concession of 1901 has not been safeguarding the concerns and interests of the Iranian government and the Iranian government deemed it necessary that the relationship between the Iranian government and the company be based on new ground rules which would protect the real interests of Iran. As stated repeatedly, there are no doubts about the shortcomings and faults of the D'Arcy Concession and the fact that it does not meet the interests of Iran. Evidently the Iranian government logically and justly cannot oblige itself to follow the terms of a concession which has been made before the establishment of the Constitution in the manner that these concessions were imposed or granted in those days. However, with the hope that the company would take the current necessities and situation of Iran into consideration and would secure the interests of Iran accordingly, the Iranian government had until now held back from implementing its rights to cancel the D'Arcy Concession. Unfortunately, in response to the patience of the Iranian government, not only were any practical steps not taken by the oil company to secure Iran's

¹²⁷¹ When the nation's name changed from Persia to Iran in 1935, the Anglo-Persian Oil Company became known as the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC). Whilst the company operated in other parts of the world, in 1935, Iran was still the main scene of its operations. In 1954 the AIOC was re-named the British Petroleum Company.

interests but also as the development and expansion of the oil company increased, the interests of Iran were further overlooked. The Iranian government is therefore disappointed that the expected results have not been achieved by the means of negotiations and considers the only way to ensure the safeguarding of its interests is by the cancellation of the D'Arcy Concession. Based on the decision of the imperial government, this ministry, from this date, declares the D'Arcy Concession null and void. Furthermore, contrary to the past, if the oil company is now ready to meet the interests of Iran and can provide sufficient guarantees that its views are in line with the just and fair views of the Iranian government, then the Iranian government would willingly grant a new concession to the company.¹²⁷²

As is evident in this letter, the proposal for a new agreement is clearly suggested by the Iranian side. In his autobiography, Taqizadeh mentions that he had added the last line to the letter because he had heard the rumour that the government wanted to cancel the concession and agree a new one with the Russians. He was eager to prove that this rumour was incorrect. According to Taqizadeh, he had taken two copies of the letter to Reza Shah, one without the last line and the other including it. The Shah had approved both.¹²⁷³ The news of the cancellation of the concession was published in the newspapers of Iran. People were encouraged to celebrate the cancellation as a national victory by the government. Taqizadeh's intention was to do his duty and inform the Parliament on 1 December 1932, which he did. Unexpectedly, all the members of the Parliament approved it on the same day.

Upon hearing news of the cancellation, the Anglo-Persian Oil Company at once rejected Iran's right to cancel the agreement and asked for its withdrawal. In another step the British government threatened that if Iran did not withdraw its letter then the case would be referred to the court in the Hague. Iran refused but agreed that it should be referred

¹²⁷² Ebrahim Safa'ei, *Eshtebah-e Bozorg-e Melli Shodan-e Naft* [The Huge Error of Nationalisation of the Oil Industry] (Tehran: Ketabsara, 1992), 25-7.

¹²⁷³ Taqizadeh, *Tufani*, 196.

instead to the Council of the League of Nations where the British government acted on behalf of the oil company. When the Council met in February, both countries agreed that the proceedings should be postponed until the Council met again in May, but that in the meantime direct negotiations regarding a new concession would continue between the Anglo-Persian Oil Company and the Iranian government. Foroughi, the Foreign Minister; Taqizadeh, Finance Minister and Davar, Court Minister were part of the Iranian delegation which was responsible for conducting negotiations with the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. John Cadman, the chairman of the company, also came to Iran and negotiations began. According to Taqizadeh, the negotiations were long and tiresome and the matter was discussed every day for over a month. Taqizadeh mentions that when they were close to an agreement the other side asked for the extension of the period of the concession which caused strong disagreement on the Iranian side.¹²⁷⁴ Reza Shah initially also disagreed with the extension but finally surrendered. The concession was extended by 32 years to the end of 1993. Taqizadeh had to sign the new agreement with a gold pen that the company had prepared. He states that he was “very weary” and could not sleep that night. He sent the gold pen to Reza Shah to imply that it was the Shah’s decision to sign the agreement; not Taqizadeh’s.¹²⁷⁵ This agreement is known as the “The Oil Agreement of 1933”.

9:9 The Oil Agreement of 1933 and its Consequences for Taqizadeh

From the twenty-seven articles of the agreement, the main points of the new agreement specified that Iran would receive its right from the share in two ways; one from the oil itself and the other from the income of the oil. From the oil that the company exported or sold in the local market, the Iranian government would receive four shillings per ton. From the net profit what was made was calculated in the following manner: after calculating the net profit, five percent of it was to be divided among the shareholders after which Iran would receive twenty percent of the remaining net profit. This arrangement was to safeguard the Iranian share in the event that the number of shareholders increased at a later date. The Iranisation of the workforce in the industry was one of the key articles since it ensured that

¹²⁷⁴ Ibid., 206-7.

¹²⁷⁵ Ibid., 209.

Iran would be able to operate the industry independently in the future.¹²⁷⁶ It was also agreed that Iran would receive from the oil company one million, six hundred thousand Pounds Sterling for previous disputes.¹²⁷⁷

It was not until Reza Shah was in power that anyone dared to criticise Taqizadeh openly. Following the resignation of the Shah and his departure from Iran, criticism of Taqizadeh began to surface.¹²⁷⁸ Among the numerous critics of Taqizadeh was Mohammad Mosaddeq who criticised Taqizadeh for not making public the details of the oil agreement before presenting it to Parliament. Mosaddeq had assumed that if Taqizadeh had made the bill public, the disadvantages of the oil agreement would have been evident and, thus, the general public would have reacted against it.¹²⁷⁹ Considering the temper and general countenance of Reza Shah, Taqizadeh's behaviour was bound to lead to trouble for him. Taqizadeh knew that doing this would have serious consequences for him and since the media was also controlled and censored by the establishment there was little hope that Taqizadeh would have been able to get away with it. To fully understand the Shah's attitude towards Taqizadeh's actions, we should look at letters addressed to Taqizadeh which remain from the office of the Shah. They are an indication of just how restricted Taqizadeh was as Minister of Finance, and just how little he was able to do without first seeking permission from the Shah. Taqizadeh had been accustomed to taking bills directly to Parliament to be made legal but the Shah was far from happy about this. In one letter sent some months before the oil agreement was drafted, the Shah had harshly reprimanded Taqizadeh, complaining that Taqizadeh had attempted to purchase gold without having sought permission from him and had directly asked Taqizadeh when he would finally submit to his authority.¹²⁸⁰ In his autobiography, Taqizadeh noted that the money that Iran had received from the oil revenue was deposited abroad and he suggested that it be used to purchase more gold. He had taken the suggestion to the cabinet to be discussed, in order

¹²⁷⁶ For the full text of the D'Arcy Concession and 1933 Agreement in English visit: <https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/bbm%3A978-3-658-00093-6%2F1.pdf>.

¹²⁷⁷ Mojtehed, 231.

¹²⁷⁸ Afshar Yazdi, 442.

¹²⁷⁹ Mohammad Mosaddeq, *Khaterat va T'amolât-e Mosaddeq* [Memoirs of Mosaddeq], ed., Iraj Afshar (Tehran: 'Elmi, 2006), 119.

¹²⁸⁰ Hossein Shokoh al-Molk (The Special Office of the Shah) to Taqizadeh, 11 September 1933 in *Nameh-hay-e Tehran*, ed., Afshar, 137-8.

that the next instalment of revenue be spent on gold. Upon hearing news of this, the Shah was furious; he wanted any matter concerning oil to be discussed solely with him and not with others, even members of the cabinet.¹²⁸¹

Taqizadeh was questioned about the cancellation of the D'Arcy agreement and the 1933 agreement and its process repeatedly but it seems that his replies were not satisfactory for many. A British Diplomatic report stated at the time:

It seems doubtful whether the real facts and motives which led to the dramatic cancellation of the D'Arcy Concession will ever be known. The Shah, Teymourache [Teymourash] and Taqizadeh, the Minister of Finance, all know a good deal about it, but even if they could be brought to give their personal versions it appears highly doubtful whether a satisfactory intelligible whole could be pieced together.¹²⁸²

On 14 September 1933, the government of Mokhber al-Saltaneh resigned and Taqizadeh's post as Minister of Finance came to an end.¹²⁸³ Concerning his removal from office, Taqizadeh writes that Reza Shah, without Taqizadeh's knowledge, had asked the Prime Minister, Mokhber-al Saltaneh, to resign and they had planned that every minister would also give his resignation separately. Taqizadeh refers to this gesture as a sign of respect for him by the Shah.¹²⁸⁴ As Taqizadeh states, Reza Shah had become suspicious of him since he had bought gold for the treasury and suspected that Taqizadeh was hiding from him the true amount of gold that they had. The Shah had ordered the new Finance Minister, Davar, to investigate the affairs of the Finance Ministry to ascertain whether Taqizadeh had indeed done anything wrong. Reza Shah no longer wanted Taqizadeh as Minister and he was sent abroad. Reza Shah was dissatisfied with Taqizadeh over two matters; one was the fact that Taqizadeh took every order of the Shah to the Parliament to

¹²⁸¹ Hossein Shokoh al-Molk (The Special Office of the Shah), 11 September 1933 in *Nameh-hay-e Tehran*, ed., Afshar, 137-8.

¹²⁸² Mr. Horace to Sir John Simon, Annual Report 1932 in *Iran Political Diaries: 1881-1965*, 276.

¹²⁸³ *The New York Times*, September 15, 1933.

¹²⁸⁴ Taqizadeh, *Tufani*, 190.

be certified and made legal, the second was that he had invested some of the income of the oil in gold.¹²⁸⁵ According to Taqizadeh, in a meeting with the Members of Parliament, Reza Shah had expressed his satisfaction with the financial position of the country. Someone present had then commented on the fact that it was the Minister of Finance who had managed to achieve this. Taqizadeh was well aware that Reza Shah would be displeased at the suggestion that someone else take credit for Iran's stable financial situation and writes about this in his autobiography. It seems that the Shah's clear displeasure had led Taqizadeh to attempt to placate him. In a parliamentary speech whilst still Minister of Finance, apparently referencing this, Taqizadeh announced that he would have preferred that his name not be mentioned in connection with the state of the country's finances. He continued that, in his opinion, it was crucial that all citizens be fully aware that it was in fact the head of the country, [the Shah], who must take credit for all achievements; he himself was simply carrying out his duty and should not therefore be given any credit for that.¹²⁸⁶ However, this appears to have done little to placate the Shah. Another interpretation could be that, since this happened after the controversial oil agreement of 1933, Taqizadeh was using the opportunity to also imply that he similarly should not be held responsible for the signing of that agreement; the responsibility for that, too, lay with the Shah.

Taqizadeh writes that, from this time on, he was more unpopular with Reza Shah. His unpopularity was further exacerbated by the fact that Reza Shah preferred to allocate budget to the military rather than invest in gold, which was Taqizadeh's preference whilst he was Finance Minister.¹²⁸⁷ According to Taqizadeh, Reza Shah later suspected that Taqizadeh had invested the money in gold in order to prevent Reza Shah from using the money to pay for arms and the military.¹²⁸⁸

The British, who were carefully observing Iranian affairs, were not fully aware of the reasons for Taqizadeh's falling out of favour with the Shah. A British diplomatic report

¹²⁸⁵ Hedayat, 400.

¹²⁸⁶ Proceedings of the Ninth Parliament, Session 15, 2 May 1933.

