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In November 1952, Christopher Montague Woodhouse of Britain's Secret Intelligence Service (SIS) and Sam Falle of Britain's Foreign Office met with officials of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in Washington. Their ostensible purpose was to discuss covert operations the two countries were undertaking in Iran to prepare for a possible war with the Soviet Union. After these discussions, they proposed that the United States and Britain jointly carry out a coup d'état against Iranian Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddeq. The British had been trying to overthrow Mosaddeq since he was named prime minister in April 1951, after leading a movement to nationalize Iran's British-controlled oil industry. Their latest effort, undertaken in collaboration with retired General Fazlollah Zahedi, had collapsed in October 1952, resulting in the arrest of several of Zahedi's collaborators and leading Mosaddeq to break diplomatic relations with Britain. Having failed repeatedly to overthrow Mosaddeq, and no longer having an embassy to work from in Iran, the British hoped the Americans now would take up the task.¹

The CIA officials who participated in this initial meeting were surprised by the British proposal and said only that they would study it. Woodhouse and Falle then met with Assistant Secretary of State Henry Byroade and other State Department officials, who were unenthusiastic about the proposal but also agreed to study it. They also met with CIA Deputy Director Allen Dulles, who was slated to become CIA director under president-elect Dwight Eisenhower, and with Frank Wisner, the head of CIA covert operations. Dulles and Wisner expressed interest in the proposal and said Eisenhower and Allen Dulles' brother, secretary of state-designate John Foster Dulles, might agree to it after the new administration was inaugurated in January. Woodhouse and Falle had brought with them the names of 15 Iranians the British considered appropriate candidates to replace Mosaddeq, though Fazlollah Zahedi was their first choice. They discussed these names with CIA officials, who agreed that Zahedi was the best candidate. At about the same time, British officials in London proposed a joint coup to Kermit Roosevelt, the 36 year-old grandson of Theodore Roosevelt and head of CIA covert operations in the Middle East, who was returning home from a trip to the region. Roosevelt expressed interest and said he had already been thinking about the idea himself.²

These discussions eventually led to the joint CIA-SIS coup against Mosaddeq that occurred on August 19, 1953. This paper gives a detailed account of the coup, focusing first on the decisionmaking and preparations that preceded it and then on the execution of the coup itself. This account is based on my interviews with many of the American and British participants, a CIA history of the coup that was leaked to The New York Times and published on the Times' internet site in April 2000, the memoirs of several participants, and documents from U.S. and

British historical archives.³ My interviews clarified the broad outlines of these events and many crucial details, including some that are not covered in the CIA history. The CIA history confirms most of what I learned in my interviews and adds a wealth of additional detail. The memoirs and the U.S. and British archival material contain further detail, especially about events preceding the coup. These sources together provide a thorough account of the coup, though a few important issues remain unclear. Since almost all of the key participants in these events have passed away and most CIA documents on the coup have been destroyed,⁴ these issues may never be clarified.

The U.S. Decision to Undertake the Coup

Since the beginning of the Cold War, the United States had considered Iran a “vital” Western ally because of its strategic location between the Soviet Union and the Persian Gulf oilfields. After the 1945-1946 Azerbaijan crisis, when Soviet-backed separatists tried to create “autonomous republics” in two of Iran’s northern provinces, the main concern U.S. officials had about Iran was that political instability might emerge there, creating conditions that could be exploited by the communist Tudeh (Mass) Party. The Tudeh Party was closely aligned with the Soviet Union and was quietly expanding its cadres and infiltrating key institutions during this period, with the goal of eventually seizing power. U.S. officials believed that the Tudeh was pursuing a “popular front” strategy that involved building alliances with progressive non-communist forces. They were deeply concerned that it would try to subvert the National Front (Jebheh-ye Melli), a coalition of political parties and prominent individuals established by Mosaddeq in 1949 to promote democracy and nationalization of the oil industry. After Mosaddeq became prime minister, U.S. officials feared that the dispute with Britain over oil nationalization would create political unrest that would strengthen the Tudeh and make Mosaddeq increasingly dependent on it, perhaps enabling the Tudeh to seize power and bring Iran into the Soviet camp. With memories of the Azerbaijan crisis and the 1948 Soviet-backed coup in Czechoslovakia still fresh, and with a bitter war against Soviet-backed forces raging in Korea, these fears were very real.⁵

The Truman administration knew that Mosaddeq was very wary of the Tudeh and the Soviet Union and believed that his popularity could make him an effective bulwark against Tudeh influence. As a result, U.S. officials initially developed a positive relationship with Mosaddeq, making a series of proposals to settle the oil dispute, persuading Britain not to invade Iran in May 1951 and again in September 1951, and hosting Mosaddeq in Washington in October 1951. However, when Mosaddeq resigned in July 1952 and was swept back into office in a tumultuous popular uprising, U.S. officials became deeply concerned that political instability would grow in Iran, perhaps giving the Tudeh an opportunity to seize power. They therefore conducted a thorough review of the situation in Iran, considering all possible means of preventing further deterioration, including a coup. However, they soon concluded that Mosaddeq was “the only and uncertain chance of preventing the rapid spread of chaos,” and they decided to continue supporting him and not to back a coup against him.⁶

Soon after the July 1952 uprising, Mosaddeq persuaded parliament to grant him expanded powers so he could circumvent the obstructionist activity of his British-backed opponents. However, in the following months several key allies left Mosaddeq's coalition and began to work against him. The most important was Ayatollah Abolqasem Kashani, a prominent clergyman and political activist, who was a leading member of Mosaddeq's coalition and had played a key role in organizing the July uprising. Kashani was elected speaker of parliament in August. He then met several times with Fazlollah Zahedi, who had been approached by the British as a possible candidate for anti-Mosaddeq activity, and encouraged Zahedi to work against Mosaddeq. U.S. officials received reports in this period that Kashani also met with Tudeh leaders, who agreed to help him replace Mosaddeq and work against U.S. influence in Iran. Several other key members of the coalition also turned against Mosaddeq, including Hossein Makki, Abol Hassan Haerizadeh, and Mozaffar Baqa'i, who headed the pro-labor, anti-communist Toilers (Zahmatkeshan) Party. U.S. officials were very alarmed by these events, viewing them as evidence that Mosaddeq was losing control over the situation. They were especially concerned about the growing strength and independence of Kashani, who they believed was hostile to Western interests and more willing than Mosaddeq to tolerate the Tudeh.⁷

In light of these trends, Iran analysts in the CIA and other U.S. government agencies undertook a comprehensive review of conditions in Iran, producing a National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) on Iran in mid-November 1952. The NIE did not foresee severe political instability or a Tudeh seizure of power in the near future, stating "it appears probable that a National Front government will remain in power through 1953." It also stated that Mosaddeq "almost certainly desires to keep US support as a counterweight to the USSR." However, the NIE warned that "if present trends in Iran continue unchecked beyond the end of 1953, rising internal tensions and continued [economic] deterioration might lead to a breakdown of government authority and open the way for at least a gradual assumption of control by [the] Tudeh." The National Security Council revised its statement of U.S. policy toward Iran in mid-November, concluding that "the Iranian situation contains very great elements of instability" and "failure to arrest present trends in Iran involves a serious risk to the national security of the United States."⁸

U.S. officials had promised Woodhouse and Falle in November 1952 that they would study the British proposal for a coup. Accordingly, Iran analysts reexamined the situation and produced an updated version of the NIE in early January 1953. The updated NIE was almost identical to the original version, implying that its authors believed no substantial changes had occurred in Iran since early November. The State Department's Office of Intelligence Research also carried out a major study of Iran at this time which drew similar conclusions.⁹

