

ENCIRCLING IRAN

ANCIENT IMPERIAL RIVALRIES

The Iranian position in global geo-politics gives them every reason to be angry with the way the US Empire treats them. The Iranians had an Empire that dominated the Ancient World when the USA did not exist. The Roman position in Israel in Jesus' time was vitally important because of the Iranian (Parthian) threat to their Eastern empire (1). Today all Iran's traditional geo-political rivals - Russia, India, Israel and the major external imperial power - once Britain and now the USA - all have nuclear weapons to remind the Iranians where imperial power now resides. The Iranians remember - if we forget - that they were invaded or attacked with the collusion of the Western powers four times in the twentieth century. Puppet regimes in 1909, 1921 and 1953 were the obvious result. Despite the twenty fifth anniversary of the CIA aided coup being in 2008 which was ignored in the mainstream media, US imperial strategists are well aware that Iran is pivotal in the Middle East. With a history as ancient and as proud as Egypt, Iran is the major oil producer of the area with a large population (70 million). Iran has also come to symbolise the revolutionary possibilities and contradictions for an oil enclave economy. Before the 'Islamic Revolution' in 1979 an ancient Empire had become a dependent peripheral economy. Its twentieth century history and politics are more akin to the revolutions and wars of Algeria, Egypt or Iraq. Yet Iran is the world's fourth largest producer of crude oil and has the second largest proven natural gas reserves. With the second largest output in the Middle East it is the countervailing force to Saudi Arabia.

If the experts do know, the Western public are not likely to know Iran's ancient imperial history. In the US in particular they do not even know their own recent history in Iran. We may have forgotten – the peoples in the area have not. They will remember that conquest pretends to be liberation. Those being threatened with conquest are not fooled. If the Pentagon did not know, the State Department should have known after 10 minutes study - that even the semblance of a more democratic Iraq would mean the equivalent of an Iraqi Kurdish State and a Shia dominated Iraq. This would automatically mean more potential power to a Shia Iran. For this reason, Iran would need to be reminded by the USA that if she gained more power via her sister Shia, she would be hedged all round by the US. The process of encircling Russia between 1945-89 is now at work by the US on Iran. Besides the CIA intervention in 1953-4, it was followed by a further campaign using Iraq in the wars after the 'revolution' of 1979. The campaign against Iran has reached new heights since the invasion of Iraq in 2003. It is easy to forget the Iranians helped the US against the Taliban in Afghanistan. Besides not liking the Taliban regime, anything that reduced either Saudi or Pakistan's power would also please the Iranians. They were amazed when in 2002 George II included Iran in the 'axis of evil'. The US foreign policy establishment were already planning for the invasion of Iraq - and its obvious implications for the Shia. After the early 'victory' in Iraq, in 2003 the Iranians offered negotiations on all issues - including support for Hamas and Hizbollah, and going nuclear. President Ahmadinejad tried again in 2006. The US did not reply. They saw Iranian weakness. Looking at Iranian history, we shall see that such imperialists do not want negotiations with powerful States, but vassals who do their bidding.

OIL PAWN ON THE IMPERIAL CHESSBOARD

The modern history of Iran is driven by double dealing and imperial ambition. Both the Russian and British Empires had been operating a pincer movement on Iran – the Russians from the North and the British from India since the late eighteenth century. By 1900 if the British Empire had created vassal or buffer States across much of Asia, the British still had the Iranian Empire to contend with. With the discovery of oil in Baku (formerly in the Iranian Empire) in 1859, oil was always likely to be the key resource the contending Empires fought for. With what became British Petroleum's first discovery in 1909, nearly thirty years earlier than the other States in the Persian Gulf, Iran has been at the centre of imperial geo-politics for at least a century.

Given the revolutionary developments in Baku from 1905 -21, which had influenced Iranian politics directly, it was also impossible to abstract the Iranian situation from that in Russia. In 1907 the proud Empire was divided into two spheres of British and Russian influence. After the Great War, Iran's oil was even more important: it was Curzon again who noted that the British had 'floated to victory on a wave of oil' (2). In 1914-21 Iran was in effect under military occupation, despite declaring its neutrality. At one time or another British, French, German, Russian and Turkish armies all fought across Iran, Azerbaijan and Kurdistan. In 1941 the British and Russians invaded Iran again, with the pretext of the Shah's closeness to Germany. Oil concessions also dominated Stalin's squabble with the USA over Northern Iran and led to the new 'Truman Doctrine' in 1947 which marked the symbolic beginning of the Cold War. Thereafter Western support for the Shah in the 70s has dominated recent Iranian history.

Proud Iran was never actually colonised and the oil industry remained an enclave almost as closed in as the banana republics of Central America until the 1950s. The major difference from the 1970s was the rentier revenues generated for the Central State. The re-making of Iran with oil by the Empire of Capital since then and over the last 100 years has had deep internal consequences for resistance and for its expression in religious terms. The 'loss' of Iran in 1979 is still being played out today by US foreign policy makers. By this mafia mentality, Iran must be punished (3). With US military threats, the right to develop nuclear energy has become a matter of pride for many Iranians. The fear that Bush's obituary would be finished by a last attack on Iran to set up the agenda for a Democrat President certainly dominated much of the radical writing on Iran in 2007 (4). The worst case for US foreign policy would be that in encircling Russia and Iran it overreaches itself by pushing them into each other's arms. The Iranians believe themselves to be encircled by potentially hostile enemies, because they are. The importance of Iranian support for Shia factions in Iraq is an entirely logical consequence for their foreign policy. There is always the danger that Iranian nationalism will reinforce the conservative repressive 'security' emphasis ever present in Iran. The US elite may talk the talk of modernising and democratising Iran; their actual walk the walk foreign policy has been to play into the hands of the opposite factions. Perhaps their Iranian enemy can then be more easily portrayed as 'Islamic-fascists' – all the better if they ever plan another 'regime change'. If Iran acted like the US or Israel it would already be well along the way to a pre-emptive strike.

RUSSIA, BRITAIN AND SPHERES OF INFLUENCE

The early struggles of modern Iran stemmed from the knock on effects of that between the Russians and the Ottoman Empire. Russian expansion had first been resisted by the Ottomans but after thirteen wars and by a Treaty of 1774, Russian ships were given access to the 'Turkish Straits'. For Kuniholm, the 'Eastern Question' over the Balkans and what became the USA's Northern tier' (usually classed as Greece, Iran and Turkey) later for defending the oil of the Middle East was born. Moving further in 1783, Russia had annexed the whole of Georgia from Iran by 1801 (5).