¹²⁸⁷ Taqizadeh, *Tufani*, 212.

¹²⁸⁸ Taqizadeh, *Tufani*, 212-3.

stipulates, “The chief reasons for the reconstruction of the Cabinet were probably the desire of the Shah to have a real Prime Minister now that Teymourtaḥe [Teymourtaḥ] was no longer there to hold the threads of the civil administration”. The same report, analysing the possible reasons for Taqizadeh’s dismissal, as well as taking into account the gold issue, states: “The exact reasons for the Shah’s discontent with Taqizadeh are uncertain...On the other hand, Taqizadeh himself is believed to have wished to retire for some time...”.¹²⁸⁹

Other statements suggest that Taqizadeh had given his official resignation to Reza Shah although it was not accepted since his ministers had no right to resign.¹²⁹⁰ In his autobiography Taqizadeh also mentions that he was unhappy with Reza Shah and eventually would leave the country and never return.¹²⁹¹ As events of his life unfolded, Taqizadeh would indeed spend a significant period of time outside Iran, beginning with his appointment in Paris.

9:10 Iranian Minister in Paris

Taqizadeh was in charge of the Iranian Embassy in Paris from January 1934 until August 1934. During this period, the Social Nationalist party was in power in Germany. An anti-Jewish policy was prevalent; life was becoming increasingly difficult for the Jews. According to the 1933 German law for the “Cleansing of the Civil Service”, officials who were not of Aryan descent were to be dismissed.¹²⁹² Those Jews working in important German affairs were now prevented from trading and owning a business and many had no choice but to flee the country. Among them were many scientists and educators who migrated to countries such as the United States and Turkey where they were welcomed for their expertise. Taking advantage of the situation, hundreds of Jews were employed on low wages in fields where they could contribute to the development of science and fine art. Those who had remained in Germany then scattered throughout Europe to countries such

¹²⁸⁹ Coll 28/67 ‘Persia. Annual Reports, 1932–’, British Library: India Office Records and Private Papers, IOR/L/PS/12/3472A, in *The Qatar Digital Library*, http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100056661166.0x0000a4?utm_source=testpdfdownload&utm_medium=pdf&utm_campaign=PDFdownload (accessed 31 March 2020).

¹²⁹⁰ Sheikh al-Eslami, 271-2.

¹²⁹¹ Taqizadeh, *Tufani*, 209.

¹²⁹² Bentwich Norman, *The Rescue and Achievement of Refugee Scholars, The Story of Displaced Scholars and Scientists 1933-1952*, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1953), 9.

as France, England, Switzerland, The Netherlands and Belgium in search of jobs. Jews had established organisations to assist other Jews in finding employment and relocating to other countries.¹²⁹³

Correspondence between the Foreign Ministry and the Iranian embassies in Europe reveals that there was a constant stream of Jews requesting Iranian visas and work permits. As the Ambassador of Iran in Paris, Taqizadeh was also involved in this. His letters to the Prime Minister's office of the time in Iran reveal that he saw this as a good opportunity, strongly believing that Iran's government should hire and make use of these people's expertise. He believed that Turkey had already benefitted by hiring educated migrants and that Iran should not delay in doing similarly.

To understand and trace Taqizadeh's stand on encouraging and inviting foreign experts to Iran, one can refer to an interview that Taqizadeh took part in after his return to Iran in September 1924. During the interview he commented that he believed one of the most important means of reform for Iran was to invite "civilised, hardworking and harmless migrants" from European countries who would be relocated in small groups throughout Iran and provided with the means to carry out agricultural work in order to establish exemplary villages which Iranians could later emulate. He used the example of the German migrants who had established settlements in the Russian Caucasus during the period of Peter the Great and Catherine the Great and who had played an important role in helping to modernise those parts of Russia and who were loyal to the Russian government.¹²⁹⁴ It should be noted that this idea was not original to Taqizadeh; exactly a century before Taqizadeh's comments, in 1824, Abbas Mirza, the Crown Prince and governor of Azerbaijan had given orders for announcements to be placed in the British

¹²⁹³ One international committee to help in finding jobs for Jewish academics was founded in Geneva. Another association was in London called "Academic Assistance Council" established in 1933. Some of its key funding figures were Sir William Beveridge; Lord Rutherford; John Maynard Keynes; A V Hill, Lionel Robbins; and Margery Fry. For further information see: Bentwich Norman, *The Rescue and Achievement of Refugee Scholars, The Story of Displaced Scholars and Scientists 1933-1952* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1953). The council continues its work as CARA (Council for Assisting Refugee Academics). For further information about CARA see (<http://www.academic-refugees.org/history.asp>).

¹²⁹⁴ Taqizadeh, "Yek Mosht Tasavorat-e bi Ed'a [Some Humble Thoughts]" in *Iran*, September 28 and October 1, 1924, republished in *Maqalat-e Taqizadeh* 5:65-6

press and several other European countries encouraging Europeans to come to Iran with the same purpose. The announcement is lengthy but to highlight its similarity with what Taqizadeh was suggesting a century later it is worth quoting part of the beginning as published in an Australian newspaper:

As many families from European countries have lately resorted, some to America and New Holland, and others to Georgia and Daghistan, as settlers; his Royal Highness, Abbas Mirza, the Prince Royal of Persia, through the medium of his Minister at the Court of Great Britain, personally assures all those who may be inclined to take up their residence in his kingdom of Adzirebijan, of which the capital is Tabriz, that, on their arrival in the district of Sauvidgeboulough, he will immediately assign to them portions of land, with residences attached, and every requisite for their comfort and subsistence. The soil will yield abundant crops of wheat, barley, rice, cotton, and every species of fruit or grain they may choose to cultivate; and the produce of the country exceeds that of any other quarter of the globe. Besides receiving grants of land, such settlers shall, as long as they reside in Persia, be exempt from all taxes or contributions of any kind their property and persons be held sacred, under the immediate protection of the Prince himself, who further engages that they shall be treated with the greatest kindness and attention, and, as is the custom of Persia, be at full liberty to enjoy their own religious opinions and feelings, and to follow without control or interruption their own mode of worship. As all travellers who have visited Persia agree that it is the best climate under the sun.¹²⁹⁵

This project of Abbas Mirza was not successful. With his passing, his plans also died. It may be that Europeans were reluctant to come to Iran because of the lack of security in the country. We know that when Taqizadeh was young and living in Tabriz he had had the idea of establishing a village with his friend; but this had never been actualised. Now that the country had a powerful central government and security was established, Taqizadeh

¹²⁹⁵ *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, January 1, 1824.

now considered the time ripe to put similar ideas into action; to invite Europeans to take up employment opportunities in Iran. Whilst in the past large numbers of educated Europeans had not come to settle in Iran, now many more educated Europeans, in particular Jews, were eager to take up this opportunity, desperate to escape Nazi persecution. Many wrote to Taqizadeh as the Iranian Ambassador in Paris and even personally went to see him. Although other Iranian Ambassadors in Europe also recommended hiring Jewish Europeans, some were more hesitant than Taqizadeh to do so. Nader Arasteh, the Iranian Ambassador in Berlin, for example, was of the opinion that accepting Jews might have negative social consequences for Iranian society. According to the governor of Khorasan, although Jewish people might have moral and racial imperfections, some were well-educated and could be beneficial for Iran. There is also a letter at hand from Hossein 'Ala', the Iranian Minister in London, to Taqizadeh in which 'Ala' mentions that the Ministry of Education in Iran was considering hiring some of the German experts who were scattered throughout Europe and in particular in Britain or France for the medical and engineering faculties at the University of Tehran. 'Ala's letter reveals that Taqizadeh comprehensively researched about this matter and took part in negotiations concerning this with Lord Marley, a senior British Labour politician who was the Chairman of the Parliamentary Advisory Committee for the aid of Jews in Europe. Marley had even travelled to Paris to discuss about the Jewish migrants with Taqizadeh. 'Ala', aware of this, requested Taqizadeh to introduce and investigate the suitable candidates to be hired in Iran. What is clear from 'Ala's correspondence is that Iran had delayed acting on this matter and many experts were no longer available.¹²⁹⁶

When the French press wrote critically about Reza Shah, Taqizadeh was constantly requested by the Iranian government to put a stop to it. Since Taqizadeh could do nothing, the Shah became furious. The government made it clear that if Taqizadeh was unable to prevent the criticisms aimed at the Shah from being published, he would lose his position. Finally, Taqizadeh was suspended from his position. He handed over the Embassy to his deputy, resided in a hotel room for some time before moving to Berlin to join his wife who had gone there earlier. He was informed from Iran that Reza Shah was furious with him.

¹²⁹⁶ Hossein 'Ala' to Taqizadeh, London. 6 March 1935 in *Nomeh-hay-e Tehran*, ed., Afshar, 170-1.

He wrote an apologetic letter to the Shah but received no offer of a job.¹²⁹⁷ Taqizadeh was left with no income and had to borrow from friends to survive until a temporary mission was offered to him.

9:11 International Congress of Orientalists in Rome

The Nineteenth International Congress of Orientalists took place from 23 to 29 September 1935 in Rome. The Iranian government considered it to be important since the conference had a special focus on Oriental literature. Since Italy had showed a positive reaction to the 1000-year anniversary of Ferdowsi in Iran, the Iranian government wanted to reciprocate by sending distinguished representatives to the congress.¹²⁹⁸ Taqizadeh was a suitable candidate for this. This was also endorsed by Reza Shah.¹²⁹⁹ This was a significant move for Taqizadeh since the Shah was so displeased with him that, according to Taqizadeh, nobody dared to even mention his name. Now it seemed, Taqizadeh's name had been put forward as someone suitable for the post.¹³⁰⁰ This was good news for Taqizadeh and his friends and supporters in Iran. They telegraphed Taqizadeh and asked if he would accept the position. Taqizadeh's response was positive. The Iranian government also dedicated 10,000 Rial (1330.67 Reichsmarks) to send to Taqizadeh who was residing in Berlin at that time to finance his trip to Rome.¹³⁰¹ Taqizadeh's attendance at the Congress went down well since only he and one other person from Finland were officially representing their countries. Taqizadeh met many famous Orientalists there and gave presentations about Ancient Iranian calendars and chronology. After the Congress finished, Taqizadeh remained in Italy for a few days before returning to Berlin on 6 October, 1935.¹³⁰²

¹²⁹⁷ Taqizadeh to Reza Shah, Taqizadeh, *Tufani* ('Elmi), 786-7.

¹²⁹⁸ The Foreign Ministry to The Ministry of Education and Religious Foundation, 27 July 1935 in *TINA*: 297039839.

¹²⁹⁹ The Ministry of Education and Religious Foundation to Taqizadeh 19 August 1935 in *Ibid*: 297039839.

¹³⁰⁰ Taqizadeh, *Tufani*, 220-21.

¹³⁰¹ The Ministry of Education and Religious Foundation to The Iranian Embassy in Berlin, 20 July 1935 and The Ministry of Education and Religious Foundation to The Prime Minister, 26 June 1935 in *TINA*: 297039839.

¹³⁰² Taqizadeh's Report about International Congress of Orientalists in Rome to The Ministry of Education and Religious Foundation, 9 October 1935 in *The Iranian National Archives*: 297039839.