Almost all U.S. officials working on Iran at the time shared this view that a Tudeh takeover was not imminent but might occur if conditions did not improve. However, they

differed considerably about what approach the United States should take to prevent a Tudeh takeover. Secretary of State Dean Acheson continued to oppose a coup and still hoped to forestall a Tudeh takeover by resolving the oil dispute. Accordingly, in November 1952 he instructed U.S. Ambassador to Iran Loy Henderson to make another attempt to settle the dispute. Outgoing President Harry Truman presumably shared this view. Assistant Secretary of State Byroade and Ambassador Henderson also opposed a coup and preferred diplomatic efforts to resolve the crisis, though both later changed their minds. Henderson's deputy in the Tehran embassy, Gordon Mattison, also opposed a coup, as did CIA Chief of Station Roger Goiran, who reportedly viewed the idea as "putting U.S. support behind Anglo-French colonialism." Goiran loyally participated in some of the planning sessions for the coup and helped prepare for it in Tehran, and he may eventually have come to support it. However, he inexplicably stepped down as station chief two weeks before the coup began. Several CIA Iran specialists in Washington also opposed the coup.¹⁰

However, top officials in the incoming Eisenhower administration favored a more aggressive approach toward the Soviet Union and its allies, both globally and in Iran. During the 1952 election campaign, at the height of the Cold War and the "red scare" in Washington, John Foster Dulles and other Republicans had called for a "rollback of the Iron Curtain" and had accused Truman of letting Iran become "a second China." Although their enthusiasm for "rollback" later waned, Dulles, his brother Allen, and other officials slated for top positions in the new administration were eager to take a more aggressive posture toward the Soviets. They also were more eager than their predecessors to use the CIA's covert political action capabilities. The Dulles brothers discussed the British proposal for a coup frequently in the weeks before Eisenhower was inaugurated on January 20, 1953. Another important advocate was Walter Bedell Smith, who was CIA director under Truman and became Dulles' under secretary of state. Frank Wisner and Kermit Roosevelt of the CIA strongly favored a coup as well, as did John Waller, who had just returned to CIA headquarters after serving in Iran since 1946.¹¹

Soon after Eisenhower was inaugurated, Woodhouse and a British Foreign Office official traveled to Washington and had a series of meetings with U.S. officials to discuss the coup proposal. In a meeting they had with the Dulles brothers, Roosevelt, and Smith, John Foster Dulles informally approved their proposal and agreed that Zahedi should replace Mosaddeq. He also named Roosevelt to lead the operation, which was given the codename TPAJAX. Eisenhower still hoped that political stability could be restored in Iran by resolving the oil dispute. In a March 4 National Security Council meeting, he stated that the United States should consider disassociating itself from the British position and make a \$100 million loan to Iran. However, a week later, after Mosaddeq broke off the last round of oil negotiations and British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden implored Dulles not to assist Iran, Eisenhower changed his position and declared that a unilateral U.S. initiative of this sort almost certainly would not work. The CIA was authorized to begin planning a coup at some point in March, and Henderson and Goiran were then informed of the decision. On April 4, \$1 million was given to the Tehran CIA

station for use “in any way that would bring about the fall of Mosaddeq,” subject to the approval of Goiran and Henderson.¹²

Conditions continued to deteriorate in Iran during the winter and spring of 1953. Henderson’s attempt to resolve the oil dispute foundered and was conclusively rejected by Mosaddeq on March 9. Kashani, Baqa’i, and other prominent figures moved increasingly into the anti-Mosaddeq camp, especially after Mosaddeq won a bitter struggle to renew his expanded powers in early January. Zahedi and his allies created an incident that led Iran’s monarch, Shah (King) Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, to threaten to leave Iran in late February. Kashani and other opposition leaders then organized large crowds that attacked Mosaddeq’s home and clashed violently with his supporters, in what Fakhreddin Azimi calls a “proto-coup.” Zahedi and other retired military officers were arrested briefly in connection with these events. Although the Tudeh Party was not actively involved, the U.S. embassy received reports afterward that it was drawing closer to Mosaddeq. In late April, close associates of Zahedi and Baqa’i kidnaped and murdered Mosaddeq’s police chief, General Mahmud Afshartus, in what was widely considered another coup attempt. In addition, Soviet leader Joseph Stalin died suddenly in March, creating uncertainty about the future course of Soviet foreign policy.¹³

These events led U.S. officials to become increasingly concerned about Iran during this period. They continued to believe that a Tudeh takeover was not imminent. However, the defections of Kashani and other National Front leaders had weakened Mosaddeq by reducing his ability to organize crowds in the streets. As a result, U.S. officials believed that Mosaddeq would have to rely increasingly on the Tudeh, which could mobilize crowds on his behalf. Moreover, Mosaddeq’s rejection of the proposed oil agreement meant Iran’s economy would continue to deteriorate, increasing popular unrest and playing into the hands of the Tudeh and its “popular front” strategy. These adverse trends reinforced the conviction of U.S. officials who already favored a coup and led some key U.S. officials who had opposed the idea earlier – Byroade, Henderson, and perhaps Goiran – to change their minds. However, a few U.S. officials remained resolutely opposed to a coup.¹⁴

The Coup Plan

CIA specialists on Iran began to prepare for the coup after they were authorized to do so in March. They studied the situation and completed a preliminary report on April 16 which concluded that a CIA-backed coup was feasible and Zahedi was the best candidate to replace Mosaddeq. The CIA favored Zahedi because he was courageous, well-respected, pro-American, and the only person openly vying for the premiership. U.S. officials then formally decided that the CIA should carry out the operation jointly with the SIS. They arranged to have CIA consultant Donald Wilber and SIS officer Norman Darbyshire meet in Nicosia, Cyprus in mid-May to draw up the initial draft of a plan for the coup. Wilber was an architect and archaeologist who had worked extensively in Iran and other Middle Eastern countries in the 1930s and served

in Iran during World War II in the CIA's predecessor, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). After the war he earned a Ph.D. at Princeton and worked part-time for the CIA, specializing in psychological warfare operations in the Middle East and South Asia. In this capacity he traveled frequently to Iran and had been stationed there from January to July 1952, running the CIA station's main political action operation. Darbyshire had served in Iran for many years, eventually running the main SIS political action operation. He now headed the SIS's Iran station, which had been moved to Nicosia after Mosaddeq broke diplomatic relations with Britain.¹⁵

Wilber and Darbyshire worked on the initial draft from May 13 until May 30, maintaining contact with CIA headquarters and the Tehran CIA station through a special three-way communications channel that had been set up for this purpose. Darbyshire and other British officials were very deferential in these and subsequent meetings, allowing the CIA to take the lead in planning the coup. Wilber and Darbyshire began by reviewing the most prominent Iranian political figures of the day to determine whether Zahedi really was the best candidate to replace Mosaddeq and who else might be enlisted into the operation. They quickly agreed that Zahedi was the only candidate with the necessary "vigor and courage," though U.S. and British officials in the past had described him as "unscrupulous" and an "opportunist." They also agreed that every effort should be made to obtain the Shah's cooperation, which would be crucial in persuading Iranian military officers and civilians to back the coup. Recognizing that the Shah's indecisive personality and "pathological fear of British intrigues" might make this difficult, they concluded that forceful efforts would be needed to persuade him to support the plot.¹⁶