For the British, it was both the Russian and Napoleonic threats to their relatively new Indian Empire which led them to make an agreement with 'Persia' as early as 1801. When Napoleon was in the ascendant, the Iranians also looked at a pro-French policy: backing the French to throw out the Russians from Georgia and hoping to use them against the British in attacking Herat. When the tide turned in Russia's favour, the British, despite protective treaties (in 1812 and 1814), left the Iranians to their fate. In a series of Russian-Iranian wars, from 1804-13 and 1826-28, the Russians continued their advance into Azerbaijan, Armenia and the Eastern Caucasus (6). The Russian army got as far south as Iran's second City of Tabriz, which has a predominantly Azeri population.

It was the British the Iranians fought in the next two wars. After an Iranian attack on Herat in 1838, the British using their sea power had taken Kharg Island (later of course a key dispute in the Iran/Iraq war of the 1980s). During the Crimean War, which broke out over the British and Russian struggles over a declining Ottoman empire, the Shah tried to sell Iranian neutrality to the highest bidder. After the Crimean War ended in 1856, the British advanced to the old capital of Isfahan, and the Iranians' insolence put in place (7).

By the 1860s, the Iranians and the British needed each other against Russia which, given more freedom by the relative weakness of the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires, had slowly absorbed three Central Asian Khanates. By 1883, the distance between the Russian and Indian border – that had been 1,700 miles twenty years earlier – had halved. Russia now shared a long frontier with Iran and accounted for 60 percent of her external trade (it doubled in 1888-98) compared to 25 percent for Britain (8). Before the events of 1905 the Russian State did not accept that there should be any dividing up of Iran; it was seen as their vassal.

Having already encouraged a new commercialisation in Turkey, leading to Kurdish and Armenian rebellions (9), a growing British economic imperialism took root. Even the Times – accused the British Government of having a Monroe Doctrine for the Persian Gulf – making the area vital to Britain's 'strategic' interest. As Blair, Brown and the military stake claims stake strategic claims in the area today, we should remember Curzon again: he saw the Russian leaders as 'duplicitous' and wanted to seize the Persian Gulf ports, besides those already taken in Kuwait and Bahrain (10). Neither Saddam nor the Iranians have been able to reverse their balkanisation.

THE BRITISH AND BAKU'S REVOLUTIONARY OIL

The dynasty of Qajar Shahs had maintained power for the previous 100 years by manipulating the factions of its fragmented Empire. As Russian and British pressures increased, Iranian protests to the British control of commercial developments first appeared in 1872 against the granting of monopoly oil, banking and construction rights to what became Reuters. More came in 1891 protests in Tabriz against the monopoly given to British Imperial Tobacco.

Increasing British influence also played a substantial role in the first modern movement for a parliamentary monarchy, supported by merchants and urban intellectuals in 1891-1911. The key British leverage over the Shah was the power of British loans, made through the Imperial Bank of Persia. The Shah was dependent on relatively meagre customs revenues. Mullahs were paid to agitate against the 'non-Islamic' loans granted by Russia. The Persian mission had advised that the Shah 'would do anything provided the price was right'. The British saw the regime as rotten. The British, even under Salisbury's Conservative Government had quietly supported the Iranian reform movement – rather like the US today likes to offer verbal support to 'modernising' 'pro' Western elements. In the South East where the threat to India was the greatest, the British – as another option - backed the 'tribal leaders' of the Bakhtiari, just as in 2007 the US sanctioned \$400 million for supporting ethnic dissension by the Baluchis or the Kurds. (Later Iranian Shahs were of course to support trouble amongst the Iraqi Kurds in British controlled Iraq) (11).

On the Russian side, what became Russian Azerbaijan and is today's independent oil State of Azerbaijan was at first a trading pawn between the Russian and Iranian empires: first taken by the Russians in 1725-35, it had been given back for trading privileges. Once the first large oil fields came on stream in the 1870s, Azerbaijan became central to the commercial development of the Russian Empire. The oil boom for late Tsarist Russia, was akin to that of Texas, and made Baku the fourth largest City of the old Soviet Union, which became a revolutionary hotbed. By 1888, Baku's oil output was up to 80 per cent of the US level. In 1898-1901, Baku was the largest oil producer in the world. By 1912 with Shell's take over of Rothschild, British controlled Capital owned 60 per cent of Baku's oil. Working conditions in Baku were terrible as the city sucked in labour from Armenia, Iranian Azerbaijan and Muslims from the Volga. The Social Democrat Party in Baku was formed in 1898, while a young Georgian, who came to be known as Stalin, earned his spurs as a labour organiser. Labour agitation and strikes led to a state of emergency in Baku in 1902 and strikes in 1903/4 (12). Baku elected a Bolshevik Social Democrat in 1905. Two thirds of the deputies from Baku were Social Democrats by 1908. Baku had also become an increasingly important Muslim cultural centre (13). The political and cultural upheavals in Baku especially after 1905 was sure to knock on into Iranian Azerbaijan and into Iran itself.

PROTESTS, PARLIAMENTS AND PARTITION

Popular protests, in the bazaar trading centres of Tehran and Tabriz fed off the tobacco deal and resentment at the monopoly of the British Imperial Bank. By 1906, city streets were full of Cossacks as Russian troops were used by the Shah to enforce a curfew. While his own troops were increasingly disloyal. Mosques and the British 'legation' (Embassy) were used as a refuge away from the Cossacks - up to 16,000 being reportedly crammed into the British embassy grounds in Tehran. As the Iranian Empire went through periods without a strong centralised State, and as the struggle for a parliamentary regime began, the Tabriz council virtually became a regional parliament. Some in the British Foreign Office began to compare it with the Soviets in the Russia of 1905.

The dying Shah set up a new Parliament, modelled on the Duma – the Majlis – on the first day of 1907. Like the Duma, it had little real power. Riots ensued, while the Shah's brother now claimed the throne (14). Turkish troops that had gathered on the borders since 1905 now invaded in the North West with the support of some within Azerbaijan and the Kurds. In 1907 a Russian that had wanted to embrace the whole of Iran was content, after the relative weakness revealed by the Japanese defeat and its own internal troubles, to tie up the North by a partition. The British were to be given the South. Meanwhile the British were concerned with imperial competition and particularly about a German inspired rail link to Baghdad. Taylor argues that the British have often preferred commercial spheres of interest Although the Indian Office objected, the Foreign Office was prepared to buy Russian support against Germany but did so by formally splitting Iran into 'spheres of interest' (15).

The new Shah made two attempts to 'restore order' in late 1907 and 1908. In the coup of June 1908 the Cossacks bombed and stormed the Majlis in Tehran. In Tabriz the council armed its volunteers. The Tabriz parliament divided: the landowners saw the new 'Constitutional Revolution' as dangerous and a thirteen month 'bloody civil war' broke out between 'royalists and constitutionalists' – largely merchants and intellectuals- with extensive street fighting (16). The Bakhtiari, assembled in Isfahan and with armed mujahideen marched on the clerical city of Qom. In April 1909, Russian troops were sent in. They surrounded the British legation to prevent the protestors from getting in. The games over US Embassy hostages 70 years later had a history. Likewise, the Russians used the excuse of protecting Russian citizens in Tabriz. In the light of South Ossetia in 2008 it looks familiar. For Iranians 1909 was an early foreshadowing of 1979.