At this point, Taqizadeh may have thought that the Shah had forgiven him and soon another position would be offered to him. However, an article he wrote and which was published in the publication of the Education Ministry, “T’alim va Tarbiyat” [Learning and Education] once again caused trouble for him and angered the Shah. The Shah was furious that Taqizadeh had written that a “sword” should not intervene in affairs of the “pen”.¹³⁰³ In the article which Taqizadeh had written upon request of the Education Minister, he had criticised Farhangestan-e Iran [The Iranian Language Academy], based on the French Academy and established in 1935. Its duty was to preserve, promulgate and promote the Persian language.¹³⁰⁴ One of the tasks of this academy was the purification of the Persian language and the introduction of new words. This movement grew out of earlier ideas and discourse.

Beginning in the later part of the nineteenth century, educated government officials had begun to realise that the purity of Persian was becoming increasingly threatened by the growing use of words from other languages. As well as the Arabic and Turkish words which the Persian language had been adopting over centuries, new words from European languages began to be imported as contact with Europe and the Ottoman Empire increased.¹³⁰⁵ This was a particular concern because government officials had realised the technological supremacy of the Europeans and had begun to focus on European ideas and technology. Some had concluded that in order to maintain the independence of Iran against the powerful invading European nations, the technology they had developed must be learned and copied. The first step was to translate books in European languages into Persian. The inadequacy of Persian vocabulary to expressing new technological and scientific concepts and objects soon became evident. As assimilation of these new words increased, Iranian intellectuals, many of them expats living abroad, began to join the debate over the purification of the Persian language. Many who advocated for this reform in language belonged to a wider nationalistic movement which glorified the pre-Islamic

¹³⁰³ For more on this see: Taqizadeh, *Tufani* (‘Elmi), 562-77.

¹³⁰⁴ For more about Farhangestan and its history see: Mohsen Roustaei, ed., *Tarikh-e Nakhostin Farhangestan-e Iran* [The History of the First Iranian Language Academy] (Tehran: Ney, 2006).

¹³⁰⁵ Mehrdad Kia, “Persian Nationalism and the Campaign for Language Purification,” in *Middle Eastern Studies* 34, no. 2 (1998), 9-36.

heritage of Iran and which was critical of the adverse effect of Islam on Iran. Some, such as Jalal-al Din Mirza and Akhondzadeh, were strongly advocating for the purification of the Persian language. They believed that the backwardness of Iran was due to the invasion of Arabs and Islam although they rarely dared to openly criticise Islam. They considered the Persian language one of the last main vestiges of pre-Islamic Iran.

The movement to purify the Persian language, eliminating foreign words, had begun before the Constitutional Revolution in Iran. Following the establishment of the constitution, the movement gained momentum as Persian language was depicted as the unifying element of the many diverse ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups in Iran. As it became easier to express opinions, the revolution brought with it a boom in journalism and many more newspapers began publication. Many of these publications avoided the complicated official language which employed more Arabic words in favour of a simpler form of language which was closer to the language used by ordinary people. Discussion in the newspapers about language purification helped to consolidate the language purification movement.

Taqizadeh himself, in the second period of his newspaper *Kaveh*, dedicated a series of critical articles such as *Farsi-e Khan-e Valeadeh*, to the style and unnecessary or misuse of foreign words in Persian. The overall style of the *Kaveh* publication was novel and uncomplicated. By publishing some of the earliest writings by such writers as Jamalzadeh, considered one of the pioneers of a more simplified style of Persian writing, Taqizadeh made an important contribution to this movement. However, taking into account Taqizadeh's ideas about the Persian language, it can be seen that Taqizadeh believed the backbone of the unity of Iranians was their cultural heritage and language. At the same time, he believed that random changes to the language, based solely on personal taste and biased ethnic superiority, would inhibit the efficacy of the language. Essentially, he was opposed to any radical movement which would advocate for the purification of the language. Some of his predecessors as well as some contemporaries, such as Talebov and Mirza Aqa Khan Kermani, were similarly opposed to the radical purification of Persian.

Taqizadeh believed that this was a bad decision and would be detrimental to the Persian language. The words introduced by the academy had to be sanctioned by the Shah and would then become obligatory. In his article, Taqizadeh had declared that the decisions should be taken by expert professionals; the force of a “sword” should not interfere in this. News of this published article had infuriated the Shah. Once again, Taqizadeh had fallen out of grace.¹³⁰⁶

9:12 The School of Oriental Studies in London

After Taqizadeh was suspended from his position as the Iranian Minister in Paris he went to Germany for a while where his time was spent reading and researching. He tried to find a job in Germany to support himself and his wife but his efforts were fruitless.¹³⁰⁷ It is also possible that Taqizadeh’s experiences during the Great War in Germany had caused him to prefer not to stay in Nazi Germany. It was in this context that Taqizadeh decided to write a letter to Sir Denison Ross, the director, offering his services to the School of Oriental Studies in London: “Having learned from a friend that there is a possibility for my being useful there to the School of Oriental Studies I have tendered to-day my services by a telegram sent to you in the following words: ‘I tender my services as lecturer to the school gratis’.”¹³⁰⁸ He ends the letter expressing his hope that his offer would be accepted.

¹³⁰⁶ 221-2.

¹³⁰⁷ Taqizadeh to Reza Shah, 1 July 1940 in Taqizadeh, *Tufani* (‘Elmi), 788-93.

¹³⁰⁸ The original of this telegram, 11 December 1935, can be found in the personnel file of Taqizadeh of what is today The School of Oriental and African Studies in London (SOAS).

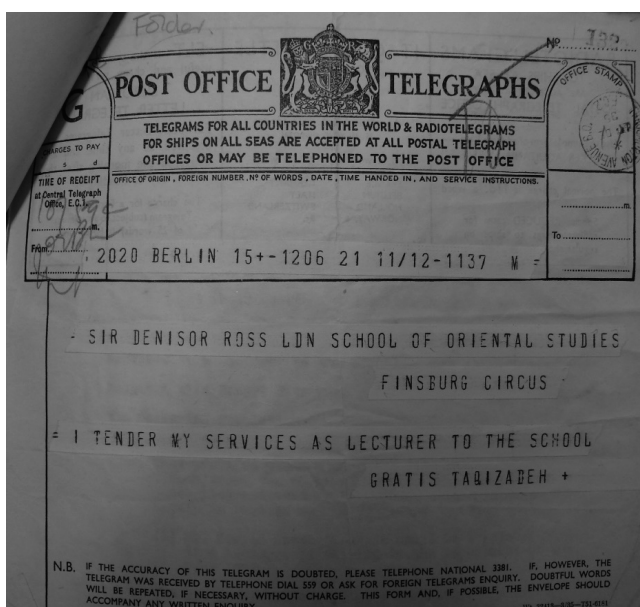


Figure 23: The telegraph Taqizadeh sent to the School of Oriental Studies London, offering his services for free. Source: Taqizadeh's personnel file, SOAS, London.

Ross, after receiving permission for Taqizadeh's arrival in Britain from the British Home Office, on 6 January 1936 sent an official letter to Berlin addressed to Taqizadeh: "...the Governing body of the School of Oriental Studies has been pleased to accept the offer you so kindly made of your services as Lecturer in Persian." He then informs him that the school re-opens after the vacation ends on 14th January and he should be there before that date in order to establish himself. He also enclosed an official document for Taqizadeh which would save him "from trouble on entering England".¹³⁰⁹ Taqizadeh, after receiving the news of his acceptance, on 6 January 1936 replies to Ross that he had begun immediately to make preparation for his departure from Berlin.¹³¹⁰ On 8 January Ross informs Taqizadeh by letter that the governing body of the school had anonymously passed a resolution which specified the terms of his appointment in 13 articles. Article 9 indicated that "There will be no salary attached to the appointment".¹³¹¹ On 30 December 1935, and even before the official issue date of the letter sent to Taqizadeh informing about his

¹³⁰⁹ Sir Denison Ross to Taqizadeh, 29 December 1935 in Taqizadeh's personnel file, SOAS University of London (School of Oriental and African Studies).

¹³¹⁰ Taqizadeh to Sir Denison Ross, Berlin, 6 January 1936 in Taqizadeh's personnel file, SOAS University of London (School of Oriental and African Studies).

¹³¹¹ Secretary of the School of Oriental Studies to Taqizadeh, 8 January 1936, in *Ibid*.

appointment, some solicitors sent a private and confidential letter to Ross, the Director of the school:

We understand that His Excellency Sayyid Hasan Taqizadeh has been appointed to a lectureship in Persian, but that no salary attaches to the office. Certain persons with whom we are in touch would like to make him a present, and perhaps you would kindly let us have his address in order that we can arrange with him how the payments are to be made.¹³¹²

In reply to this letter, further correspondence in reply to the solicitors, details that as Taqizadeh would not be in London before 14 January he still had no address. The letter suggests: "With regard to the manner in which he receives the money which has been provided for him by certain persons, I would suggest that payments be made in monthly instalment, such instalments to be paid in advance on the first day of each month, and that the instalment for January be paid on his arrival in England".¹³¹³ In a later letter the solicitors write to Ross that they would arrange that the monthly amount would be credited to the bank account Taqizadeh would open in England.¹³¹⁴ After the arrival of Taqizadeh in London, Ross writes another letter to the solicitors stating that Taqizadeh was unhappy about the way the payment of money was arranged. The letter states: "He would greatly prefer to be able to say that he had received it from the school account". Then Ross states that it would be better if they sent the money to him and he could personally hand it to Taqizadeh because, "He will then be able to say that he receives money from the Director and thus silence the curiosity of his friends. He is so anxious that what he receives should appear to be in payment for services rendered to the School".¹³¹⁵ The amount of salary he received from the unidentified source via solicitors is not mentioned in these documents but Taqizadeh himself has stated that he received annually eight hundred Lira, sixty a month.¹³¹⁶ Taqizadeh has never referred to these anonymous people who paid him this

¹³¹² Solicitors, F. Arnold Biddle, F. M. Welsford, M.D. Macduff, 21 December 1935 in Ibid.

¹³¹³ The School of Oriental Studies to Solicitors, in Ibid.

¹³¹⁴ Biddle, Thorne, Welsford & Gait Solicitors to Sir Denison Ross, 30 December 1935, in Ibid.

¹³¹⁵ Sir Denison Ross to Biddle, Thorne, Welsford & Gait Solicitors, 20 January 1935 in Ibid.