The coup planners then discussed how the operation would be carried out. Darbyshire described to Wilber the main SIS political action network in Iran, which was run by the three Rashidian brothers. The Rashidians had been working for the British since World War II and had built up a network of contacts and operational agents that encompassed much of Iran's political elite, including members of parliament and other politicians, members of the royal court, military officers, businessmen, newspaper editors, clergymen, mob leaders, and apparently even a "British" wing of the Tudeh Party. After Iran nationalized its oil industry in April 1951, the main task of this network was to destabilize Mosaddeq's government. The Rashidians did this by planting anti-Mosaddeq articles in the press, organizing anti-Mosaddeq street mobs, trying to persuade influential people to oppose Mosaddeq, and in other ways. The British gave them a monthly stipend of £10,000 (approximately \$28,000), which was a large amount of money in Iran at the time. The Rashidians began plotting with Zahedi against Mosaddeq in July 1952 and were among those arrested when Zahedi's British-backed plot was broken up in October. The British then developed a preliminary plan for a coup under which the Rashidians would use their network to seize control of Tehran and arrest Mosaddeq and his ministers. This was the plan Woodhouse and Falle proposed to U.S. officials in November 1952, and Darbyshire presumably brought it with him to Nicosia.¹⁷

Wilber told Darbyshire about the CIA's main political action network in Iran, which had first been created in the late 1940s for an anti-Soviet operation codenamed TPBEDAMN. TPBEDAMN was created to counter the Soviet Union's extensive overt and covert political activity in Iran, most of which was carried out through the Tudeh Party, which had an elaborate propaganda apparatus and held frequent rallies and demonstrations. Under TPBEDAMN, Wilber and other CIA psychological warfare experts prepared newspaper articles, cartoons, leaflets, and books and had them translated into Persian by Iranians working under TPBEDAMN. CIA officers in Tehran then disseminated this material through Iranian newspapers and other outlets in ways that disguised ("gray" propaganda) or deliberately misrepresented ("black" propaganda) their real source. Most of this propaganda consisted of newspaper articles that portrayed the Soviet Union and the Tudeh as anti-Iranian or anti-Islamic, described the harsh reality of life in the Soviet Union, or explained the Tudeh's close relationship with the Soviets and its "popular front" strategy. CIA officers also funded anti-communist organizations such as the Pan-Iranist Party, the SOMKA (Socialist-e Melli-ye Kargaran-e Iran, or National Socialist Workers of Iran) Party, and the Toilers Party through TPBEDAMN and paid these organizations and mob organizers like Sha'ban "the brainless" Ja'fari to attack Tudeh rallies. They even gave money to Iranian clergymen to denounce the Soviet Union and the Tudeh. These activities were carried out through Iranian agents working under TPBEDAMN, so the newspaper editors, party leaders, clergymen, and other people involved generally did not know they were being manipulated by the CIA. Britain and the Soviet Union were, of course, carrying out similar activities in Iran as well.¹⁸

In late 1950 or early 1951, two Iranians named Ali Jalili and Farouq Keyvani approached the U.S. embassy and offered to work on behalf of the United States to weaken Soviet influence in Iran and strengthen the monarchy. CIA Station Chief Goiran determined that Jalili and Keyvani had a network of their own and a good understanding of intelligence "tradecraft," which he assumed they had learned from the British or German intelligence services. Goiran arranged to have them travel to the United States, where Roosevelt and other CIA officers evaluated them and concluded that they could be very useful. They demonstrated their effectiveness in July 1951 by having agents provocateurs organize a "black" demonstration ostensibly by the Tudeh against U.S. envoy Averell Harriman, who was in Tehran trying to resolve the oil dispute. The CIA decided to hire Jalili and Keyvani at about this time, giving them the codenames Nerren and Cilley. Wilber went to Tehran in January 1952 on a six-month assignment to work with Jalili and Keyvani and learn more about their network and capabilities, and they soon became the principal agents in TPBEDAMN. By the time Wilber and Darbyshire met in Nicosia, Jalili and Keyvani had over 100 sub-agents in their network and TPBEDAMN apparently had a budget in the range of \$500,000 to \$1 million per year—roughly one percent of the CIA's entire \$82 million budget for covert operations. Wilber described their network to Darbyshire but did not reveal their names, telling him the names of two other Iranian agents instead.¹⁹

After Wilber and Darbyshire revealed the assets each country would contribute, they began to develop a plan for the coup. Their initial plan had six steps. First, the Tehran CIA station would immediately begin to destabilize Mosaddeq's government with propaganda. This destabilization campaign would be expanded sharply just before the coup to bring anti-Mosaddeq sentiment to a "fever pitch." Second, Zahedi would immediately begin to organize a network of army officers to carry out the military side of the coup, using \$60,000 from the CIA and SIS. To assist him, the CIA station would, if necessary, try to "subsidize" key officers. Third, Ambassador Henderson and an unnamed U.S. envoy would try to secure the Shah's cooperation and "maneuver" him into appointing Zahedi. Fourth, the Rashidians would "purchase" the cooperation of enough members of Iran's parliament to permit a "quasi-legal" vote to dismiss Mosaddeq from office. Fifth, on the morning of "coup day," Jalili and Keyvani, the Rashidians, and unnamed religious and bazaar leaders would organize thousands of demonstrators to take sanctuary (bast) in the parliament compound and denounce Mosaddeq for being "anti-religious" and leading Iran toward collapse. This would trigger the "quasi-legal" vote in parliament to dismiss Mosaddeq. At the same time, Zahedi's military network would take steps to stop the expected reaction by the Tudeh Party and pro-Mosaddeq Qashqai tribal forces. Finally, if this "quasi-legal" effort failed, Zahedi's military network would forcibly seize power.²⁰

Wilber and Darbyshire completed this version of the plan on May 30 and sent copies to Washington and London, where CIA and SIS officers reviewed it. On May 29 CIA paramilitary warfare expert George Carroll arrived in Nicosia to begin planning the military side of the coup. Wilber, Roosevelt, Goiran, and Carroll then met in Beirut on June 10-13 to work further on the plan. They decided that it would not be necessary to take action against Qashqai tribal forces, greatly simplifying the military planning. Goiran, who continued to oppose the coup, suggested that they develop an alternative plan that would involve backing a plot of some sort then being developed by one or two of the Amini brothers and the Qashqai tribal khans (chiefs). Goiran's colleagues agreed to keep this option alive, but they did not pursue it further. Wilber and Roosevelt then traveled to London on June 15 and met with SIS officials, who added a few minor comments on the plan but continued to defer to the Americans. They then returned to Washington on June 17 and wrote up the final version of the plan, incorporating the revisions made in Beirut and London.²¹

The final coup plan consisted of the six steps outlined in the Nicosia plan but provided more detail on how these steps would be financed and carried out. A sum of \$150,000 was budgeted for the pre-coup destabilization campaign, whose goal was to "create, extend, and enhance public hostility and distrust and fear of Mosaddeq and his government." This campaign was to include a "massive" "gray" and "black" propaganda effort immediately before the coup, whose main themes would be that Mosaddeq was pro-Tudeh and anti-Islamic; he was deliberately destroying army morale and promoting economic collapse; he was fostering regional separatism to facilitate a Soviet invasion; and he had been corrupted by power and was being manipulated by unscrupulous advisors. One part of this propaganda effort called for the

dissemination of falsified “black” documents detailing a secret agreement under which the Tudeh would use all of its resources to support Mosaddeq against religious leaders and the army and police. The destabilization campaign also was to include anti-Mosaddeq political activity by Islamic leaders and bazaar merchants. The plan stated that the CIA team in Iran had “firm contacts” with prominent Islamic leaders, whose “pro-Zahedi capabilities are very great.” These contacts almost certainly were arranged through the Rashidians. The Islamic leaders were expected to make speeches opposing Mosaddeq and supporting the Shah, tell the Shah privately that they supported him, and organize anti-Mosaddeq demonstrations. An Islamic “terrorist gang” – almost certainly the Fada’iyan-e Islam (Warriors of Islam) – would threaten pro-Mosaddeq officials. Bazaaris also would organize demonstrations and spread rumors against Mosaddeq. The Rashidians, Jalili, and Keyvani presumably would use their networks to assist these activities.²²