By July 1909, the second Shah had abdicated and a new grand-son had succeeded. The leader of the Bakhtiari army was made Prime Minister and the mujahideen leader made Minister of War. By 1912, the Central Government existed in name only and Russian troops were bombarding the sacred shrine of Meshed in the North East, close to the Russian and Afghan borders. By 1914 20,000 Russian troops were entrenched in Iran. In 1914 Northern Iran was in effect part of the Russian empire (17). Being the pawn in Big Power conflicts can only be uppermost for most Iranians, even if the West (if not its experts) has chosen to forget it. Any Iranian leadership will not have forgotten.

WARS FOR OIL IN IRAN

For forty years, the British had been keeping an eye on oil opportunities in Iran, bribing the Shah to grant their nationals an oil monopoly. A British explorer, D'Arcy, who had made his money in Australia was given a huge concession of 800,000 square miles in 1901. Noting Russian interests it excluded five Northern provinces, including Azerbaijan and Gilan. When an oil discovery was made in 1909, the British Empire made sure of the resource. When D'Arcy ran out of funds, it was the Admiralty who persuaded Burmah to subscribe to the new Anglo Persian Company. The company that eventually became BP, like so many of our major companies, was a straight forward imperialist venture. It depended entirely on Iranian oil until 1934 and still took 75 per cent of its oil from Iran until 1951.

In 1914-21 Iran was overrun by enemy troops. The Iranian parliament had been keen to emphasise its neutrality, but this was ignored. German and Turkish armies took Tabriz in 1915 and Khorramshahr in 1916. Immediately as the war broke, Britain sent Indian troops from Basra to occupy Southern Iran. As Sampson puts it well: the Iranian oilfields were to be 'protected by the army to serve the navy' (18). Outside of Belgium, the little matter of the independence of other States was of little concern to the British Empire of 1914 – other than as a tactic.

Before the Leninist regime, the British and Russians had agreed that Russia would claim parts of the Ottoman Empire between Georgia, Armenia and Turkey. This also involved Kurdistan, but the Kurds were not consulted. In return, the British were given more rights in the Iranian Neutral Zone (where there might be more oil). In all the long debate about the British intervention in the Russian revolution, the armies in the North have received far more attention. The British General got orders to move into Azerbaijan and Northern Iran on Christmas Eve 1917 - the day after the agreement with France over Syria and the new Iraq (19). The British had organised a client army – the South Persia rifles and with troops also sent from Basra, Tabriz, originally taken back by the Russians from the Turks, was now taken by the British in May 1918. The British had now moved into the old Russian sphere in the Caucasus and Iran. It looked to both the US and French diplomats as if the British wanted the whole of Iran (just like the Russians before 1905). The British device for this was the old one of making Iran a 'Protectorate'. By the Summer of 1918 the British were moving further North too and onto the side of the Baku Soviet against any Armenian, Azerbaijan or Georgian sell out (of Baku's oil) to the Ottomans or Germans.

The US elite were perhaps to learn a lesson; they took to heart that British foreign policy had all along been driven by a determination – globally – to make sure that British oil supplies were not too dependent on anyone else's production –even that of an ally – the USA (20).

THE 'MUSLIM PEASANT' IN REVOLUTION: 1917-21

The Baku Soviet – perhaps the third most important in Russia - was the 'capital city of a Muslim feudal land'. By 1917 of the 110,000 oil workers, 37 percent were of Azeri origin; over half of the unskilled workers were Azeri. Many were semi proletarians, who kept their ties to the land. Many of the early leaders of the Iranian Communist party of the 1920s were to have had their Baku experience. In an immigrant city, full of ethnic ghettos, where there had been communal clashes between Azeris and Armenians, and where more Armenians fleeing Turkish forces were also arriving, this meant the Baku Bolsheviks steered a careful line of compromise. As Suny puts it, there was a 'struggle for the mind of the muslim poor'.

The Baku Soviet could not survive long given that it was surrounded by heavily armed enemies. The major problem of its short 97 day rule was that of feeding the town. Turkish troops advanced from the South and there was also hostile 'White' (Cossack) territory to the North. Starvation was rife. The Baku Soviet was their inability to win over the Azeri peasantry around their new socialist enclave. Despite the pre-war success in aligning Muslim workers with the Bolshevik cause, the Muslim peasantry had remained stubbornly loyal to their mullahs. Only 20 per cent of the land was owned by large landlords, who were less likely to be absentee than elsewhere in the Russian Empire; although in January 1918 some noble estates were seized by the peasants. In June, the Soviet declared the land 'socialised' and this was supported by a Muslim peasant congress, but this represented only the sub-urban areas, which were dependent on the town. This problem of winning the peasantry was to re-surface consistently and the problem of reconciling the industrial workers to the peasantry was to be vital across Iran.

German and Turks recruited the Kurds to fight a guerrilla war. In the Gilan area, in North West Iran a movement of 'primitive rebellion' grew into a popular rural movement, joined by Social Democrats from Baku and Democrats from Tehran. The paper they launched was called 'Jangal'. Occupied by the Russians for a time and following the Russian model, a Soviet Socialist republic in Gilan was proclaimed in June 1920. The Gilan area, unlike Azerbaijan, had traditionally been dominated by bigger, commercially driven plantation style farms for cotton, with a preponderance of share croppers and rural landless. Because of its access to foreign markets via the Caspian, it gave more scope to the 'middle peasants', who became the backbone of the Jangal peasant movement. The Jangal coalition, with a new ally in the Soviet Communist party, increased the percentage of the crop going to the sharecroppers, cut labour services, taxed the large landowners and abolished dues in kind. The bandits turned defending army paid for their food to the peasants and under their control the new regime started to re-distribute land (21). The Gilan Republic revealed the problems to come for the 'revolutionary Islamic republic 60 years later – and highlighted the problem of reforming rural Iran as a whole ever since – the clash between 'Communist' radicals who looked to re-distribute land and 'Islamic' conservatives who saw private property as sacred. As in the 1980s, the Democratic and radical forces were forced out by the end of 1921.

IRANIAN OIL EXPANSION: 1921-1950

When the Russian Red Army had consolidated at home, it began to look to restore bits of the old Tsarist Empire. The rail and road links built by the Tsars, as the British had feared, were now available to the 'revolution' to put a pliable regime in place in Iran. The Iranian regime may have been more 'fascist' than 'communist' but labels aside, the key was its subordination to Russia. Soviet Azerbaijan was first re-conquered later in 1920. Cossack officers then forced a coup in favour of Reza Khan in Tehran in 1921. Gilan was re-taken by Iranian troops and its remaining leaders executed. The independent parliament in Tabriz was dismantled. The first thing the new Iranian regime did was to renounce the Anglo Iranian agreement made with Lord Curzon in 1919 and sign a new one with Russia. Although the formal constitution was that of 1905-12, Halliday argues that little of any real substance had changed in Iran. The new Shah controlled the Majles and had a number of opposing leaders and trade unionists killed.