¹³¹⁶ *Tufani*, 224.

monthly amount. In his autobiography Taqizadeh has his own version of the story which does not match the documents in his personnel file in the school; his own account about his initial acceptance at the school even differs from the official documents. He writes in his autobiography:

After the 19th International Congress of Orientalists, I came back to Berlin. Once again, I spent some months there and was jobless until in late 1935, I received a telegraph from Sir Denison Ross, the Director of the School of Oriental Studies in London. He had asked if I wanted to teach Persian literature at postgraduate level. I gave a positive response, they invited me immediately and I arrived in London on 10 January 1936.¹³¹⁷

Possibly the reason for Taqizadeh not expressing the truth about how he landed this unsalaried teaching position is that he might have felt embarrassment at having had to actively seek a position which he felt was below him. Taqizadeh then continues and writes that he received a salary from the School of Oriental Studies although there is no mention of the solicitors. We can assume that his insistence to receive the money not from the solicitors but from the school was due to the fact that his movements and actions were being monitored by some Iranian communist and leftist intellectuals. Among these was one of the later founders of the pro-Soviet Tudeh Party and Taqizadeh's fellow-citizen, Khalil Maleki who he mentions in his autobiography:

The school could not offer much and we didn't earn a lot. We could just make ends meet. There was someone here (In London) from the Tudeh Party, (Khalil Maleki), who used foul language. He also slandered me. He was sent by the Tudeh newspapers to London. He had written that the fact that such a person had been teaching there, at the school, is just a pretext. In one place he also wrote that it was said that he (I) received sixty Lira! He wanted to say that I received one hundred thousand Lira. However, at that time in London anyone could live on sixty Lira; it was true with sixty Lira

¹³¹⁷ Ibid., 227.

we lived. We had taken a small apartment which had three rooms. We spent all this time there. They were not able to give more but it was fine. When I went there, I did not have even one penny. Life had become very difficult. It was a heavenly gift that all of a sudden, they wrote to me asking if I was willing to go there. I replied that I was. If I had not been desperate, I would not have accepted this offer because I consider it was below my dignity. But we were in a dire situation. I taught there for about six years.¹³¹⁸

We know that as soon as Taqizadeh took up governmental positions he was subjected to strong criticism by left-wing intellectuals and those who had a pro-Soviet Union stance. He was considered by some leftist activists as someone in Iran who was against the policies of the Soviet Union and instead favoured the interests of the imperialist states. This criticism began as early as 1922 when he took up his first governmental job to conduct trade negotiations with the Soviet Union and increased further while in the role of cabinet minister, he co-operated with Reza Shah's government. Even stronger criticism was directed at him when, as Finance Minister, he signed the Oil Agreement of 1933 which was considered an agreement in favour of the British. The treatment of the leftists by Reza Shah's regime, considering them a serious threat to the independence of the country, the imprisoning of their prominent members and the persecution of other members, further exacerbated the leftist movements' attacks against those who were seen to co-operate with the regime, among them Taqizadeh. Later, with the formation of Hezb-e Tudeh-e Iran [Party of the Masses of Iran] in 1941, these attacks were targeted in more organised ways against those the party did not favour. Khalil Maleki, who was sent to Germany by the Iranian government to study there, began his anti-regime activities whilst Taqizadeh was in Iran and co-operating with Reza Shah. Thanks to the severe censorship in Iran, Berlin had become a centre in which the leftist position had a strong hold and from which their own publication *Peykar* [Fight] was published, mostly by the students who were sent from Iran to study there. In *Peykar* one can trace the criticism of Taqizadeh regarding his participation

¹³¹⁸ Ibid., 227.

in the Iranian government and the policies advocated by the government. One policy which was particularly criticised in *Peykar* was the decision of the government about the settlement of the various nomadic tribes of Iran.¹³¹⁹ *Peykar* considered this policy to be harmful and unhelpful for the situation of the tribes in Iran. The newspaper was critical of Taqizadeh's statements in the Parliament as Finance Minister, although Taqizadeh's comments were misquoted and misrepresented in the publication.¹³²⁰ Taqizadeh was also criticised about other matters including the fact that he had not spoken out against the lack of freedom and censorship during this period.¹³²¹ On another occasion Taqizadeh was accused of faking import and export figures, as Finance Minister, in order to cover up the pro-British policy under the leadership of the Court Minister, Teymourtash. He was also ridiculed for the budget he had prepared in which the largest expenditure was dedicated to the military.¹³²² Considering the critical atmosphere of the time, it would not be surprising that Taqizadeh wished to distance himself from Germany, the hotbed of criticism against him, and that he should be at pains to avoid providing any opportunity for the leftist opposition to accuse him of receiving money from what they might perceive to be questionable sources.

No documents have come to light which suggest the exact amount of money Taqizadeh received as a present during this period. However, towards the end of 1936 the solicitors sent another letter to the Director of the school: "We are writing to inform you that exactly the same financial arrangements will be made during the year 1937 for His Excellency Sayyid Hasan Taqizadeh as have been made during the current year. The first payment will be made to his Bank on 1st January. We presume that you will notify His Excellency."¹³²³

¹³¹⁹ *Peykar*, April 20, 1931.

¹³²⁰ Proceedings of the Eighth Parliament, Session 7, 1 February 1931 in *Maqalat-e Taqizadeh* (Tehran: Tus, 2011), 9: 101-5.

¹³²¹ *Peykar*, September 1, 1931.

¹³²² *Ibid.*, June 1, 1931

¹³²³ Biddle, Thorne, Welsford & Gait Solicitors to Sir Denison Ross, 21 December 1936, in Taqizadeh's personnel file, SOAS University of London (School of Oriental and African Studies).

Interestingly, in this letter there is no mention of the arrangement that Ross would give the money to Taqizadeh in person. The money was deposited directly into Taqizadeh's bank account. After his arrival in England, Taqizadeh might have realised that there was no danger in his receiving the money directly into his bank account. After 1937, there are no letters from the solicitors in Taqizadeh's personnel file, possibly because in 1937 the Director of the school, Denison Ross, was replaced by Ralph Lilley Turner. It could be that Taqizadeh did not want the new director to know about the financial arrangements organised by the solicitors and had thus asked that the money be paid into his bank account directly. In his autobiography Taqizadeh mentions that this money was enough to live on frugally and even sufficient to allow him to save a little. He even talks about a small house that his wife had bought with a mortgage in Cambridge and later another in London. According to Taqizadeh they later sold the houses before returning to Iran. Later, because of the Second World War, the school had to move to Cambridge and Taqizadeh spent most of his time in that city. Taqizadeh's school personnel file provides evidence that he was giving tutorial classes during the holiday time which allowed him to earn some extra income.

Although Taqizadeh states that he was satisfied with his situation, it seems that his situation was not as secure as he would have hoped. On 1 July 1940, he wrote a letter to Reza Shah explaining his situation, asking for forgiveness and enquiring about the possibility that a job might be referred to him. He was clearly worried about the turbulent situation in Europe and aware that life might be difficult for him as a foreigner in Britain.¹³²⁴ His request appears not to have been met and he continued work for the school.

Whilst working for the school in London, Taqizadeh was a colleague of Vladimir Minorsky, his old friend and other prominent orientalist scholars.¹³²⁵ Another

¹³²⁴ Taqizadeh to Reza Shah, 1 July 1940, in Taqizadeh, *Tufani* ('Elmi), 786-9.

¹³²⁵ For more about Minorsky (1877-1966) and his relationship with Taqizadeh see: Hassan Taqizadeh, "Payam be Majles-e Sugvari-e Minorsky, [Eulogy for Minorsky]" and "Darbareh-e Minorsky, [About Minorsky]" in *Maqalat-e Taqizadeh* [The Essays of Taqizadeh] (Tehran: Tus, 2014), 13: 375-9.

scholar working in the School of Oriental Studies was Walter Bruno Henning, a German expert in Middle Iranian languages and literature.¹³²⁶ Notably, among the famous students of Taqizadeh in the school was Ann Lambton, who later became a well-known orientalist and a Persian Studies Scholar. Writing about Taqizadeh, she states that Taqizadeh had come to London, carrying out a job which was beneath him. She describes the close relationship between Taqizadeh and his wife and writes of the warm family nest they had created together.¹³²⁷

Being in Britain during the war gave opportunity to Taqizadeh's brother-in-law, Hans Joachim von Young, to seek refuge in Britain. There is no evidence of the reason he left Germany. Since this happened in the early years of the war, one could speculate that he was a political refugee. Taqizadeh, in an attempt to help the case of his brother-in-law who was interned in Britain, wrote to the Iranian Minister in London, Mohammad Ali Moqaddam, requesting assistance for him.¹³²⁸ Taqizadeh was fully prepared to guarantee that his "brother-in-law, who is a bonafide refugee, will abide by all the rules and regulations." The Home Office's response was negative.¹³²⁹ This would appear to be an indication that Taqizadeh did not have as much influence with the British as some have suggested. Nevertheless, his brother-in-law was later able to remain in Britain and become naturalised.¹³³⁰

¹³²⁶ Taqizadeh who believed a good dictionary of Persian was needed convinced the Iranian government to provide funds for the compiling of an etymological vocabulary of the new Persian language. This publication, however, was never completed. There are a series of published letters between Taqizadeh and Henning. *Scholars and Humanists: Iranian Studies in W.B. Henning and S.H. Taqizadeh Correspondence 1937-1966*, eds. Iraj Afshar and Touraj Daryaei (Costa Mesa, Calif: Mazda Publishers, 2009).

¹³²⁷ Ann Lambton, "Remembering Seyyed Hasan Taqizadeh," in *Iran Nameh: Special Issue on Seyyed Hassan Taqizadeh* 21, no. 1-2 (2003), 109-11.

¹³²⁸ Mohammad Ali Moqaddam to Mr. Baggally, London, 27 May 1940, in *TNA*: FO 371/25244.

¹³²⁹ Baggally to Mohammad Ali Moqaddam, 4 July 1940, in *Ibid.*

¹³³⁰ Certificate of Naturalisation, Hans Joachim von Young, 24 January 1947, in *TNA*: HO 334/201.

January 6th 1935

My dear Sir Denison,

I have received your letter of 29th. december last and I thank you for the acceptance of my offer as well as for the kind words you said in the same letter for me. Immediately I have started to make preparations for my departure from Berlin. There was much to do and to liquidate, but I am glad to say that I am now almost ready to leave. I hope to leave Wednesday the 8th. or Thursday the 9th. and to arrive in London 10th. of January. I will call on you the next day and will be at your disposal. I do not need to say that I have much to learn about the ways and methods of the works there and must try to be acquainted with them. Therefore I hope I may count upon your friendly guidance in this

Figure 24: Taqizadeh's letter to Sir Denison Ross. Source: Taqizadeh's personnel file, SOAS, London

Private & Confidential

20th January 1935

Dear Sirs,

I find that Sayyid Hasan Taquzadeh is not altogether happy about the manner in which it is proposed that he should receive the money. He would greatly prefer to be able to say that he had received it from the School account, I think it will meet his wishes if the payments are made directly to myself at the dates already agreed upon and I can hand the sum over to him personally. He will then be able to say that he receives money from the Director and thus silence the curiosity of his friends. He is so anxious that what he receives should appear to be in payment for services rendered to the School.

I shall be glad to hear if you approve this arrangement.

Yours faithfully,

Director.

Messrs. Biddle, Thorne, Welsford
& Gait,
22, Aldermanbury, E.C.2.

W. Welsford

Mutspolman 2525

Parham

Bank ?

Figure 25: Letter concerning Taqizadeh's wish to receive monies directly from the Director of the School of Oriental Studies rather than unidentified sources, in order to "silence the curiosity of his friends". Source: Taqizadeh's personnel file, SOAS, London.

9:13 The Occupation of Iran by the Allies

The beginning of the Second World War with the rapid advances of the Germans had convinced the Iranian leadership, especially the Shah and the Crown Prince, that the Germans would eventually have the upper hand in the war. Reza Shah's amicable relationship with the Germans and the German experts busy working in different fields in Iran had made the British sceptical and worried that possibly in the future, with further victories of the Germans in the East, Iran would co-operate with the Germans.¹³³¹ Ignoring the neutrality policy of Iran, the British and Soviet Union troops in a joint operation invaded Iran on 25 August 1941. The Iranian army could not resist and the Allies occupied Iran. Reza Shah was forced to resign and leave Iran. The Allies agreed that the Crown Prince Mohammad Reza Pahlavi should become the new Shah. Foroughi became Prime Minister and Soheyli Foreign Minister. Soheyli, having had a good relationship with Taqizadeh previously, wrote to him asking him to accept the post of Iranian Minister in London. After some hesitation Taqizadeh accepted the post. After the coming of the Allies and disintegration of the Iranian army, confusion and rioting was widespread. The security and peace of the previous twenty years had come to an end and local unrest especially among the tribes was rife. As Abbas Amanat has described this period: "The opening of the public space came with new ideologies, ranging from Marxist-Leninist to ultranationalist and Islamic extremist. A dose of demagoguery, covert and overt foreign influences, proxy politics, and the re-emergence after a brief interlude of the royal court and the army in the political arena all led to an atmosphere of distrust and conspiracy".¹³³² Coming back to the political arena in this period made Taqizadeh more vulnerable to this atmosphere of suspicion.