Zahedi had already begun to receive the \$60,000 allocated under the Nicosia plan for his efforts to organize a military network. Under the final plan, the CIA budgeted another \$75,000 to enable Zahedi “to win additional friends and influence key people.” The final plan called for Zahedi to appoint a military secretariat headed by an officer acceptable to the United States and Britain. The CIA team carrying out the coup would brief this secretariat on the military aspects of the plan, which called for army units to arrest Mosaddeq, his chief associates, and over 100 leading Tudeh activists; take control of Tehran’s streets; and seize targets such as the army general staff headquarters, the police and gendarmerie headquarters, the army radio station, Radio Tehran, the telephone exchange, post and telegraph offices, the parliament, the national bank, and Mosaddeq’s home. The military secretariat then would recruit appropriate officers to carry out these tasks. The plan also called for Zahedi to appoint a director of press and propaganda, who would be subject to U.S. and British approval. After the coup, this individual would be responsible for running Radio Tehran and overseeing a propaganda effort aimed at promoting political stability, presumably with help from the CIA team and the TPBEDAMN network.²³

The final plan called for a much more elaborate effort to persuade the Shah to support the coup. It described the Shah as “a creature of indecision, beset by formless doubts and fears, [who] must be induced to play his role.” Ambassador Henderson had been called back to Washington by this time and would remain away from Iran until after the coup as part of a “war of nerves” against Mosaddeq, so he could no longer participate in this effort. In his place, the final plan proposed that the Shah’s twin sister, Princess Ashraf, be recruited to oversee an effort to persuade the Shah to support the coup and back Zahedi. Asadollah Rashidian, who was a frequent guest at the Shah’s palace, would also participate in this effort, as would retired U.S. Army General Norman Schwartzkopf, who had gained the Shah’s confidence when he commanded Iran’s gendarmerie during 1942-1948. Princess Ashraf, Rashidian, and Schwartzkopf would visit the Shah repeatedly and try to persuade him to sign royal decrees (farmans) naming Zahedi army chief of staff and calling on the army to accept Zahedi’s orders,

as well as an open letter ordering army officers to support Zahedi. Since the Shah would soon “brood and doubt,” he would then be “removed from the capital” until after the coup, apparently to prevent him from rescinding these actions. Note that the plan did not call for the Shah to sign decrees dismissing Mosaddeq and appointing Zahedi, presumably because the planners feared he might refuse to do so. The plan states that the coup would be carried out “without the Shah’s active cooperation,” if necessary.²⁴

The final plan also explained in more detail how the “quasi-legal” overthrow of Mosaddeq would be accomplished. It would begin with “staged attacks against respected religious leaders,” presumably carried out by the mob leaders in the Rashidian and TPBEDAMN networks. Other religious leaders would blame these attacks on Mosaddeq and issue statements denouncing him. They would then take sanctuary in the parliament compound and call on their followers to do the same in mosques and other public buildings throughout Tehran. The Rashidians, Jalili, and Keyvani would organize crowds to participate in this effort. At the same time, bazaar leaders would close the Tehran bazaar to dramatize the situation. Zahedi would then take over as chief of staff, arrest Mosaddeq, and carry out the other military measures described above. The members of parliament who had been “purchased” would vote to dismiss Mosaddeq and appoint Zahedi prime minister. Zahedi would assume office, “with or without a royal decree.” Only then would the Shah return to Tehran and, presumably, ratify the parliament’s actions. The plan also called for the latter phases of this process to be implemented if Mosaddeq offered his resignation or tried to force the Shah into exile in a bid to outmaneuver his adversaries. If this “quasi-legal” effort failed, Zahedi’s military forces would simply seize power by implementing the military aspects of the plan.²⁵

Of the \$285,000 budgeted for the coup under the final plan, \$147,500 was to be provided by the United States and \$137,500 by Britain. It is not clear whether these funds were part of the \$1 million that had been given to the Tehran CIA station in April. In addition to this \$1 million, \$11,000 per week was allocated to the Tehran station beginning on May 20 to “purchase” members of parliament.²⁶

As the coup plan was being developed, a small group of State Department officials began examining the diplomatic aspects of the matter. They decided in early June that the United States should be prepared to make a large aid package available immediately to Mosaddeq’s successor and that Britain should give assurances that it would show an appropriate measure of flexibility in resolving the oil dispute after the coup. The Foreign Office finally gave such assurances on July 23.²⁷

With a detailed plan for the coup now ready, Secretary of State Dulles called a meeting of top State Department and CIA officials on June 25. The group unanimously endorsed the plan, though Kermit Roosevelt believed that at least three senior State Department officials who participated in the meeting quietly opposed the coup. This decision was communicated to

London, where Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden gave their approval on July 1. President Eisenhower and Secretary Dulles gave their final approval on July 11.²⁸

Anticipating that the operation would be approved, the CIA on June 22 created two teams in Washington to prepare for the coup. John Waller was put in charge of these teams and reported directly to Deputy CIA Director Frank Wisner, bypassing the CIA's Iran desk. One team, headed by Carroll, prepared a detailed plan for the military side of the coup, which Carroll then would present to Zahedi and his military secretariat. The other team, headed by Wilber, was responsible for preparing psychological warfare material to be used in the pre-coup destabilization campaign, including anti-Mosaddeq newspaper articles, cartoons, broadsheets, and wall posters. Roosevelt, who was to lead the coup, traveled to Iran in mid-July, arriving on July 19. Carroll, who was to oversee the military aspects of the operation, arrived in Iran on July 21. Goiran left Iran on August 2 and was replaced as station chief by Joe Goodwin, a former journalist who had covered the Azerbaijan crisis and had served in the CIA station since September 1952. CIA officer John Leavitt was sent to Nicosia to maintain liaison with the SIS Iran station and oversee the Tehran-Nicosia-Washington communications channel. The Tehran CIA station arranged to maintain covert liaison with Zahedi, who was in hiding at this time, through his son Ardeshir; and it established direct contact with the Rashidians in late June.²⁹

The Military Network

Carroll's military planning team began its activities by trying to determine which senior officers in the Iranian armed forces might be willing to participate in the coup. They quickly realized that neither the CIA nor U.S. military intelligence sources had much information about Iran's officer corps. They therefore asked the Tehran CIA station to find out which officers Zahedi was planning to work with and to gather information on its own about the officer corps and the organizational structure of the armed forces. The Tehran station soon reported back that most senior officers were loyal to Mosaddeq, including army chief of staff General Taqi Riahi and the commanders of at least three of the five army brigades based in Tehran. Carroll also sought information from the SIS, which reported that a Colonel Ashrafi, who was military governor of Tehran and commander of Tehran's Third Mountain Brigade, was willing to participate in the coup. Carroll's team therefore developed an initial plan that called for the Third Mountain Brigade to arrest Riahi and his staff and neutralize all other military forces in Tehran, which consisted of two additional infantry brigades and two armored brigades. They also enlisted the cooperation of Colonel Abbas Farzanegan, an Iranian military attaché in Washington who was working for the CIA as a translator in the TPBEDAMN operation. Farzanegan was given special training and a lie detector test in Washington and sent to Tehran in early July.³⁰