However important the external pressures, the rulers of Iran, whether they are Shahs, Ayatollahs or Elected Presidents, have always looked to local classes for their necessary support. Under the new Shahs of Iran from 1921, the elite were supported by the old landlords, the new capitalists and the upper levels of the increasing armed forces and civil services. The Shah neither tried nor intended any changes in landholding. Iran's capitalism was weak and very late and like the pre-revolution bourgeois in Russia, the bourgeois class of owners was very dependent on the monarchy and State. Nevertheless, oil revenues enabled the expansion of a more 'modern' administration as the Central State became more important and the power of the traditional tribal leaders declined. In the 1920s oil revenues were far smaller than today, yet still provided around 25 percent of government revenues. This was still enough to fund the new dynasty and an old arbitrary officialdom was slowly replaced by an increasingly institutionalised power. Recalcitrant provinces and tribes were bombed into submission, farsi imposed as the official language and Islam emphasised to keep clerical support. By 1922, the new military took nearly half of the Iranian government budget (22).

A new agreement in 1933 improved relations between BP and Iran so that oil production had doubled from 1927-37. As early as 1930, Iran had overtaken Mexico to become the fourth largest oil producer in the world. From a low point in 1941, production doubled again by 1944 and by 1945, Iranian oil production was more than treble that of 1927 (338 tbd). The late 1940s was a time when oil finally began to leave its enclave and have a larger impact on the wider economy. Between 1944 and 1950, oil production more than doubled again and by 1950 was running at 638 TBD. As the dispute over BP was to reach new heights, Iranian production was on a par with Russia – only the USA and Venezuela produced more (23). As oil revenues for the Iranian government took off too, the new oil wealth flowed into connected industries in the urban areas. Instead of only 10 percent of GNP from industry it rose to 19 percent between 1937 and 1941. The urban population increased from 21 percent in 1938 to 31 percent in 1951. Given the Shah's administrative centralisation, most of this urban population came to be centred in the capital, Tehran. 20 per cent of the country lived in the Capital province in the late 1970s and Tehran had grown to be seven times larger than the next biggest city (Isfahan) (24).

THE TUDEH AND THE OIL COLD WAR

1921-41 in Iran was an 'armed truce' between Britain and Russia. So keen were the British to prevent Germany from getting Baku's oil nearby, that they had contemplated bombing the oil fields in 1940, even before the Russians joined the war. Despite the increase in the Iranian army from 25,000 to 125,000 in August 1941 the Russians invaded with 40,000 troops from the North and the British with 19,000 from the South. The Shah was handily – if correctly - accused of being pro-German. In the new Russian area land, welfare and educational reforms were enacted, along with collective farms. Azerbaijan had always been Iran's granary. It produced up to 33 percent of Iran's wheat and much of it was used to feed Tehran and Tabriz. With the war, the Russians simply expropriated the Iranian Azerbaijan harvest. The cost of bread increased 25 times in 1938-43.

The Tudeh Party - the name means the 'masses' - had been a closed intellectual circle under the Shah's repression. As it held its first open Conference in Azerbaijan in 1942, peasants seized landlord estates. The Tudeh has often since been accused as a front for the Russians; from 1944-46 its demonstrations were protected by Russian troops. The Tudeh had Communists in its ranks but had a liberal, not a nationalisation, programme. In the British zone, the Tudeh stayed more clandestine. In the first open Iranian elections in 1944, the Tudeh won 12 seats, the pro-British patriotic party won 21. Landowner politicians like Mossadeq opposed Tudeh from the start and accused the Iranian PM of being a traitor for negotiating oil concessions with the Russians. Meanwhile in December 1945, the Kurdish Democratic Party proclaimed the new Republic of Kurdistan - covering about a million people - from the Iranian town of Mahabad.

Iran, Azerbaijan and Kurdistan then became one of the first major disputes of the coming Cold War. In 1942 the British and Russians had agreed their troops would pull out by March 1946. In 1944/5, the Tudeh increased the pressure; the Russians continued to confiscate grain and Tehran starved. The Russians were also worried about their oil production. Baku output was only a half of its 1940 level in 1945. The Russians made new oil concessions the key. As with Iran again today, many commentators ignored Russia's traditional imperial interest and common borders with Iran. Stalin was using Iran as a buffer zone, buying time against a 'capitalist attack'. Iranian Azerbaijan was a bargaining chip and Stalin looked to the domestic Communist party (the Tudeh) to fight its own battles. Whatever noises Stalin made, he was not prepared for military action in the Arab world. With an increasing awareness of their global ability to take over from Britain, the US now saw the control of Iran as in their key strategic interest. The Cold War was used by the USA to justify their intervention in Iran. The USA was becoming increasingly committed to its oil games in the Middle East. The early post war democratic coalition in Tehran lasted only 77 days (25).

MOSSADEQ AND THE NATIONAL FRONT

With US and British support a new young Shah was back in charge. By late 1945, the US was guaranteeing Turkish and Iranian independence. In March 1947 the Truman Doctrine proclaimed the potential commitment of US troops to 'Northern Tier defence' in Greece, Iran and Turkey. The McCarthyite era was to begin thereafter. The US had discovered the rules of nineteenth century Great power diplomacy. When the Russian troops did leave in April 1947, with oil concessions (later cancelled) the new Shah moved his own troops into what had been an independent Iranian Azerbaijan and they met virtually no resistance. The Russian calculation on Iranian Azerbaijan politics had misfired.

This is not as US commentators claim, because they had 'stood up' to the great dictator. Nor can the Shah's victory in the North be explained by violent repression. Many Azeris did cross into Russia, the key in Iranian Azerbaijan was that despite the Russian reforms and Tudeh popularity, Russian confiscation of grain and consequent famine had angered the Muslim peasantry. The Iranian Azeri experience (as in Gilan and Baku) was akin to that of the Russian peasantry after 1917. Kurdish peasants were more wary of Russian support. They remained loyal to traditional leaders and stayed with their traditional alignments in Iran. For the conservative Muslim peasants, the devil they had always known was preferable to the infidel devil they liked even less. It was going to take forces other than the peasantry to make an Iranian revolution.

The two key nationalist forces in Iran as a whole after 1945 were the National Front and the Tudeh. The National Front was a coalition stretching from conservative clerics to left wing secular nationalists held together against British domination. Rather as in Nasser's Egypt, the National Front was anti communist and had landowners in its ranks but nationalization of BP had always been a part of its programme (BP). The Tudeh Party was able to campaign in Iran after 1945 while the National Front (NF) was founded in 1949, with Mossadeq its leader.