The Minister in London

Taqizadeh after resignation from the Oriental school took up his post as the Iranian Minister in London. This was a key position since British forces had occupied Iran and the Iranian Minister needed to be a skilled politician in order to represent Iran well and defend Iranian rights in Britain. Taqizadeh was well known and respected among the British

¹³³¹ The Germans were not the only reason that Britain was dissatisfied with the Iranian government; oil disputes also played a big role in creating distrust between Britain and Iran. For more on this see: Touraj Atabaki "The Battle to Conquer the World's Oil Empire," (Forthcoming).

¹³³² Abbas Amanat, *Iran: A Modern History* (Yale University Press, 2017), 502.

politicians and this was one reason he was chosen for this post.¹³³³ Another reason was that Foroughi at this point was not keen for Taqizadeh to be in Tehran where he might act as a rival and preferred him to remain abroad.¹³³⁴

The British legation in Tehran was of the belief that Taqizadeh “by far was the best possible successor to Foroughi as Prime Minister”.¹³³⁵ But Taqizadeh avoided accepting the post, using his bad health as an excuse. Later when Soheyli had taken up the position of Iranian Prime Minister, Reader Bullard, the British Minister in Tehran, again referred to Taqizadeh as the Britain’s preferred choice for Prime Minister: “It is doubtful whether Soheyli will ever be able to manage the Majlis...I therefore think we should make one more effort to secure Taqizadeh as Prime Minister. He is the only man about whose qualifications we, Soviet Embassy, Shah and Persian people are all agreed”.¹³³⁶ Since Britain maintained a military presence in Iran, it would have been advantageous for them to be able to deal with a man more acquainted with British affairs and with whom they in turn were more familiar. Taqizadeh’s position in London, however, was still a benefit to the British government, as well as being Taqizadeh’s preferred position. There are some who have suggested that these events in particular support the suggestion that Taqizadeh was in some way working for the benefit of the British rather than for his own country and rumours abounded that he had a special relationship with Britain. However, a close examination of events from all perspectives and a close reading of remaining documents help to refute these suggestions.

A “confidential and private” letter sent from Taqizadeh to the Court Minister of the time and a close friend of his, Hossein ‘Ala’, makes it clear that Mohammad Reza Shah had twice requested Taqizadeh to return to Iran, once in the early winter of 1942 to accept the position of Prime Minister.¹³³⁷ A couple of months later this request was repeated by the

¹³³³ Ali Soheyli to Taqizadeh, telegram, without date, in *Nameh-hay-e Landan*, ed., Afshar, 262.

¹³³⁴ Baqer Kazemi to Taqizadeh, Tehran, 26 October 1941 in *Ibid.*, 411.

¹³³⁵ Reader Bullard to the British Foreign Office, February 1942 in Reader Bullard, *Letters from Tehran: A British Ambassador in World War II Persia* (London: I.B Tauris 1991), 115.

¹³³⁶ Reader Bullard to the British Foreign Office, March 1942 in *Ibid.*, 124.

¹³³⁷ Taqizadeh to Hossein ‘Ala’, London, 21 January 1943 in *Nameh-hay-e Landan*, ed., Afshar, 27- 35.

Shah but Taqizadeh declined once again.¹³³⁸ He was later also offered the position of Minister of Finance.¹³³⁹ On all occasions Taqizadeh rejected the offers. The reason Taqizadeh gave for his rejection was his poor health. Taqizadeh reveals to ‘Ala’ that he suffered from an embarrassing problem, urinary incontinence or the loss of bladder control and gives a comprehensive record of his illness which he had apparently suffered with for years. He stated that due to his poor health he was unable to travel. However, there are, in fact, two possible further reasons for his reticence about returning to Iran. Firstly, following the gaining of power and influence by the Tudeh Party in the country after the Russians had occupied parts of Iran and the growing criticism towards Taqizadeh himself due to his perceived position as an anglophile in particular after his signing of the 1933 agreement, it is likely that Taqizadeh felt he would be too much of an easy target for vilification if he returned. Secondly, and what can be understood from the content of his letter is that Taqizadeh was well aware of the fact that the governments in Iran during that period were unable to hold power for any length of time and, thus, the government of Iran was unstable and somewhat in flux. He knew that if he returned to Iran to take up a position, his position itself would, in fact, be unstable and that his position as Minister in London was a far more secure job and one which he would be able to maintain for a longer period. In the letter Taqizadeh considers this lack of stability a danger for the country and comments on the need for the central government to be strengthened. The most notable part of the letter is Taqizadeh’s warning that to allow a military man to take power “could lead to the worst of mischiefs” and advises that the first priority should be the securing of the foundations of constitutionalism and democracy. It is evident from the letter that, unlike in the aftermath of the Great War when many intellectuals and among them Taqizadeh had welcomed the idea of a military man coming to power to bring security to the country, now, in contrast, having experienced the dictatorship of Reza Shah, Taqizadeh had clearly had a change of heart and was eager to ensure that the constitution would not now be brushed aside by a military man. Although Taqizadeh was in favour of authoritarian modernity, his main focus

¹³³⁸ Taqizadeh, *Tufani*, 242.

¹³³⁹ According to Ali Amini, when Qavam al-Saltaneh was the Prime Minister, Taqizadeh who was in London was asked to accept the post of Finance Minister but he rejected it. Ali Amini, Interview recorded by Habib Ladjevardi, 3 December 1981, Paris, France, Tape 1. Harvard Library: Iranian Oral History Project, available online: <https://sds.lib.harvard.edu/sds/audio/460344575> (accessed 4 April, 2020).

remained on the positives of bringing modernisation to the country, a mindset he had had from his earliest political awakenings and which he had vehemently maintained throughout his life.

Whilst Taqizadeh held the position of Minister in London, most of his friends or former colleagues in key positions, such as Soheyli and 'Ala', sought advice from Taqizadeh. Taqizadeh deemed it necessary in his correspondence to them to mention points about certain topics that he thought were crucial for the improvement of the situation. Therefore, what we are able to read in his remaining letters from his time as Minister in London contains key points regarding his ideology, changes in or continuity in his ideas and refers to matters related to challenging issues in Iran at that time. One of these issues was language policy. Following the period of Reza Shah, a strict policy had been imposed, enforcing the use of Persian language to act as a backbone of the new state of Iran in the aftermath of the Great war. Other languages spoken in Iran such as Azeri or Kurdish were not given any official status. After the fall from power of Reza Shah, there had been a backlash to this hegemonic policy. The enforcement of a policy of Persian monolingualism on a national population whose mother tongues varied and the deprivation of the right to be educated in their own languages, had now, with the lack of a central government, put in danger the integrity of Iran as a unified nation.

In a letter, responding to the possible danger of Arab unity Taqizadeh writes extensively about his ideas concerning language policy and nationalism and is worthy of discussion at length. Taqizadeh believed that Arab unification was an absurd illusion in imitation of the pan-Germanism, pan-Slavism and pan-Turkism of the first part of the twentieth century and could not be actualised in Iran for two reasons. First, most Arabs residing in different regions were still not independent and secondly, they still followed a traditional lifestyle and were not so developed. Taqizadeh believed that essentially the unification of Arabs was not harmful for states neighbouring the Arab countries such as Iran. He opined that if these countries were able to throw off the domination of western Christian countries which had been exploiting them, this would benefit the other Islamic states. Furthermore, in future these countries, both Arab and non-Arab, could unite and defend their territories together.

In terms of the danger of the idea of Arab nationalism for the Arabic people of Iran, he believed that as long as the Arab countries, unlike the developed nations of Germany, Britain, Japan or China, had not fully embraced scientific developments and were in a state of ignorant “dissolution”, then there was no threat from them. However, he opined, if the Arab states should one day become more modernised, then nothing would prevent the Arabs in Iran from joining arms with their fellow Arabs outside the country. Taqizadeh goes on to suggest two ways to prevent this, according to him: one would be a criminal act and unacceptable, the other would be to face the issue and by paying the necessary attention to it, resolve any potential issues. The first is to become a monolingual nation by eradicating different cultures and languages, enforcing, even under the threat of death, those who are different to accept one language and culture. According to Taqizadeh, this was what had been done to the languages of the Ottoman Empire when Turkish had been imposed as the sole national language after the loss of a major part of its land. It had become evident that the two or three million Kurds living within modern Turkey’s borders spoke a different home language; Turkey’s forces suppressed the use of their Kurdish mother tongue with fire and steel, blood was shed and the issue had still not yet been resolved.¹³⁴⁰

Taqizadeh, as Minister of Iran in London, was responsible for regulating affairs between Iran and Britain. Due to the military presence of Britain and its occupation of Iran by the Allies, affairs between the two nations were wide-ranging and of high importance. Taqizadeh was responsible for overseeing the protracted dealings between the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, the Iranian government and the British government and many other economic and political affairs. Some of the remaining correspondence from the period he was working as the Iranian Minister in London indicate the vast number of wide-ranging issues which were referred to Taqizadeh and with which he had to deal.¹³⁴¹ Though based in London, Taqizadeh’s duties also involved dealing with the situation of the deposed Shah, Reza Shah, whilst also being expected by the new Shah, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, to

¹³⁴⁰ Taqizadeh, Letter to the Foreign Ministry, 8 June 1943 in *Nameh-e hay-e Landan*, 53-66.

¹³⁴¹ See: *Asnadi az Ravabet-e Iran va Englis*: 1320-1325 [Some Documents on Anglo-Iranian Relations: 1941-1945], ed., Behnaz Zarin Kelk, (Tehran: Sazman-e Asnad va Ketabkhaneh-e Melli Jomhori-e Eslami-e Iran, 2003).

facilitate contact between him and his father who had been exiled by the British.¹³⁴² Taqizadeh wrote that during his time as Minister in London he could save money and had quite an easy life; he could live rent-free; utilities were paid for and staff were at his disposal. However, his role as Minister in London was clearly politically a difficult one and one that came at a time of instability in Iranian politics and Anglo-Iranian relations in particular. Taqizadeh's failing health would not have made his job any easier. Whilst in London, there is also evidence that his ill health also affected other career opportunities for Taqizadeh. When the United Nations had been set up in San Francisco, Taqizadeh had been invited to head the Iranian delegation but had refused this position, again stating the reason to be ill health.