Carroll traveled to London on July 15 to work more on the military plan with SIS officials. They finalized lists of Iranian civilians, military personnel, and Tudeh members who would be arrested during the coup. They also developed a list of targets in Tehran that would be neutralized, including Riahi's office, the military communications network, the ministry of post and telegraph, and a machine gun factory. While Carroll was in London, Zahedi finally told the Tehran CIA station which officers he planned to work with. He did not have reliable contacts in any of the five Tehran brigades. Instead, he planned to work with the Shah's Imperial Guard, a unit consisting of 700 hand-picked soldiers, which was commanded by Colonel Nematollah Nasiri; with the army garrison at Kermanshah (525 kilometers west of Tehran), which was commanded by Colonel Teimur Bakhtiar; and with units from the army's transportation branch, the police, and the border guard. Zahedi also had failed to appoint a military secretariat, as called for in the coup plan. This information was passed on to Carroll, who concluded that Zahedi's assets were inadequate for carrying out the coup and that the Shah might realize this and refuse to support the plot. It was clear to the CIA team that "it would be necessary for CIA to seize the initiative and to furnish [Zahedi] with a military plan and military forces."³¹

Carroll arrived in Tehran on July 21 and made contact with Farzanegan, who had been renewing his contacts in the officers corps. Farzanegan reported that his old friends General Nader Batmanqelich and Colonel Hassan Akhavi might be useful. Carroll told Farzanegan to determine what assets Akhavi had. After a long delay Akhavi reported that he was in touch with three colonels who might be useful. He also reported that Colonel Ashrafi could not be trusted and that Batmanqelich lacked courage but might be willing to participate if he was appointed chief of staff after the coup. Akhavi introduced Carroll to a Colonel Zand-Karimi, deputy commander of the Second Mountain Brigade, who claimed to have a variety of useful contacts. Carroll, Farzanegan, and Akhavi then met repeatedly with Zand-Karimi on August 6-8 and, based on his contacts, developed a list of some 40 officers who held command positions in the five Tehran brigades and the police and might be useful in carrying out the coup. These officers became the military network for the coup. Farzanegan, Akhavi, and Zand-Karimi became the military secretariat and helped Carroll develop the final version of the military plan.³²

On August 9 or 10, Colonel Akhavi met with the Shah and described the military network to him. The Shah told Akhavi he wanted the armed forces' support if he decided to back the coup. This statement helped the military secretariat recruit officers into the military network. The Shah also asked Akhavi to meet with Zahedi, who did not know Akhavi or Zand-Karimi. On August 11 Akhavi met with Zahedi, who agreed to appoint Batmanqelich chief of staff. Zahedi then met with Farzanegan and asked him to head his military bureau and serve as his liaison with the CIA team. A retired general named Guilanshah, who was a long-standing ally of Zahedi, also joined the military network. Zahedi also met with Batmanqelich and with Zand-Karimi, who explained the military plan to him. On August 13 Carroll, Batmanqelich, and the military secretariat met and decided that the military network could be mobilized for action

within 48 hours of the Shah's decision to support the coup. They also decided to have Colonel Nasiri of the Imperial Guard deliver the Shah's decree dismissing Mosaddeq.³³

The Pre-Coup Destabilization Campaign

The plan for TPAJAX called for the Tehran CIA station to use the TPBEDAMN and Rashidian networks to destabilize Mosaddeq's government with propaganda and other covert means in the months prior to the coup.

Although TPBEDAMN was initially authorized as an anti-Soviet and anti-Tudeh operation, the Tehran CIA station had been carrying out covert activities against Mosaddeq and the National Front under its auspices at least since the summer of 1952. As discussed above, the Truman administration continued to support Mosaddeq during this period. However, Roosevelt and other top CIA officials had concluded by this time that Mosaddeq's refusal to settle the oil dispute on terms acceptable to the British was creating political instability in Iran, making a Tudeh takeover increasingly likely. Accordingly, despite Truman's policy of supporting Mosaddeq, they had instructed Wilber and the other CIA officers working on TPBEDAMN by the summer of 1952 to carry out covert activities aimed at undermining Mosaddeq and the National Front.³⁴

The main goals of this activity seem to have been to discredit Mosaddeq and other National Front leaders and create splits within the National Front. Much of this was aimed at Ayatollah Kashani, whom U.S. officials considered an anti-American, populist demagogue and a likely target of Tudeh overtures. CIA officers disseminated propaganda that attacked Kashani and tried to create friction between him and Mosaddeq. In an effort to build a clerical alternative to Kashani and drive pious Iranians away from the National Front, they gave money indirectly to a clergyman named Mohammad Taqi Falsafi, and possibly to other clergymen as well. Ironically, CIA officers also tried unsuccessfully to establish direct contact with Kashani in this period, and they indirectly gave him money. In addition, CIA officers tried to turn the Toilers and Pan-Iranist parties against Mosaddeq and provoke tension between pro-Mosaddeq and anti-Mosaddeq factions within these parties. In one case, a CIA contract officer approached Toilers' leader Baqa'i in the fall of 1952 and encouraged him to break with Mosaddeq; and the CIA gave Baqa'i money. The CIA also approached National Front leader Hossein Makki and Ayatollah Mohammad Behbehani, a well-known cleric, and may have given them money as well. The CIA's financial support for Falsafi, Kashani, and most or all of these other figures was provided through Iranians working under TPBEDAMN, so the recipients generally did not know the real source of this money. The Rashidians were carrying out similar activities on behalf of the British at this time.³⁵

It is not clear how much of an impact these activities or the parallel activities carried out by the Rashidians had in undermining Mosaddeq. Kashani, Baqa'i, Makki, and other National Front leaders had begun to turn against Mosaddeq by the fall of 1952, and they had conclusively

broken with him by early 1953. Moreover, the Toilers and Pan-Iranist parties both split into pro-Mosaddeq and anti-Mosaddeq factions in late 1952. This was precisely the time in which these activities were being carried out. However, these individuals were very ambitious and opportunistic and clearly had their own motives for breaking with Mosaddeq. Although new sources of financial support and hostile articles in the press may have contributed to their decisions to turn against Mosaddeq, it seems unlikely that they were as important in this regard as the personal motives of these individuals. Moreover, the CIA officers who carried out these activities disagreed among themselves about their impact: one believed they were “important” in turning Kashani and Baqa’i against Mosaddeq, but another believed their effect was “limited.”³⁶ While it is impossible now to judge how much of an impact these activities actually had, it seems best to conclude that they played only a minor role in undermining Mosaddeq at this time.