The Tudeh with 25,000 members and 600 in the army was declared illegal in 1947. The Tudeh celebrated the British Labour Party victory of 1945; a hope that Britain might withdraw from the 'great imperial game'. It was particularly strong in the North: in 1944, 16 out of 18 manufacturing plants in Tabriz were on strike. Post war freedom meant trade unions: there were 335,000 members by 1946, including 90,000 oilworkers, 50,000 manufacturing workers in Tehran and Tabriz and 45,000 more in Gilan. 75 per cent of the industrial workforce was unionized. Oil worker strikes in 1944 and 1946 emphasised the relative power of this small – but key - number of workers. The strikes gained their objectives - a minimum wage and a 48 hour week (26) With the troubles giving the Shah leverage he was close to agreeing a new deal with the oil companies by 1949.

NATIONALISATION AND BOYCOTT

If the US entry into Saudi oil transformed the oil politics of the Middle East after 1945, the Aramco deal in Saudi Arabia due to start in January 1951 – on much more generous terms - undid the Shah's deal in Iran. The Saudis had learnt from the Venezuelan push to 50/50 profit shares of oil. In Iran BP's profits were £250m, against Iranian royalties of £90m. The Saudi deal led to more oil strikes and martial law by March 1951. Parliament voted to nationalise BP in April, but it was not until May that Mossadeq became Prime Minister as the Shah attempted to put the lid on the situation.

What most internal analysis of Iran tends to side-step from here is the oil boycott by all the major oil companies of Iranian oil after nationalisation. In the battle he saw correctly between a declining UK and a rising US imperialism Mossadeq had hoped to gain from US support against BP. If he could simply prevent BP from having a monopoly on Iranian oil he may have been content. Bevin - a true imperialist - but a Labour foreign secretary - issued bellicose noises for 'British' interests; in other words, BP. This was also 1951, not 1971. Before the Western boom had truly got underway and before the rise of new US independents like Amerada Hess or Italy's ENI hungry for oil. BP had already been struggling to find outlets for its increased Iranian output as Saudi output surged. The Iranian oil crisis of 1951-3 and the complete elimination of Iranian oil from the world market had no impact on world oil prices. Today this would be impossible. Sampson argues that it was the oil companies more than the CIA which destroyed Mossadeq's regime. The CIA simply filled in the last chapter.

Iranian output and refineries were shut down and the impact on the Iranian economy was so severe that it is remarkable that Mossadeq lasted so long, with or without a CIA coup. Mossadeq's problems were compounded with the take over of the US Presidency by Eisenhower in 1952, with the virulently anti communist Dulles, as his Secretary of State. Dulles law firm also acted for BP. In July 1952 Mossadeq resigned in a dispute over the control of the armed forces, which Mossadeq saw as the major bloc to his power.

Mossadeq's supporters came out in Tehran and 800 were killed in street fighting. Mossadeq's own coalition was fracturing. The leading Ayatollah of the time – Kashemi fell out with Mossadeq on his request for temporary 'dictatorial' powers. The Iranian bourgeois who had gone along with Mossadeq saw they were losing out hugely with the boycott. Even so, when the Shah tried to arrange his own coup in August 1953, it failed. There were demonstrations against him, with Tudeh support in Tehran and general strikes in Tabriz and Isfahan. The Shah fled to London.

The entry of the working masses onto the streets had scared the more conservative landowners and nationalist supporters of Mossadeq. Reaction was better than a bourgeois or nationalist revolution. Their links with the army now led to another coup to which the US put the finishing touches and money. Though most stress CIA and US involvement, Churchill back in power in Britain happily agreed (27).

THE CIA AND 'REFORM'

For Halliday the CIA's role in Mossadeq's overthrow was over emphasised in Iran. Thereby the weakness of internal progressive class forces could be ignored and all blamed on the Americans. This suited the CIA itself anxious to show the 'benefits' of its work (28). Yet the Tudeh with its own links in the army had warned Mossadeq about the impending coup. He knew it was coming. Perhaps he also knew that the Tudeh 'communists' who were most under threat. After the coup in August 1953, Mossadeq was imprisoned for three years - he was no Allende - and the NF remained legal. 50 of the Tudeh leaders were executed after torture and 3000 members of the party jailed. Martial Law remained until 1957. The Tudeh party tried to keep its head down and wait for a better day. Iran in 1953 was not ready for a revolution. Within another generation and after a sustained and divisive oil boom, the 1970s were to provide a different outcome.

Iran's attempts to nationalise the oil industry in came before another big take off in output later in the 1950s. The Iranian struggle in 1951-3 was not capitalism versus socialism, but fractions of the global ruling classes contending over the oil loot. In the early 1950s the Iranians lost. By the 1970s the balance of world oil power had shifted. The world in 2009 is far closer to that of 1979 than that of 1953.

After 1953 the Shah's powers became increasingly absolute, while US aid to Iran took off. US aid to Iran in 1951 was running at \$1 million. In 1956 during the Suez Crisis it was running at \$74 to \$85 million each year. US trade with Iran was three times that of its trade with Africa and Latin America combined. The US effort to supplant the British in the Middle East was in place and the US was in the 'driving seat' in Iran (29). Iran was in the US sphere of influence. Both the Tudeh and the NF were made illegal.

Before the 1970s the Iranian economy struggled when oil revenues were lower. As imports increased 6 times to 1961, the Iranians were faced with a classic developing country problem - the IMF. The US insisted on an open economy in exchange for loans and aid. The Kennedy Administration pushed for a land reform. This led to what the Shah called the 'White Revolution' in 1962. In effect this amounted to an attempt to press ahead with capitalist development.

The property limited elections of 1960 had given the landed upper class and like minded mullahs a 60 per cent majority. They could hardly lead a land reform against themselves. Most of the best land, where mechanised methods were in use, was left untouched by the reform. 20 million out of 42 million hectares were exempted. Two per cent of the population - mainly absentee landlords - owned 55 per cent of the land. Many sharecroppers were excluded because no agreement could be reached with their landlords. In 1975 the majority of peasants had only between 3-10 hectares and around 30 per cent had less than one. Agriculture which still involved at least a third of the population only represented 10 per cent of GDP. By the 1970s the number of Iran's rural proletariat was 3.5m.

THE US MILITARY AND THE SHAH'S STATE INDUSTRIALISATION

Although the peasants did not rise against the Shah, by 1963 student, clergy and urban demonstrations of up to 200,000 had ended in repression - several thousand were killed in June 1963. From here the Shah pushed ahead with his ambitions to use the State - and oil to a new industrialised Iran. Manufacturing increased by 12 per cent per annum in 1963-72 from a small base. Oil revenues concentrated power around the Shah with the land owners and tribal leaders as his underlings and the army as brutal enforcers.