9:13 Northern Oil Concession and the Soviet Union

When the war was close to finishing in Europe, the Soviet government requested from the Iranian government Iran's northern oil concession in regions which were exempt from the southern oil concessions. Prior to the Russian request, the British and Americans had requested a similar concession. However, the Iranian Prime Minister, Mohammad S'aed, had rejected the requests under pressure from the nationalists in Iran who were in favour of the country's resources being assigned only by Iranians.¹³⁴³ Some preliminary investigations were undertaken in some oil-rich regions. Considering the importance of this request for Iran, S'aed decided to consult some senior Iranian statesmen: Taqizadeh, Ambassador of Iran in London, Hossein 'Ala', Ambassador to Washington and Mahmoud Jam the Iranian Ambassador in Cairo. They advised S'aed not to give any concessions until the end of the war.¹³⁴⁴ On 2 September, 1944 the cabinet held a meeting in which it was decided that until the global financial situation stabilised following the end of the war, the whole question of any oil concessions to any country should be suspended.¹³⁴⁵ Two weeks later a delegation headed by Sergey Kavtradze, Deputy Foreign Commissar of the Soviet

¹³⁴² Taqizadeh, *Tufani*, 312.

¹³⁴³ Albert Gates, "Stalin's Hand of Empire Reaching into Iran Oil Fields," in *Labor Action* 8, no. 47, (1944), 3. Accessed 4 April, 2020).
<https://www.marxists.org/history/etol/writers/glotzer/1944/11/iran2.htm>.

¹³⁴⁴ Mojtehed, 243.

¹³⁴⁵ Mohammad Sa'ed Maragheh, *Khaterat-e Siyasi-e Mohammad Sa'ed Maragheh* [Political Memoirs of Sa'ed Maragheh], ed., Baqer 'Aqeli (Tehran: Namak, 1994), 184.

Union arrived in Iran for negotiations regarding the northern oil fields.¹³⁴⁶ As soon as S'aed rejected the Russian proposal, the Russian press instigated a campaign against the rejection. The Russians criticised S'aed himself, accusing him and his government of supporting the fascists and opposing the Russians and the Allies. As representative of S'aed's government, Taqizadeh could not escape being tarred with the same brush.

Upon his return from London, Taqizadeh stayed in Iran from 23 September until 27 October 1944. While in Tehran, Taqizadeh was interviewed by the press. He commented that while in Britain he had only witnessed benevolence from the British politicians and that the independence of Iran was in line with British interests. This interview made the Tudeh Party leaders, who were suspicious about Britain, furious. From then on, the Tudeh Party's attacks on Taqizadeh increased.¹³⁴⁷ Taqizadeh came under attack in Tudeh Party meetings throughout the country. In many of these meetings, he was critically referred to as a spokesman of the British imperialist government.¹³⁴⁸ In one meeting he was accused of being a corrupt oil dealer.¹³⁴⁹ He was also accused of receiving payment from Britain.¹³⁵⁰ In another Party meeting, he was called a traitor to his own country.¹³⁵¹ Fereydoon Tavallali, member of the Shiraz Tudeh Party and later a famous poet who wrote for the Tudeh Party publications, called Taqizadeh "Abolfased Taqizadeh-e Landani". [Taqizadeh of London, father of all corruption]¹³⁵²

Many of these verbal attacks also stemmed from the role Taqizadeh later played defending the integrity of Iran when he was involved in the events surrounding the formation of the autonomous government of Azerbaijan which was backed by the Soviet Union. Taqizadeh's involvement in the conflict with the Soviet Union over Azerbaijan

¹³⁴⁶ Sa'ed Maraghei, 182.

¹³⁴⁷ Fereydoon Tavallali, *al-Tafasil* [Details] (Shiraz: Kanoun Tarbiat, 1969), 14.

¹³⁴⁸ The weekly Talk of the Tudeh Party and Labour Union in Kermanshah, 5 July 1946 in *Asnad-e Ahzab-e Siyasi-e Iran: Hezb-e Tudeh-e Iran* [The Documents of the Political Parties of Iran: The Tudeh Party of Iran], ed., Behrooz Tairani (Tehran: Sazman-e Asnad va Ketabkhaneh-e Melli-e Jomhori-e Eslami-e Iran, 2005), 829.

¹³⁴⁹ Talk in the Tudeh Party Club in Rasht, 8 February 1946 in *Ibid.*, 918.

¹³⁵⁰ Talk in the Tudeh Party Club in Rasht, 8 April 1946 in *Ibid.*, 926.

¹³⁵¹ Talk in The Tudeh Party Gathering in Malayer, 9 February 1946, in *Ibid.*, 1317.

¹³⁵² Fereydoon Tavallali, *Altafasil* [Details] (Shiraz: Kanun-e Tarbiat, 1969), 14.

which was referred to the Security Council of the United Nations could be considered one of the most significant political activities he played a part in.

9:14 Events in Azerbaijan

On May 1945, World War II came to an end in Europe with victory for the Allied Forces. Iranians, happy with this outcome, were now expecting that the Allies would withdraw their forces from Iran. According to the agreement Iran had with the Allies, after the war ended, the Allies were to withdraw their troops from Iran within six months. On 19 May 1945 the Iranian government sent a letter to the Russian Embassy in Tehran stating that now the war had ended, the presence of the Soviet army in Iran was not necessary and requested that their armed forces leave the country. Letters with a similar request were also sent to the British and United States Embassies.¹³⁵³ Despite the Iranian government request, whilst the British and United States' forces left Iran, the Soviet army continued to maintain a presence in the country and postponed the pulling out of its troops.

To continue to maintain its hold on Iranian Azerbaijan, the Soviet Union, in November 1945, supported the establishment of "Azerbaijan Milli Hokomati" [The National Government of Azerbaijan] with Ja'far Pishevari as its Prime Minister and leading figure. Pishevari was a communist from Iranian Azerbaijan who was arrested during the Reza Shah period and spent ten years in prison. Pishevari began launching reforms in Azerbaijan and ousted the officials of the central government. They disarmed the central government forces and the Gendarmarie and formed their own military force, spreading their influence throughout Azerbaijan. They set up a new judiciary system, launched land reforms and demanded taxes without approval of the central government in Tehran and the ratification of the Iranian Parliament.¹³⁵⁴ This caused a crisis in Iran and was considered a threat to the national integrity of Iran. Hakim al-Molk (Ebrahim Hakimi) the Prime Minister at the time gave a speech in the Parliament and declared that he would not allow the separation of one part of the country. This was while the Iranian government could not deploy any troops to Azerbaijan because of the presence of Soviet Union troops in that region. When the

¹³⁵³ Jamil Hassanli, *Azerbaijan-e Iran, Aghaz-e Jang-e Sard* [The Iranian Azerbaijan: Beginning of the Cold War] (Tehran: Tirazheh, 2008), 95.

¹³⁵⁴ For more about the Autonomous Government of Azerbaijan see: Atabaki, *Azerbaijan*.

Iranians decided to send troops, the Soviets prevented them from entering Azerbaijan. In Tehran the pro-Soviet Union Tudeh Party was putting pressure on the government in support of the Soviet Union's policies. The Iranian government had no choice but to take its complaint to the newly founded United Nations. The crisis of Azerbaijan was going to be the first confrontation between the Western bloc and the Soviet Union.

The United Nation was to hold its first session in London in January 1946. It was decided that any matters to be discussed had to be submitted prior to the formal proceedings. Hakimi, the Prime Minister, had asked Taqizadeh to prepare the Iranian complaint but the British were against the idea of Iran submitting the matter to the United Nations, considering the matter too serious to be dealt with in the newly founded organisation. According to Taqizadeh, they argued that this case could break the back of the incipient United Nation and the British Foreign Minister had personally requested that this complaint not be handed in.¹³⁵⁵ However, Taqizadeh at this time asked for advice from several western diplomats and the complaint was finally taken to the Security Council instead of the General Assembly of the United Nations. The complaint was submitted allowing Taqizadeh the opportunity to discuss in detail the Russian invasion and the reason for the complaint. This caught the attention of the world's press and was considered a momentous session for the United Nations and a test for the new organisation.¹³⁵⁶ Following many debates between Taqizadeh and Andrey Vyshinsky, the Russian representative, it was agreed that the two nations should discuss the matter and bring the matter to the Security Council if it was not resolved.¹³⁵⁷

On 19 February 1946, Qavam al-Saltaneh, the Iranian Prime Minister, travelled to Moscow. After two weeks stay in the Soviet Union and several negotiations with Stalin and the Russian Foreign Minister, Vyacheslav Molotov, he returned to Iran. The main focus

¹³⁵⁵ Taqizadeh, *Tufani*, 234.

¹³⁵⁶ "Test for Charter: Persia's Complaint Before Security Council," in *The West Australian*, January 30, 1946.

¹³⁵⁷ To watch Taqizadeh's first appearance in the United Nations, see: <https://www.unmultimedia.org/avlibrary/asset/2082/2082439/>. The General Assembly opens the general discussion on the Report of the Preparatory Commission. Delegates make general remarks on the aims and ideals of the United Nations. 7th, 8th, and 9th Plenary Meetings of General Assembly: 1st Session.

of the negotiations there was the pulling out of Soviet forces from Azerbaijan. Stalin, however, had stipulated one condition; that the oil concession from northern Iran should go to the Russians. After the return of Qavam, the Soviet Ambassador in Iran pushed constantly for Iran to accept that condition and agree to the Soviets having the northern oil concession. Qavam, however, postponed any acceptance. With the support of the United States and Britain, Iran referred the case to the newly established Security Council of the United Nations again. Hossein 'Ala', the Iranian Ambassador in Washington, and Taqizadeh in London were both instructed to follow the case. After a while the Russian army withdrew its troops and shortly after, in late November 1946, the Iranian army launched its final attack against Azerbaijan and ended the one year rule of the National Government of Azerbaijan. According to Taqizadeh, the Americans played a major role in forcing the Soviets to leave Azerbaijan.¹³⁵⁸ As the crisis ended, the propaganda of the pro-Soviet activists against Taqizadeh increased because of the role he had played against the Soviet Union.

Anvar Khamaei writes that since public opinion considered Taqizadeh an anglophile, his failure in the negotiations was seen as the defeat of the policy of Britain in Iran.¹³⁵⁹ As Khalil Maleki reflects in his memoirs, it was considered necessary to oppose Taqizadeh and slander him in the leftist publications and meetings not because he was a reactionary character but simply because he was making critical remarks from London about the Soviet policies in Iran.¹³⁶⁰

9:15 Return to Iran from London and Membership in the Parliament

The period of the Fourteenth Parliament came to an end on 12 March, 1946. The Parliament was suspended for a period of about 16 months until the Fifteenth Parliament convened. During this period Qavam acted as Prime Minister. The order for elections was announced on 16 December 1946 immediately after the Democrat government of Azerbaijan came to an end and the central government took control of the province. The

¹³⁵⁸ Taqizadeh, *Tufani*, 239.

¹³⁵⁹ Anvar Khamaei, *Khaterat-e Siyasi* [Political Memoirs] (Tehran, Gofar, 1993), 460.