Whatever their earlier impact may have been, the scope of these anti-Mosaddeq activities increased sharply after the May 1953 Nicosia meetings. One such set of activities may have been an effort by the CIA team to “purchase” members of parliament with the \$11,000 per week allocated for this purpose on May 20. Parliament had only 79 members at the time, so this would have been a large amount of money for this purpose. Severe tension had existed for several months between Mosaddeq and his opponents in parliament, who were now led by Kashani and Baqa’i. Although Mosaddeq’s opponents often could not muster a majority to vote against him, they effectively paralyzed parliament by preventing a quorum from forming. These tensions continued after late May. Although pro-Mosaddeq members managed to oust Kashani as speaker by a 41-31 vote on July 1, they were not able to prevent a vote several days later appointing Hossein Makki to supervise the government’s monetary policy. With Makki in this powerful position, and with parliament effectively paralyzed, Mosaddeq called on his supporters in parliament to resign. Although many members did resign, parliament remained open. Mosaddeq then staged a referendum on August 4 in which Iranians voted overwhelmingly to dissolve parliament. There were separate polling stations for “yes” and “no” votes, producing sharp criticism of Mosaddeq. Mosaddeq blamed the deadlock in parliament on “agents of foreigners” and justified the referendum by saying that almost half of the members of parliament were on the British payroll, which may well have been true. Mosaddeq’s government also closed down an opposition newspaper in early August.³⁷

Another set of anti-Mosaddeq activities the CIA carried out after the Nicosia meetings was an “all-out” propaganda campaign. Wilber’s psychological warfare team prepared a large amount of propaganda material at CIA headquarters and sent it by courier to Tehran on July 19. The CIA station then began to distribute this material on July 22 through the TPBEDAMN and Rashidian networks, who placed it in some 20 newspapers. Most of this material was distributed in Tehran, though some was used in Azerbaijan. One aspect of this propaganda campaign was an effort to turn clerical leaders against Mosaddeq by issuing “black” propaganda in the name of the Tudeh that threatened these leaders with “savage punishment” if they opposed Mosaddeq. Another was an effort to discredit Mosaddeq by claiming he was Jewish. The CIA team also

“relentlessly” attacked Mosaddeq for the conduct of the August 4 referendum. The CIA history states “there can be no doubt whatsoever that this [propaganda] campaign reached a very large audience and directly influenced their thinking in a most positive way.” CIA officials in Washington also tried to generate support for the coup by planting articles hostile to Mosaddeq in the U.S. press, including one in the August 10 issue of Newsweek that was titled “Iran: Reds Taking Over.”³⁸

The CIA team also used more aggressive means to undermine Mosaddeq in the weeks prior to the coup. Their Iranian agents made threatening “black” phone calls to clerical leaders in the name of the Tudeh and carried out a “sham bombing” at the home of one of these clerical leaders. They also had a “stink bomb” thrown into a Tehran mosque, and they may have arranged other attacks on mosques. As with the “black” propaganda described above, the goal of these activities was to turn clerical leaders against Mosaddeq. As part of their “war of nerves” against Mosaddeq, the CIA team persuaded the heads of the U.S. economic and military assistance groups in Iran to reduce their contact with pro-Mosaddeq officials. British officials developed plans to shut down Tehran’s central telephone exchange. CIA officers also took steps to neutralize the Qashqai-Amini “plot” mentioned above and prevent Qashqai tribal forces from assisting Mosaddeq. Henderson’s deputy, Gordon Mattison, apparently met with leaders of the Qashqai-Amini group and tried to “divert [their] attention from the real purpose of TPAJAX.” CIA officers were in regular contact with the Qashqai khans during this period, and Station Chief Goodwin traveled to southern Iran while the coup plot was underway to discourage the Qashqai from helping Mosaddeq. British officials offered to use their contacts to foment tribal revolts in the Qashqai region, though this does not seem to have occurred.³⁹

In addition to these covert activities, the United States also used overt diplomatic means to undermine Mosaddeq. Secretary of State Dulles deliberately snubbed Mosaddeq by skipping Iran when he visited Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Turkey in May 1953. In late May, Mosaddeq sent a secret letter to Eisenhower asking for U.S. economic aid and hinting that communist influence in Iran might increase if it was not forthcoming. Eisenhower did not reply for a month and then sent a letter to Mosaddeq bluntly turning down his request. The U.S. embassy spread rumors in Iran about Eisenhower’s letter, and the State Department then released both letters on July 9, deeply embarrassing Mosaddeq. CIA officials in Washington persuaded Secretary Dulles on July 28 to state publicly that growing Tudeh activity in Iran was of concern to the United States, putting further pressure on Mosaddeq. Finally, as discussed above, Ambassador Henderson conspicuously remained out of Iran for more than two months prior to the coup as part of the “war of nerves” against Mosaddeq.⁴⁰

Although these various destabilization activities were much more extensive than those carried out earlier under TPBEDAMN and the Rashidians, it remains difficult to judge how much of an effect they had. As we have seen, Mosaddeq himself blamed “agents of foreigners” for the deadlock in parliament; and the CIA history states that the CIA team’s influence in

parliament was “at least partially responsible” for Mosaddeq’s decision to hold what it considered a fraudulent referendum.⁴¹ However, the Rashidians undoubtedly had been engaged in similar activities before this time, and parliamentary opposition to Mosaddeq does not seem to have increased much after the CIA team was authorized to “purchase” members of parliament in late May. Therefore, while the CIA team’s efforts to manipulate parliament in this period may not have had much additional effect, it seems likely that these efforts, together with the Rashidians’ earlier efforts, undermined Mosaddeq by stiffening parliamentary opposition to him, thus encouraging him to undertake the referendum. The CIA’s propaganda campaign and other destabilization activities probably played some role in turning the clergy and other elements against Mosaddeq, though Kashani, most other leading clergymen, and most Iranians in general had already chosen sides by this time. Similarly, U.S. influence may have helped discourage the Qashqai from acting on Mosaddeq’s behalf, though it is doubtful that they could have acted quickly enough to help him. Consequently, while these activities probably helped undermine Mosaddeq in the weeks prior to the coup, they seem mainly to have exacerbated trends that were already underway.

Obtaining the Shah’s Support

The architects of TPAJAX believed that it was important to obtain the Shah’s support for the coup, both because he could confer the legitimacy of the monarchy upon it and because his approval was necessary to dismiss Mosaddeq and appoint Zahedi legally. However, there were two major obstacles to obtaining the Shah’s support. First, as discussed above, he was extremely indecisive. Second, he had repeatedly told Ambassador Henderson and Henderson’s predecessor that he opposed Zahedi as prime minister.⁴² The architects of TPAJAX therefore developed the plans discussed above to persuade the Shah to support the coup. Moreover, the CIA team intended to keep him out of Tehran while the coup was taking place so he would not change his mind; and it was prepared to carry out the coup without his support, if necessary.

The first version of the coup plan developed in late May had called for Henderson to approach the Shah about supporting the coup. Accordingly, Henderson met with the Shah on May 30 and asked what he thought about Zahedi as prime minister. The Shah replied that while Zahedi was not an “intellectual giant,” he would be acceptable if he had broad support, came to power legally, and was given “massive economic aid” by the United States or Britain. The Shah also told Henderson that he believed Mosaddeq was more capable of resolving the oil dispute and that Zahedi would not succeed if he came to power through a military coup.⁴³ Although these statements were more positive than the Shah’s previous statements about Zahedi, they certainly were not what U.S. officials had hoped for. These statements may have led the architects of TPAJAX to develop the more elaborate approach to the Shah featured in the final version of the plan.