From 1946-70, 50 per cent of US aid was for the military. As Iran's oil revenues built up the capacity to buy US arms increased exponentially. Oil income built from 45 per cent of government revenues in 1963 to 56 per cent in 1971 and 77 per cent in 1977. As oil prices increased in the 1970s, Iran bought \$20 billion of US arms in 1970-8. \$524 million purchases in 1972 had rocketed to 3.9 bn in 1974. At this point, the military took 30 per cent of the government budget. Iran became the largest buyer of US arms in the 1970s - taking around 25 per cent of US sales. The USA elite's annoyance at the loss of this pivotal position in the Middle East after 1979 has been the un-stated reason for the US propaganda against Iran ever since.

The State's desire to stimulate 'modern' industries was thereby understandable. With a population that nearly doubled in 1956-76 (from 19 to 34 million), peasants were still leaving the land for urban industrial work. Despite its pre-dominant economic influence, the oil industry only employed 30,000 workers. Oil workers had been one of the most concentrated groups of the urban industrial proletariat in the Middle East and were to be a key component of the protests of the late 1970s.

Industries - foreign and domestic owned - generated by the State's efforts were heavily concentrated in a few sectors, in a few companies and in a few hands. The old Iranian petty bourgeois which lay behind the political pressures for democratic reform from the nineteenth century was being squeezed by State generated wealth. Sometimes the NGO and Christian development lobby believes protection is the major need for developing countries. In Iran, the internationally weak industries producing for domestic consumption were protected by tariffs of 200-300 per cent. Here protection provided a platform for domestic exploitation - often by foreign owned companies. In 1976 there were 183 multinationals in Iran, but their investments were heavily concentrated close to energy.

Likewise in Iran in the 1970s the State owned 70 per cent of banking Capital. So much too for those who argue that nationalisation of finance is another answer for us all. The Shah's family stake stood out. It had stakes in 137 out of 527 companies. The Shah's wealth confronted everyone, whilst after 1963, the forces of repression were in the open. Even a nuclear industry was being pursued - with the co-operation of the USA - of course. By the end of the Shah the State was the largest employer, the largest industrialist and the largest banker. As in Venezuela no wonder that State accumulation was the prize and setting for all subsequent political conflict (30).

IRAN'S REVOLUTION: WE ASKED FOR RAIN AND GOT A FLOOD

As oil revenues began to fall again after 1975 the Iranian economy was nearing a crisis. The 'bazaar petty bourgeois' felt penalised by the Shah's State banks, being unable to get credit, while relaxing import controls threatened their sales. For Tariq Ali 'it was the dispossessed former peasants who became the vanguard of the Islamic revolution in the towns' (31). There may have been up to a million ex peasants in Tehran's population of 4.5m. The workers could be spending up to 50 per cent of their income on housing while the middle classes made fortunes from real estate. The urban poor, as across the world had both job and home insecurity, as shanties were demolished. In 1977 the intellectual and mullah opposition called for a return to the 1905 Constitution. Resistance battles broke out in South Tehran shanty towns. In December 1977 Ayatollah Khomeini supported a 50,000 rally for constitutional reform. The bazaar funded the protest and the urban poor took to the streets. An oil workers strike in 1973 had given an early signal. In September 1978 another oil strike broke out and lasted for 33 days - one of its targets being martial law. Marshall argues that 'demonstrations of the poor could have been defeated'; the strikes proved the key. When the Ayatollah returned from enforced exile in February 1979, the floodgates of at least 50 years of anger - and now of hope - opened. Reading the wind's direction, most of the old Establishment now 'changed sides'. The army and Savak (the not so secret police) held on for 10 days before they capitulated. The new regime quickly moved to satisfy the protestors. Skilled workers' wages were put up by 50 per cent and those of the unskilled were doubled. All Iranian workers were given a 40 hour week, holidays, sick pay, health services and the right to strike. In July 1979 51 of the largest local businesses were nationalised.

For all the headiness of this national democratic revolution the old instruments of the autocracy remained intact. Savak's personnel may have disappeared and their offices were occupied by demonstrators but their old powers remained - they only had to be called upon. This was going to be inevitable in what Kamrava calls the subsequent 'bloody and violent jockeying for power'. Parsa argues that there had been major divisions in the protest movement in 1977-9, but these had been suppressed in the interests of removing the Shah - on which all could agree. On getting to power, however, the new rulers were deeply divided. A classic bourgeois revolution had taken place - Halliday and Abrahamian for example both compare Iran after 1979 to France after 1789. The radical mujahideen were to be increasingly eliminated in the infighting of the 1980s. For all the corporate chatter of deaths in the protests of 2009, barely a mention of the left dissidents killed at the start of the Iran/Iraq war - 149 executed in one day in September 1981 and at least 2000 executions in all. As one commentator put it: 'we asked for rain and we got a flood' (32). The revolution did not only have its internal troubles. When Saddam Hussein invaded Iran with US encouragement, 18 months after the revolution in September 1980, the 8 year war (running alongside the guerrilla war in Afghanistan) was to set back Iran's hopes for at least a generation and killed at least a million Iraqi and Iranian soldiers. The fighting was the Gulf's own version of trench warfare first world war style with bayonet charges, barbed wire, human wave attacks and Iraq's extensive use of chemical weapons against Iranian troops and civilians as well as against the Kurds.

REFORMING THE IRANIAN STATE?

After the 1979 revolution two factions emerged – the first could be described as State modernisers without the Shah – a social democrat left shorn of a radical or militant working class base after the repression of the mujahideen and communists. The second faction was of traditional conservatives who supported the interests of the bazaar and private industry. The war with Iraq and the conciliatory role of Khomeini enabled him to unite these factions with a mix of populist pro-poor rhetoric and conservative theology.

Yet between 1977 and 1988 GDP per capita declined by nearly 50 percent and urban unemployment increased from 4 to 19 percent. Subsidies and price controls reduced the impact along with major improvements in rural healthcare and education. From 1987 as these problems mounted Khomeini tacked 'left' and spoke of 'the Islam of the barefooted'. After Khomeini's death in June 1989, a new faction emerged around a two term President Hashemi Rafsanjani, which became known as the 'modern right' or the 'pragmatists' - which had its social base among the technocrats in the state apparatus. This aligned with the 'traditional right', around the bazaar against the 'left'. After IMF talks price controls and subsidies were scrapped, and the exchange rate floated. This led to social unrest. In the early 90s there were six major protests in Tehran and other cities. In 1995 there were three-day riots in a suburb of Tehran, following increases in bus fares and fuel prices. Rafsanjani ordered helicopters to shoot at demonstrators. The economic experience of Iran in the era of falling oil prices was similar to that of Venezuela.