¹³⁶⁰ Khalil Maleki, *Khaterat-e Siyasi-e Khalil Maleki* [Khalil Maleki's Political Memoirs] (Tehran: Enteshar, 1989), 336. For a comprehensive account of Maleki's activities see: Atabaki, *Azerbaijan*, 71-98.

elections were supervised by the Iranian Democrat Party which Qavam al-Saltaneh had established. However, in Azerbaijan province most of the candidates were independent, among them Taqizadeh.¹³⁶¹ Taqizadeh in particular had gained popularity in Azerbaijan after his role in presenting the case of Iran in the United Nations and returning the province to Iran. Taqizadeh in his autobiography about this period writes:

Qavam al-Saltaneh had complete power, like a king. I was elected to parliament from Tabriz. Qavam al-Saltaneh did not want me to return to Iran because he had made everyone obey him. In his own words he did not want anyone in Iran more powerful than himself. Despite the fact that a law exists that no-one (government employees, diplomatic posts officials) could hold a position for more than five years, I was able to retain my position after the five-year period and even for six years. When I was elected, Qavam al-Saltaneh had discussed in a cabinet meeting that the law would be cancelled and a new one passed stipulating that it was now legal to remain in the post for ten years. But I said whatever the law, I am setting out to return, the people of Tabriz have elected me with enthusiasm and devotion....¹³⁶²

Qavam al-Saltaneh tried hard to prevent or delay the opening of the Parliament although most of its members had been elected in the winter. However, he eventually could delay no longer and the Parliament was opened with the Shah's speech on 16 July, 1947. In the summer of 1947, Taqizadeh was elected as the Member of Parliament from Tabriz and, after spending a couple of months in Switzerland, arrived in Tehran early autumn of that year and entered the Parliament.¹³⁶³ He was returning to Iran after an absence of nearly fourteen years. Taqizadeh was not a member of parliament after the Sixth Parliament, and

¹³⁶¹ Sa'ed Maraghei, 237.

¹³⁶² Taqizadeh, *Tufani*, 243.

¹³⁶³ Mohsen Ra'is who replaced Taqizadeh was born in 1895 in Tehran and was educated in Iran and France. He worked for the foreign ministry from 1919 and from 1935 represented Iran in various posts in Europe. Before being appointed as Taqizadeh's successor, he was the Iranian Minister in Baghdad. Ra'is was recommended to the British officials as a very agreeable man who spoke good French. The British Foreign Ministry deemed him suitable for the position in London. Taqizadeh himself considered Ra'is to be one of the top men in the Iranian diplomatic service. Sir N. Butler August 1947, 1947, FO 371/62049.

it was during this period that the drama began with the British-Iranian Oil Company, which eventually led to the nationalisation of oil. Upon his return, Taqizadeh entered a space and environment that had changed completely from that he had previously experienced. The political climate was tense and hostile, extremist left and right factions were lined up and more newspapers and media were in the hands of the opposition. Taqizadeh found himself in a difficult position; he was struggling to find a place he fit into in the current political policies of groups within the powerful political parties.

In the Fifteenth Parliament many of the member's credentials were disputed and among them Taqizadeh's. The person who strongly opposed Taqizadeh's credentials was Abbas Eskandari, a member of the Democrat Party and loyal to Qavam al-Saltaneh. According to Mohammad Sa'ed, Eskandari was very knowledgeable, was the best speaker of the Parliament and by himself could answer the whole Parliament.¹³⁶⁴ In order to besmerch Taqizadeh's name, he used the Oil Agreement of 1933 against Taqizadeh and vehemently attacked him. Abbas Masoudi, a supporter of Taqizadeh, defended him and exonerated him from the accusations. In the end, Reza Zadeh Shafaq proposed that Taqizadeh's personal qualifications and his votes in the election be considered and that Taqizadeh should be allowed to reply about the agreement later upon his return. With this solution, Taqizadeh's credentials were approved. When Taqizadeh later attended the Parliament, he gave a comprehensive response to the Parliament concerning the issue of the agreement.¹³⁶⁵ On 27 January, during a debate with Abbas Eskandari, Taqizadeh delivered his famous speech about the Oil Agreement of 1933. Taqizadeh explained that he wished to explain the true facts about the oil concession. He praised Reza Shah's patriotism but also blamed him for the outcome. He noted that Reza Shah had suddenly cancelled the old concession, had involved himself directly in the negotiations and had given in to last minute pressure from the company to grant an extension of the concession. "No one," said Taqizadeh, "could stand against the will of the Almighty Ruler-there was no alternative and no one could foresee what the League of Nations' award would have been had the case been referred once again to that authority". He went on to say that he had played no part in the matter

¹³⁶⁴ Sa'ed Maraghei, 238.

¹³⁶⁵ Ibid,

except to sign and that if he himself had refused to sign, someone else would have done so in his place.¹³⁶⁶

This speech was quite unexpected and caused a public outcry. What Taqizadeh had said was referred to during the later movement of the nationalisation of oil in order to justify that the agreement was signed under duress and was thus not valid.¹³⁶⁷ Taqizadeh's admittance that he had signed an agreement under duress is unusual in Iranian contemporary history and many have praised his bravery and candour.

Events in the Parliament, Taqizadeh's speech and the refusal to hand over the northern oil concessions to the Soviets provided grounds for a demand for a better deal with the British. The Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOP) had full control over the oil-rich fields in the south of Iran. The Tudeh Party was also galvanising its supporters to demand the cancellation of the 1933 Oil Agreement. The Iranian nationalists were adamant that they wanted a renegotiation of the 1933 agreement and nationalisation of Iranian oil. The anti-colonialist atmosphere of the time was also a catalyst. In the Parliament under the leadership of Mohammad Mosaddeq, Taqizadeh's speech encouraged both the nationalists and leftists to demand the nationalisation of oil. On 4 February, the Shah was shot and wounded in an unsuccessful assassination attempt only one day after two thousand students had marched in front of the Parliament and demanded the cancellation of the Anglo-Iranian oil concession. "The students scattered leaflets charging that the concession had been renewed under duress. They demanded the trial of officials responsible for renewing the concession".¹³⁶⁸ It was presumed that the assassination attempt had been carried out by a Tudeh Party sympathiser and so the Tudeh Party was declared illegal by the Shah and some of its leadership were arrested. The Shah used the opportunity to demand the revision of the Constitution, asking to be granted the power to dissolve the Parliament. In July 1949

¹³⁶⁶ From Tehran to Foreign Office, 31 January 1949 in *The Qatar Digital Library*: Ext 5000/47(2), "Persian Situation: Miscellaneous Reports," IOR/L/PS/12/1224, available online: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100054528044.0x000016 (accessed 8 April, 2020).

¹³⁶⁷ Anvar Khamaei, 713.

¹³⁶⁸ *The United Press*, February 5, 1949 in <https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/library/world/mideast/020549iran-assassin.html>, (accessed 8 April, 2020).

a hasty Constituent Assembly was formed and some amendments to the Constitution were made. The right to dissolve the Parliament was granted to the Shah. Commenting on that, Taqizadeh agreed with the Shah being granted this authority although he was not fully convinced about the matter.¹³⁶⁹ It is difficult to imagine that someone who had worked so hard for constitutionalism since the First Parliament would be easily satisfied with restrictions being placed on the power of the Parliament. The Shah sought advice from Taqizadeh but Taqizadeh writes that he was hesitant about this right being granted to the Shah.¹³⁷⁰ In order to restrict the power of the Parliament, the Shah also insisted on the opening of the Senate.

9:16 The Senate

When according to the constitutional law, the senate was formed on 9 February 1950, Taqizadeh was one of its elected members and was appointed as Speaker of the Senate. According to the Constitution, the Senate had the power to dissolve the Parliament (Majles). This was one of the main reasons the First Parliament and later parliaments had been reluctant to form a senate. According to Article 48 of the constitutional law, the only way that the Parliament could be dissolved was by two-thirds of the Senate members voting for it. Without a senate, no power could legally dissolve the Parliament and, in the absence of the Senate, whatever the Parliament approved would legally become law once the Shah had signed it.¹³⁷¹ Article 43 stipulated the number of members as 60. Article 45 declared that 30 of the members should be chosen by the Shah, 15 from Tehran, 15 from the provinces and the remaining 30 by the people, similarly 15 from Tehran and 15 from the provinces. The members could sit in the Senate for a maximum of two years.¹³⁷²

Taqizadeh was the Speaker of the Senate for about seven years, resigning from this post on 15 April, 1957. Taqizadeh was popular and well-respected among the senators. Unlike his earlier time in the First Parliament, he displayed a moderate stance in the Senate and put

¹³⁶⁹ Amanat, *Iran: A Modern History*, 657.

¹³⁷⁰ Taqizadeh, *Tufani*, 247.

¹³⁷¹ With the constitutional amendment of 1949 the Shah had gained the right to cancel the Parliament without referring to the Senate.

¹³⁷² The Senate convened for seven periods before it was finally closed down following the 1979 Revolution.

effort into encouraging co-operation between the Parliament and the government. His time in the Senate was a turbulent time in Iran. In the election of the Sixteenth Parliament Abd al-Hossein Hajir, the Court Minister of the Shah, was assassinated by a member of an extreme Islamic group and the elections in Tehran were cancelled. In the second round of elections Mosaddeq and his supporters were elected. Discussions over the nationalisation of oil were heated. Following some unstable governments, General Razmara as Prime Minister was also assassinated. Finally, Mosaddeq became Prime Minister and nationalised oil. The Senate approved the Parliament without debate on 20 March, 1951. Mosaddeq disliked Taqizadeh and had attacked him after his signing of the 1933 Oil Agreement. As a result, Taqizadeh gave up the Speaker's Chair when Mosaddeq came to the Senate and was replaced by one of his deputies.¹³⁷³

Mosaddeq, unhappy with the Senate, convinced the Parliament (Majles) to dissolve it. Taqizadeh remained at home following the dissolution of the Senate. After the coup d'état against Mosaddeq on 19 August 1953, Taqizadeh was elected to the Second Senate from Azerbaijan, continuing as a member until 15 April 1957. At the end of his career in the Senate Taqizadeh became dissatisfied with his position due to differences of opinion between him and 'Alam over such issues as human rights and the practice of torture and the exemption from tax of military personnel.¹³⁷⁴ The Shah wanted military personnel to be exempt from tax and insisted that this should be approved by the Senate. The Senate blocked the law and the press, influenced by the secret police, began to criticise the Senate. When Taqizadeh and other senators approached the Shah to express their opinion against the passing of the law, the Shah spoke forcefully against them. Taqizadeh's response to the Shah was to stress the point that although the Senate would support the Shah, if the Senate believed it was not in the best interests of the country, it would not simply pass any law that the Shah wanted. According to Taqizadeh, the Shah was put in a rather difficult position. However, the bill was eventually passed, despite the opposition of Taqizadeh and others in the Senate.¹³⁷⁵ As evidenced by Taqizadeh's tone in his autobiography, this must have been a bitter pill for Taqizadeh to swallow; he had fought hard for a restriction on the

¹³⁷³ Mojtehedī, 288-92

¹³⁷⁴ Taqizadeh, *Tufani*, 269.

¹³⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 271-2.

powers of the monarchy and yet here was a clear example of the continuing marginalisation of constitutionalism.

9:17 The Senate Library

One of Taqizadeh's accomplishments as Speaker of the Senate was the establishment of a specialised library for the Senate. Taqizadeh, a true book lover, asked Abbas Zaryab Khoei whom he had met in the library of the Parliament when he was a member of the Fourteenth Parliament to become the first manager and to organise the Senate library.¹³⁷⁶ The budget of the library was initially maintained from assigning to it the fine every senator had to pay if he was late for a parliamentary session. If a Senator was one hour late, a day's salary would be cut and would be assigned for buying books. Later the Senate also assigned a budget for the library. The books were chosen in line with Taqizadeh's interests; mainly history and literature of Iran and Islamic civilisation. The senators were critical of this and believed the books of the Senate should be more focussed on law.¹³⁷⁷ Taqizadeh wanted this library to be for the use of top-level researchers only and did not want to publicise it too much.¹³⁷⁸ Taqizadeh had had a library at his home in Germany whilst publishing *Kaveh* and books from there were given to the Senate library. Zeki Velidi Togan, a well-known Turkish scholar and historian who had visited Taqizadeh and his wife in Germany and had kept in contact with Taqizadeh in later years, writes, "In their home on Leibniz Strasse, Taqizade[h] had an excellent library. This library from which I had borrowed books and benefited is today a part of the Iranian Senate Library in which he is also a member."¹³⁷⁹

9:18 Taqizadeh and Freemasonry

As mentioned in Chapter Four, from his first exile Taqizadeh had formed strong ties with some European politicians. This deepened his sense of belonging to an international community and encouraged his views that history was moving in the direction of progress,

¹³⁷⁶ Taqizadeh had a high opinion of Zaryab and recommended that he should receive a bursary to study in Germany.