The final plan called for Princess Ashraf to lead an effort to persuade the Shah to support the coup. Ashraf was in France at the time, so the CIA team asked Darbyshire and Colonel Stephen Meade of the U.S. army to go there and seek her help. Darbyshire and Meade arrived in France on July 10 and eventually located Ashraf on the Riviera on July 16, with the help of Assadollah Rashidian. Ashraf was reluctant to approach her brother about the plot. She apparently agreed to do so only after Darbyshire gave her a large sum of money and Meade made an unauthorized promise to her that the United States would support the Shah in the style to which he was accustomed if the coup failed. Ashraf then arrived in Iran on July 25, producing a sharp outcry from Mosaddeq's supporters. The Shah initially refused to see her, so she sent him a letter through Soleiman Behbudi, the head of the royal household (and a British agent), saying General Schwartzkopf would soon visit him. She then had a brief, stormy meeting with her brother on July 29 and returned to France. Within days Mosaddeq had learned the true purpose of Ashraf's visit.⁴⁴

Asadollah Rashidian then visited the Shah on July 30 and 31. To prove to the Shah that he was speaking on behalf of the British, he arranged to have a phrase chosen by the Shah broadcast over BBC radio. The Shah accepted Rashidian's connection to the British but told Rashidian he needed more time to consider the situation.⁴⁵

General Schwartzkopf had agreed to approach the Shah. He left the United States on July 21 under the pretext of touring the region. His main objective was to persuade the Shah to support the coup and sign a royal decree naming Zahedi chief of staff. Schwartzkopf arrived several days later in Tehran, where his visit was denounced in the pro-Mosaddeq press as a "nefarious plot." He then met with the Shah on August 1. The Shah refused to sign the decree, saying he was not fully confident of the army's loyalty; and he asked for more time to assess the situation.⁴⁶

During the following days, Kermit Roosevelt and Asadollah Rashidian both visited the Shah several times and tried to persuade him to sign the decree and support the coup. The Shah vacillated, at times agreeing to back the coup, but then changing his mind. Roosevelt threatened to leave the country and warned the Shah that the United States might act without him if he refused to cooperate, but he continued to vacillate. On August 9 or 10 Colonel Akhavi met with the Shah and described the military network to him, but still he refused to act. Rashidian then met with the Shah and told him Roosevelt would leave the country if he did not cooperate. The Shah finally agreed to sign the decree and meet with Zahedi the following day, but Rashidian failed to draw up the decree on time. The Shah then went to the royal resort at Ramsar, on the Caspian Sea. Roosevelt and Rashidian decided to ask him to sign two decrees, one dismissing Mosaddeq and the other appointing Zahedi. Rashidian and another British agent drew up the decrees. On the evening of August 12, Colonel Nasiri flew the decrees to Ramsar. The Shah then signed the decrees. Nasiri returned with them to Tehran on the following evening, and the Shah remained at Ramsar.⁴⁷

The Initial Coup Attempt

Mosaddeq's decision to close parliament in early August made it impossible for parliament to dismiss him and appoint Zahedi. Moreover, although the Rashidians had assured the CIA team that the clerical leaders included in the coup plan "would take whatever action was required of them," these leaders refused to cooperate.⁴⁸ Consequently, the "quasi-legal" effort to overthrow Mosaddeq was no longer feasible. The CIA team therefore improvised a new "quasi-legal" effort that focused on having the Shah, rather than parliament, dismiss Mosaddeq. The crucial step in this new effort was to persuade the Shah to sign the decrees dismissing Mosaddeq and appointing Zahedi. After these decrees were signed, the military network would arrest Mosaddeq and his colleagues and seize control of Tehran, as envisioned in the coup plan.

Once the Shah signed the decrees, the CIA team made plans for Nasiri to deliver the first decree and arrest Mosaddeq during the night of August 14-15. However, this action was inexplicably delayed until the following night, apparently by Zahedi and the military secretariat. The CIA team temporarily lost contact with Zahedi and the secretariat, so they did not learn about the delay until the night of August 14. Mosaddeq's government learned about the coup attempt on August 14 or 15, apparently through a variety of channels, and took steps to stop it. The decision to delay the arrest of Mosaddeq by one night was responsible for this breakdown in security, which led to the failure of the initial coup attempt.⁴⁹

On the evening of August 15, Nasiri went to the Imperial Guard base in western Tehran to assemble forces to arrest Mosaddeq. Other members of the military network began to implement their parts of the coup plan as well at this time, arresting several of Mosaddeq's cabinet ministers and certain loyalist military officers, occupying (but not shutting down) the central telephone exchange, and cutting telephone lines at certain locations. As these actions were occurring, Riahi contacted the commanders of the five Tehran brigades and had them deploy troops throughout the city. Pro-Mosaddeq forces arrested Nassiri when he tried to arrest Mosaddeq at his home. Other loyalist units seized army headquarters and other strategic locations and disarmed the Imperial Guard. The military network then began to collapse, with many officers refusing to carry out their assigned tasks. The Mosaddeq allies who had been arrested were released. By 2:30 am the anti-Mosaddeq forces had given up. General Batmanqelich "lost heart and went into hiding." Farzanegan fled to the U.S. embassy compound. At dawn, Radio Tehran broadcast the news that a coup attempt had been stopped.⁵⁰

On the morning of August 16, pro-Mosaddeq army units were deployed throughout Tehran and established control over the city. They began to arrest people suspected of participating in the coup attempt, eventually arresting Batmanqelich, Zand-Karimi, several other high-ranking officers in the military network, Baqa'i, Behbudi, Minister of Court Abolqasem Amini, the Shah's confidant Ernest Perron, and scores of other suspected plotters. They also

began an intense search for General Zahedi. The Tudeh published details of the coup attempt in its newspaper and held demonstrations, as did Mosaddeq supporters. Foreign Minister Hossein Fatemi, who had been arrested and then released during the night, addressed a large pro-Mosaddeq demonstration near the parliament and made a series of radio broadcasts, denouncing the Shah and calling him a traitor. Fatemi's newspaper described the royal court as a "brothel" and said the Iranian people wanted the Shah hanged. The Shah fled the country in panic without telling Zahedi or the CIA team, flying to Baghdad and later to Rome, with London apparently his eventual destination. News that the Shah had fled was broadcast that evening, and Fatemi and other Mosaddeq supporters made speeches demanding that he abdicate. On the following day the pro-Mosaddeq press declared that the United States was involved in the coup attempt, and Radio Tehran called for Zahedi to surrender. On August 18 the Tudeh called for a popular front of "anti-colonial organizations," abolition of the monarchy, the creation of a "democratic republic," and the expulsion of U.S. officials from Iran. Some pro-Mosaddeq newspapers announced that the Shah's dynasty had come to an end.⁵¹

On the morning of August 16, the CIA team got in touch with General Zahedi and his colleagues and took steps to prevent them from being arrested, hiding Zahedi in the house of one of the CIA officers and hiding his son, the Rashidians, Farzanegan, and Guilanshah in the U.S. embassy compound and other secure locations. They also sent a series of cables to CIA headquarters explaining what had happened. Roosevelt sent the commander of the U.S. military assistance mission, General Robert McClure, to see Riahi, who told him that the Shah's decree was a forgery and the army would support Mosaddeq. McClure then suggested to Roosevelt that they support Riahi in the hope that he might eventually try to overthrow Mosaddeq. Mattison and Melbourne told the CIA team that they thought there was no longer any hope of success. Jalili and Keyvani apparently wanted to end their participation in the plot but changed their minds after Roosevelt threatened to kill them if they did so.⁵²

On August 17, a message arrived from CIA headquarters advising Roosevelt to leave Iran as soon as possible. Roosevelt made contingency plans to evacuate himself, General Zahedi, and a few other participants in a U.S. military attaché's airplane. On the following day he asked headquarters for help in arranging the clandestine evacuation of up to 15 people, and headquarters told him to give up the coup attempt. In Baghdad, the Shah met with the U.S. ambassador to Iraq, telling him that "he would be looking for work shortly as he has a large family and very small means outside of Iran," and that he hoped eventually to move to the United States. In Rome, he told a reporter "I hope to go back [to Iran]. Everyone lives on hope."⁵³

From Failure to Success

Despite these setbacks, neither the CIA team nor Zahedi and his colleagues were ready to give up. On the morning of August 16, soon after the initial coup attempt failed, Roosevelt drove to

Zahedi's hiding place to discuss the situation. Zahedi and his son Ardeshir believed there was still some chance of success. They suggested that the plotters try to rally the army and public opinion to their side by publicizing the fact that the Shah had legally dismissed Mosaddeq and appointed Zahedi.⁵⁴