70 percent of Iran's population is now under 30. The 1979 revolution is history to them. Since the mid-1990s a new 'democracy movement' emerged that some see as the best new left of a younger generation in Iran. It was the intellectual component of the street riots after 1995. Women have often played a vital role in this change. Women account for more than 60 percent of university students and took 30 percent of professional and technical jobs (33). There was a huge turnout in the 1997 elections which saw the election of the pro-reform president Mohammed Khatami with 70 per cent of the vote. He spoke of a 'dialogue of civilizations' and captured the youth and the women's vote. Unfortunately, the 'Tehran Spring' after 1997 didn't last long.

In July 1999 a demonstration at the University of Tehran, organised by the pro-Khatami student union against the closure of dissident newspapers, was attacked by the police. The riots that followed lasted for 6 more days were in poorer areas with higher rates of unemployment. Banks were looted and set on fire, and prestige cars burned. In 2002 and 2003 large student protests started in Tehran and spread. Khatami condemned the protests. In foreign policy the Khatami liberals were astounded by Bush's axis of evil speech which badly undermined them internally. Disillusionment set in. Unofficial strikes and occupations increased. In 2004 there was a successful textile workers strike in the Kurdish city of Sanandaj. In July 2005 workers in Iran-Khodro, the largest car producer in the Middle East went on strike. The left were divided over Khatami. Some were New Labour like in their control freak devotion. This pro- Khatami faction hoped that they could reform the regime from inside which tended to mean cultural reform only. Average unemployment had risen to 30 percent by 2005.

AHMADINEJAD – THE POPULAR VOTE

Given the rising protests of the streets the victory of Mohammed Ahmadinejad, the mayor of Tehran after 2003, was always a possibility in the 2005 Presidential elections. Ahmadinejad, the son of a blacksmith, from a little village 90 miles from Tehran was a symbol of the rising educated classes. A student, reputedly involved in the hostage crisis in 1979, he had gained a PhD in transport engineering in 1997. He was Governor of Ardabil Province from 1993-7 and a professor at the University. He still lives in the same Tehran flat and was known to favour more aid for the poor. He campaigned under the slogan: 'We Can' pre-dating Obama by two years and he talked about 'cutting the hands off the oil mafia'. His opponent, the old President Rafsanjani, on the other hand, appeared the embodiment of capitalist enrichment. He owned large parts of Iranian Daewoo (the South Korean car company) and was the father of Iran's 1990s privatisation programme. Colloquially known as 'the Shark' Rafsanjani has ties to the US and has proven to be the ultimate survivor - a 'skilled juggler' between Khatami and Ayatollah Khamenei (who took over from Khomeini as 'Supreme Leader').

Ahmadinejad's victory came in the second round of voting. After the first round he and Rafsanjani were close. Rafsanjani gaining 21 per cent and Ahmadinejad with 20 per cent. In the second round, both conservative and reformist votes seemed to swing against the old capitalist regime and Ahmadinejad took 62 per cent on a turn out of around 60 per cent in both cases. This turn out is higher than that in most US Presidential elections for all the media smears of Ahmadinejad's abuse of human rights and 'economic incompetence'. Like Chavez in Venezuela, Ahmadinejad's populist message against poverty and corruption struck a chord with Iran's workers and poor, reinforced by his position as a relative outsider (34). For an Iran criticised as a fascist State this was a real popular movement and a real democratic vote. This populist campaign after the US invasion of Iraq would hardly endear Ahmadinejad to the US elite, even if Obama could borrow his campaign slogan. Escobar argues that 'the ruling ayatollahs' assumed they could control Ahmadinejad. Instead Escobar argues of solidifying the theocratic leadership, Ahmadinejad has fractured an increasingly unpopular ruling elite. The conflict between Ahmadinejad and Rafsanjani has been played out again in the June 2009 Presidential elections. The strategists in the US State Department know all this.

They would also know that an important factor in Ahmadinejad's victory in 2005 was his stand against the US regarding Iran's nuclear energy programme. As I presented a paper on Iran at Manchester University in September 2007, my accompanying speaker was an Indian journalist explaining how the US had been leaning over backwards to help the Indian nuclear programme – as an obvious strategic weapon versus China (and a useful warning to Pakistan). Chomsky using a Financial Times source amongst others argues that India was put under pressure to sign up to the Iraq invasion with the threat of losing US support for her nuclear programme. As Barsamian points out neither India nor Pakistan have signed the nuclear proliferation treaty. Iran signed in 1970 and the Iranians have not said - but they could - that they could hardly be beholden to a treaty signed by a puppet regime. There is clearly one US law for the Indians and another for the Iranians.

GOING NUCLEAR?

Keeping the Iranians in check is the real reason for the hullabaloo about Iran going nuclear. As Schumpeter explained with Rome long ago, it is all about who the unilateral power wishes to choose as allies (35). One Israeli military historian (hardly a Marxist or Islamist source) has argued that the Iranians would be crazy not to be working on nuclear weapons. The US political economic and diplomatic attack on Iran going nuclear has nothing to do with defence or the nuclear threat or proliferation per se, anymore than its attack on Iraq was to do with WMD. The US blocked a little reported UN resolution of November 2004 to put all nuclear weapons - including the US stockpile - under international control. There were two abstainers - Britain and Israel. Indeed it is the Iranians who correctly - like the Russians - see themselves under threat. Barsamian pointed out in 2007 that two entire US battle fleets are parked off the Persian Gulf - how would the US respond if an Iranian fleet was sailing off New York? Hersh suggests that US special forces may have already been dropped into Iran. Attempts to de-stabilise Iran through ethnic tensions - with 16 million Azeris, 5 million Kurds or 1 million Baluchis - are well underway. Torture in Iran - which does take place - is well publicised, whilst that under the Shah was not mentioned. The US elite have made it clear that any development of Iranian nuclear weapons will mean an attack - probably by proxy by Israel (36).

To tell Iran off for fighting 'proxy wars' in Iraq is a joke to anyone who has followed the geo-political history seriously. It is a PR joke in which the British army has indulged and the day after his election climb-down in October 2007, Brown was quick to play the game of let's warn the Iranians and show we are 'tough on defence'. Having just bottled an election, what a perfect way to show British hubris and Brown's real impotence while making noisy threats to the Iranians. For the British today can only make threats to Iran as a PR tool to keep the US on side - angry about Britain's 'humiliating' departure from Iraq. In a recent British TV documentary by Peter Osborne on our 'Iraq legacy' one US diplomat was for example rolled out to complain that it was a British fault that Southern Shia Iraq was now too close to Iran (37). Of course, like any bully we need our special big brother relationship to actually implement any threat. The Iranians and Syrians intervene in Iraq for their own purposes: does anybody in the corporate media observe who largely houses **the Afghan and** Iraqi refugees - still numbering 2 million in these two countries? Undoubtedly the Iranians are involved in Iraq. It is after all their next door neighbour - which is more than the US can claim - and indeed they have been invaded from Basra in the past. Telling the Iranians to get out of Iraq is like telling the USA to get out of Mexico or Canada or telling Scots politicians to get out of England. In the light of Carter and Clinton, a Democrat in 'power' may not provide a sufficient safeguard if like Brown Obama decides in the midst of a recession that he needs to sound 'tough on defence'. From its new positions in Iraq and Afghanistan, President Obama still has Hilary Clinton and Robert Gates, an ex CIA and George II man, as Secretary of State and for War. The rampant hypocrisy of the only power ever to use nuclear weapons to tell other powers what they may or may not do with nuclear weapons only has a credence because the US has a big military stick - and some day some of the US elite may be mad enough to use it. It can be no surprise that Iran and Venezuela have made common cause.