¹³⁷⁷ Gholam Hossein Mirza Saleh, ed. *Goftogou ba Dr. Abbas Zaryab Khoei* [Interview with Dr. Abbas Zaryab Khoei] (Tehran: Farzan, 2002), 6.

¹³⁷⁸ Homa Afraseyabi "Mosahebeh ba Keykavos Jahandari [Interview with Keykavos Jahandari]," in *Payam-e Bahrestan* 2, no. 19 and 20, (2003), 11-6.

¹³⁷⁹ Ahmet Zeki Velidi Togan, *Memoirs: National Existence and Cultural Struggles of Turkistan and Other Muslim Eastern Turks* (North Charleston: CreateSpace, 2012), 439.

and that people of all nations should work in unity in order to further this progress. Two of the intellectuals who had a strong influence on Taqizadeh, Jamal-Din Asadabadi (Afghani) and Malkam Khan were practising freemasons and this may explain the fact that during his exiled period in Europe, Taqizadeh joined a masonic lodge. He may also have had some affiliations with Lozh-e Bidari-e Iraniyan [Awakening Iranian Lodge] before moving to Europe. We do not know exactly of which Lodge Taqizadeh became a member when he first went to Europe in 1908, but as the sources about freemasonry in Iran state, later in life Taqizadeh was a member of the German Lodge in Iran. According to Taqizadeh's file held by the Iranian secret police (SAVAK), Taqizadeh together with six other freemasons: Abdollah Endezam, Hossein 'Ala', Taqi Eskandani, Abol Hassan Hakimi and Dr. Theodor Vögel had established a club in Iran. This club corresponded with the United Grand Lodge of Germany and had persuaded them to give permission for the Iranians to open a branch of that lodge in Iran. The first lodge's name was "Mehr" [Affection]. Later, another lodge under the name of "Aftab" [Sun] was established, followed by a number of other lodges including "Setareh Sahar" [Morning Star] and "Nahid" [Venus]. According to the file on Taqizadeh in SAVAK, Taqizadeh was one of the key directors of these lodges. Later the lodges with which Taqizadeh's name was affiliated severed ties with international freemasonry lodges and established the Grand Lodge of Iran. Taqizadeh's name is mentioned among the leaders of the independent Grand Lodge of Iran.¹³⁸⁰

Esma'il Ra'in has presented Taqizadeh as one of oldest freemasons in Iran. He also claims that Taqizadeh had commented to him that all the regulations and administration system of the Iranian Parliament were copied from that of freemasonry lodges.¹³⁸¹ Ra'in even relates that the writing of a supplementary law to the Constitution was orchestrated by freemasons, Taqizadeh among them.¹³⁸² These kinds of claims attempt to mar Taqizadeh's image as an independent politician and constitutionalist and intellectual and instead paint him as an obedient member of a freemasonry lodge. In his published book

¹³⁸⁰ Iran's National Organization for Security and Intelligence (SAVAK) file on Taqizadeh in *Rejal-e Asr-e Pahlavi be Revayat-e Asnad-e SAVAK: Seyyed Hassan Taqizadeh* [The Statesmen of the Pahlavi Era based on SAVAK Documents: Seyyed Hassan Taqizadeh] (Tehran: Markaz-e Barresi-e Asnad-e Tarikhi-e Vezarat-e Ettela'at, 2004), 131-2.

¹³⁸¹ Ra'in, *Faramushkhaneh va Framasonery dar Iran*, 190.

¹³⁸² *Ibid.*, 197.

about freemasonry, Ra'in described nearly all the statesmen of the constitutional time as freemasons. Some believe that Ra'in was supported by Asadollah 'Alam, an ambitious politician who wanted to paint a picture of the older generation of politicians as being corrupt foreign agents who were responsible for the existing corruption in order to pave the way for himself and other younger up-and-coming politicians.¹³⁸³

Writing in his diaries, 'Alam does not hide his strong dislike of Taqizadeh. He describes him as an "extremely sinister person and an obedient servant of St James's Court and one of the main supporters of freemasonry in Iran." He expresses his anger about what Taqizadeh had said about his role in the Oil Agreement of 1933 and the fact that he had referred to the period of Reza Shah's leadership as a dictatorship.¹³⁸⁴ This opinion is particularly interesting because at the time of his writing 'Alam was very close to the Shah.¹³⁸⁵

Although Taqizadeh was indeed involved in freemasonry, a close inspection of his life proves that what he advocated in his political life was based on his own knowledge and experience and his deep understanding of the position of Iran on a global stage, rather than on any connection to freemasonry. Nevertheless, the critical accusations regarding his involvement in freemasonry had a deeply negative effect on his popularity among the ordinary people and even in the eyes of some intellectuals his image was tainted.¹³⁸⁶

9:19 Lectures at Colombia University

In the October of 1957, Taqizadeh was invited to Columbia University in the United States of America. He was received warmly and the news of his trip to the United States appeared in major newspapers. *Columbia Daily Spectator* described him as "equivalent of

¹³⁸³ Ebrahim Zolfaghari, *Qeseh-e Hoveyda* [The Story of Hoveyda] (Mo'seseh-e Motale'at va Pazhoesh-hay-e Siyasi, 2007), 239-53.

¹³⁸⁴ Asadollah 'Alam, *Yaddasht-hay-e 'Alam* [Notes of 'Alam], Alinaqi 'Alikhani, ed. (Tehran: Ketabsara, 2001), 1: 369.

¹³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 6: 243.

¹³⁸⁶ The idea, propagated by some, that freemasonry had strong influence on contemporary Iranian history, is still a contentious issue. Taqizadeh's name is often linked to this alternative and controversial reading of this period of Iranian historiography. One of the most recent publications which explores this issue from a similar perspective is: Hossein Maleki *Naqshe-e Framasonha dar Tarikh-e Moaser-e Iran* [The Role of Freemasons in Iranian Contemporary History] (Tehran: Eshareh, 2008).

Senator Lyndon Johnson”.¹³⁸⁷ He was joining the university “as Adjust Professor in the Near and Middle East Institute”¹³⁸⁸ and was to participate “in two of the institute’s seminars, as well as advising students on Iranian affairs” for a semester.¹³⁸⁹ According to *The New York Times*, his talks, for only faculty members, dealt “with problems connected with the westernization of India, Pakistan, Iran and neighboring countries”.¹³⁹⁰ He also gave a lecture about the ancient Iranian prophet, Mani, and presented three lectures on “The History of Modern Iran”.¹³⁹¹ According to Mojtehedī, students assuming that the speaker of the Iranian Senate wanted only to praise the “current situation”, did not appear in large numbers to listen to Taqizadeh speak. Realising this misconception, Taqizadeh declared that he would speak only the truth. His later talks were attended by much larger numbers.¹³⁹² Taqizadeh stayed about seven months in the United States, towards the end of which, by official invitation of the United States’ government, he travelled to different states. He was received in Princeton University, Harvard and Yale Universities where he participated in discussions.¹³⁹³ In the political circles of Iran, it was rumoured that Taqizadeh had been invited by the American officials so that he could be consulted about Iranian affairs.¹³⁹⁴ In Washington Richard Nixon, the vice-president at the time, welcomed Taqizadeh warmly. Nixon, who had been in Iran before and who had been welcomed by the Iranian Senate, organised a visit of the United States’ Senate for Taqizadeh. Taqizadeh was introduced to the Senate by the leader of the Republicans in the Senate and was cordially welcomed.¹³⁹⁵ Taqizadeh was 79 years old at this time.

9:20 Taqizadeh in Old Age

Invitations for Taqizadeh to share his experience and knowledge continued even into his old age; he was clearly well-respected by many and invited to present and participate

¹³⁸⁷ *Columbia Daily Spectator*, October 23, 1957.

¹³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹⁰ “Iranian Conducting Two Seminars Here,” in *The New York Times*, October 27, 1957.

¹³⁹¹ Taqizadeh, “The History of Modern Iran: Lectures Given in Colombia University,” in *Maqalat-e Taqizadeh*, 8: 195-256.

¹³⁹² Mojtehedī, 299-300.

¹³⁹³ Hassan Taqizadeh, “Sargozasht [Life Story],” in *Yadnameh*, ed., Yaghmaei, 296-7.

¹³⁹⁴ Iran’s National Organization for Security and Intelligence (SAVAK) file on Taqizadeh, 6 February 1958 in *Rejal-e Asr-e Pahlavi be Revayat-e Asnad-e SAVAK*, 73.

¹³⁹⁵ *Ettela’at*, February 13, 1958.

in international cultural events. He headed the Iranian delegations at international congresses, including the Twenty-third International Congress of Orientalists in Cambridge in 1954 and the Munich International Congress of Orientalists in 1957.¹³⁹⁶ In the summer of 1962, colleagues and friends of Taqizadeh published a series of articles in the field of Iranian Studies and dedicated it to Taqizadeh. The book was presented to him in a ceremony at Cambridge University.¹³⁹⁷

Nevertheless, although it might be assumed that Taqizadeh had a peaceful and comfortable old age, remaining documents reveal that he experienced financial difficulties which led to him, unwillingly according to him, having to accept a job in the Senate.¹³⁹⁸ At the age of seventy-seven, in a letter to Jamalzadeh who had presumably advised Taqizadeh that it was perhaps the time to quit politics, Taqizadeh writes some lines which express his deep unhappiness about his financial situation. He states that working in the Senate was pointless drudgery and a job he had only accepted because he needed money to make ends meet. He continues that every morning he considers quitting the job and would not stay “even one hour in this kind of job” if he was not married and was not responsible for his wife. He mentions he would prefer any other non-political job even one that was less well-paid. He then describes his “eternal suffering” and wishes his life would soon end.¹³⁹⁹ He was also worried that he would have no pension since he had never been officially employed by the government. Taqizadeh clearly felt at this age that he was no longer of any use and had no power to influence the political situation that he was clearly unhappy with. Only nine years after his death, the Revolution of 1979 would prove what he had feared; that the political situation of the country was not heading in the direction he had hoped it would. The secular government based on a constitution he had fought so hard for was replaced by a religious autocracy.

¹³⁹⁶ Mojtehedī, 300.

¹³⁹⁷ *A locust's leg: Studies in Honour of S. H. Taqizadeh*, eds. Walter Bruno Henning, Ehsan Yar-Shater (London: Percy Lund, Humphries & Co., 1962).

¹³⁹⁸ For more about Taqizadeh's financial problems see: Hossein Pourbagheri, “Parishani-hay-e Mali-e Taqizadeh [Taqizadeh's Financial Difficulties],” in *Ghorub* 1, no. 4, (2017), 212-5.

¹³⁹⁹ Taqizadeh to Jamalzadeh, 21 January 1955, in *TINA*: 280000033.