END NOTES CHAPTER 3

1. See Wilde (2006) p 3-6.
2. Curzon quoted in Freeburg, R & Goralski, R. War and Oil. New York, Morrow 1987 p 15.
3. Barsamian, D. Targeting Iran. San Francisco City Light Books 2007 p 17-20.
4. As the best example see Pilger, J. Iran: A War is Coming www.johnpilger.com 1st February 2007. Further Articles in April 2007
5. Kuniholm, B.R. The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East. Great Power Conflict and Diplomacy in Iran, Turkey and Greece. Princeton University Press, 1980 p 6-11.
6. On Azerbaijan, see Atabaki, T. Azerbaijan: Ethnicity and the Struggle for Power in Iran. 1993, this Edition, London IB Tauris 2000 p 10-12. By 1200, Tabriz was one of the largest cities in the world with a population then of around 250,000, which stayed at around this level until 1900. By 1400 Tabriz was the capital of a Turkomen Empire stretching from Anatolia to Herat.
7. Hiro, D. Between Marx and Mohammed: Changing Face of Central Asia. 1994. This ed , London, Harper Collins 1995 p 6.
8. Kamrava, M. The Political History of Modern Iran. From Tribalism to Theocracy Westport 1992 p 24. Kazemadth p 5-9, 21-2.
9. On the Kurds and their many rebellions see Chaliand, G (Ed). A People without a Country. London, Zed Press 1993.
10. McLean, D. Britain and her Buffer State. The Collapse of the Persian Empire. 1890-1914. London, Royal Historical Society, 1979 p 1, 15-16, 29, 37-9, 42. Gillard, D. The Struggle for Asia 1828-1914. A Study in British and Russian Imperialism. London, Methuen 1977 p 96-8. On the fight for Kharg Island in the 1980s see Simons, G. Iraq. From Sumer to Saddam. New York, St Martins Press 1996 p 310-13.
11. McLean p 3 -9, Gillard p 157.

On US funding for the Baluchi population in Iran see www.globalsecurity.org and Daily Telegraph, 6 January 2009. The Baluchi population also spreads into Afghanistan and Pakistan. Baluchistan – a protectorate in 1947 was invaded by Pakistan in 1948 and there has also been an on-going campaign for independence.

12. Yergin, D. The Prize. The Epic Quest for Oil, Money and Power. New York, Schuster & Schuster p p 129-31.

13. Suny, R.G. The Baku Commune 1917-1918: Class and Nationality in the Russian Revolution. Princeton University Press 1972 p 3-44.
14. For an early detailed description of the unrest in Iran that was closely linked to those of Russia in 1905, see Browne, E.G. The Persian Revolution of 1905-9. London Frank Cass 1910, this ed 1966, see especially p 115-41.
15. See McLean p 73-80. On Grey's anti-German stance at the Foreign Office and the diplomatic game that led to 1914 see Wilde (2006) p 80-3.
16. Atabaki p 24-34.
17. Bamberg, J.H. A History of the BP Company. Volume 2. The Anglo Iranian Years 1928-54 p 11 & Yergin p 135-7.
18. Sampson, A. The Seven Sisters. The Great Oil Companies and the World they made. London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1975 p 71-4. The quote is p 72, see also McLean p 125-6.
19. On the British/French squabble over Iraq and Syria see Simons and Wilde (2006) Chapter 3 and on Belgian neutrality see Wilde same chapter.
20. Shwadran, B. The Middle East, Oil and the Great Powers. Israeli University Press, 1955; This Ed 1973 p 22-8.
21. Kazemi, F. Peasant Uprisings in Twentieth Century in Iran, Iraq and Turkey in Kazemi, F & Westbury, J. (ed) Peasants and Politics in the Modern Middle East p 105-17. On Baku and the land see Suny Quote p xiii and p 69, 90-100, 275 – 96.
22. Halliday, F. Iran: Dictatorship and Development. London, Penguin 1979 p 9-32, Shwadran p 37, Kamrava p 51-6.
23. On the historical statistics see BP Statistics and Shwadran: on Iran p 47, 51-2, 132. Iraqi production began in 1927, but only took off in 1935 (p 241). Bahrain production began in 1933 (p392). The Saudi Aramco concession was signed in 1933, but production did not go above 100,000 bpd until 1946 (p349).
24. Parsa, M. Social Origins of the Iranian Revolution. London, Rutgers University Press 1989 p 34-5. Kamrava p 49,65, Halliday p 11, 34.
25. Keddie, N.R. & Gasiorowski, M (ed). Neither East nor West: Iran, Soviet Union and the USA. Yale University Press, 1990. Especially see Herrmann, R. The Role of Iran in Soviet Perception and Policy 1946-88. Even George Kennan, classic exponent of the Cold War philosophy recognized the proximity of Northern Iran to Russia's oil p 63-70. Yergin, D. Shattered Peace. The Origins of the Cold War and the National Security State. London Andre Deutsch 1978 sees the first Cold War crisis as Iran (p 164).

26. Marshall, P. Revolution and Counter Revolution in Iran. London, Bookmarks 1988. p 39.
27. Sampson p 141-8, Parsa p 43-4.
28. Halliday p 25.
29. Sachar, H.M. Europe Leaves the Middle East 1936-54 London, Allen Lane 1974 p 339 – 349; also see Barsamian p 16 – 17
30. On the equivalent importance of the State in Venezuela see Chapter 4, Wilde (2011).
31. Tariq Ali. Clash of Fundamentalisms. Crusades, Jihad and Modernity. Between Hammer and Anvil London, Verso 2002, p 132
32. Kamrava p 82, the quote is p 256.
33. Ebadi, S. Iran Awakening. New York, Random House 2006 p 35-9,
34. Barsamian p 20, 141- 2,
35. For the Schumpeter quote see Wilde (2006) p 6.
36. Hersh in the New Yorker 7 July 2008.
37. Osborne, P The Iraq Legacy (2008).