Accordingly, the CIA team made a series of efforts to publicize the Shah's actions. Roosevelt sent a message through CIA headquarters to the New York office of the Associated Press explaining what the Shah had done. The Associated Press then disseminated this information, and it was later picked up by Iranian newspapers. Jalili and Keyvani made copies of the Shah's decrees dismissing Mosaddeq and appointing Zahedi and disseminated them in the Iranian press. They also disseminated a broadsheet stating that the coup attempt that had occurred was aimed at overthrowing the Shah; and they fabricated a favorable interview with Zahedi and had it published the following day. Members of the CIA team also made copies of the Shah's decrees, using a duplicating machine in the home of one of the CIA officers. The CIA team contacted Kennett Love, a reporter for The New York Times, and invited him to a meeting with Ardeshir Zahedi at this CIA officer's home. Ardeshir told Love about the Shah's decrees and gave him copies, which he then distributed to other reporters. On the afternoon of August 16, the CIA team and Ardeshir Zahedi prepared a public statement by General Zahedi about the coup and had it disseminated. These press-related efforts continued during the following days. However, pro-Mosaddeq police units were soon posted at all Tehran print shops, making these efforts more difficult.⁵⁵

After the CIA team learned that the Shah had fled the country, it tried to have him make a favorable radio broadcast from Baghdad. CIA officers wrote statements for the Shah to make and sent them to CIA headquarters to be relayed to Baghdad. The State Department opposed a U.S. effort to contact the Shah, however, and suggested that the British do it. The British SIS station in Nicosia endorsed this idea and made preparations to send Darbyshire and Leavitt to Baghdad, but London opposed this. The Shah met secretly with the U.S. ambassador in Baghdad and asked for advice on whether he should publicly oppose Mosaddeq; he posed the same question to the British ambassador through an intermediary. Acting on his own initiative, the U.S. ambassador advised the Shah to make a statement emphasizing that he had acted constitutionally in dismissing Mosaddeq and that Mosaddeq's resistance constituted a coup against him. The Shah then broadcast a statement along these lines, adding that he had not abdicated. CIA headquarters sent propaganda guidance concerning the situation in Iran to the CIA stations in Karachi, New Delhi, Cairo, Damascus, Istanbul, and Beirut. It also directed a CIA officer in France to ask the Agha Khan, a prominent Islamic leader, to contact the Shah and offer moral support. The Agha Khan refused to do so.⁵⁶

The CIA team also made efforts to generate support for Zahedi in the Iranian armed forces. Either the CIA team or Zahedi's group drew up and circulated a declaration calling for the armed forces to support the Shah. The U.S. military advisory mission in Iran apparently

distributed blankets, boots, uniforms, electric generators, and medical supplies to the Iranian armed forces on an emergency basis “to create an atmosphere in which they could support the Shah.”⁵⁷

The CIA team also took more active steps to organize political activity against Mosaddeq. On the evening of August 16, one of the CIA officers gave Jalili and Keyvani \$50,000 to finance their anti-Mosaddeq activities. Jalili and Keyvani then had agents provocateurs organize a raucous “black” crowd to march into central Tehran on the following morning, pretending to be a Tudeh mob. Genuine Tudeh members, who did not realize this was a CIA-financed provocation, also came out into the streets, as did other Iranians. These crowds created chaos in Tehran, tearing down statues of the Shah and his father, Reza Shah, attacking Reza Shah’s mausoleum, and throwing stones at mosques. The Shah’s picture was removed from most homes, restaurants, offices, and government ministries in Tehran. These activities continued on the following day, with “black” Tudeh mobs looting and vandalized shops, smashing windows in mosques, clashing with Mosaddeq supporters, ransacking the headquarters of the pro-Mosaddeq Pan-Iranist Party, and calling for the expulsion of American diplomats. Several Americans were assaulted during these events. The Tudeh leadership responded to what they thought was a spontaneous popular uprising by calling for the abolition of the monarchy and the establishment of a “democratic republic.” The Rashidians may have carried out similar “black” activities during this period, and the Pan-Iranists and other pro-Mosaddeq organizations were also active in the streets. Statues of the Shah were also torn down in Tabriz and Shiraz; and pro-Mosaddeq or anti-Shah activity occurred in Kermanshah, Kerman, Babolsar, and probably other cities. With the exception of a small demonstration in Tehran on August 18, no anti-Mosaddeq or pro-Shah street activity occurred during this period.⁵⁸

These “black” activities helped undermine Mosaddeq in several ways. First, together with the informational activities described above, they contributed to the increasingly tense climate in Tehran, which led many Iranians to believe that Mosaddeq was losing control of the situation. As a result, many civilians and members of the armed forces either failed to back Mosaddeq or joined his opponents during the decisive events of August 19. Second, Ambassador Henderson, who suddenly returned to Iran on August 17, told Mosaddeq on August 18 that the mobs had been assaulting Americans and said he would recommend that all Americans leave Iran if the security forces could not provide better protection. In a fateful decision, Mosaddeq then telephoned the chief of police and ordered him to break up the mobs. The security forces, which had been confined to their barracks on the morning of August 17, attacked the “Tudeh” mobs in a “frenzy.” They reappeared in the streets the following day, and some of them joined the crowds that brought down Mosaddeq. Mosaddeq also told National Front leaders not to hold demonstrations and issued an order forbidding demonstrations and calling for offenders to be arrested, blaming “agitators” for the unrest. Mosaddeq’s supporters therefore were not in the streets on August 19. Finally, when the security forces attacked the

“Tudeh” mobs, the Tudeh leadership ordered its cadres to withdraw. Tudeh forces therefore also were not in the streets on August 19.⁵⁹

On the evening of August 17, Roosevelt had a long meeting with the Zahedis, Farzanegan, Guilanshah, and the Rashidians. In this meeting they decided to try to launch an uprising against Mosaddeq on August 19, based on three sets of activities. First, they decided to contact Ayatollah Behbahani and ask him to persuade Iran’s leading Shi’i clergyman, Ayatollah Mohammad Hossein Borujerdi, to issue a religious decree (*fatva*) calling for a holy war against communism. It is not clear whether these contacts were made, but Borujerdi did not issue such a decree. Second, they decided to seek support from army garrisons outside Tehran. Toward this end, they sent Ardeshir Zahedi and George Carroll to Isfahan and Farzanegan and another CIA agent to Kermanshah, using forged identification papers and travel documents provided earlier by CIA headquarters. The Isfahan garrison commander refused to cooperate. However, the Kermanshah commander, Colonel Bakhtiar, agreed to help and led a column of tanks and armored cars toward Tehran. They stopped in Hamedan to suppress a Tudeh demonstration but arrived in Tehran too late to play a direct role in the overthrow of Mosaddeq, though news that they were marching encouraged the participants in the coup. Third, Roosevelt and his colleagues decided to organize large anti-Mosaddeq demonstrations on August 19, based on the theme that “it was time for loyal army officers and soldiers and the people to rally to the support of religion and the throne.”⁶⁰

The CIA team worked through several channels to organize these demonstrations. The Rashidians suggested that they seek help from Ayatollah Kashani and said he could be contacted through their ally Ahmad Aramesh. In the early morning of August 19, two CIA officers therefore went to Aramesh’s home and gave him \$10,000 to give to Kashani to organize demonstrations. It is not clear whether Kashani received this money and, if so, whether he used it for this purpose. Ayatollah Behbahani apparently played a key role in organizing the demonstrations of August 19. He also allegedly wrote lurid “black” letters in the name of the Tudeh Party to other clergymen, threatening to hang them in the streets. Although the CIA team may have facilitated these activities, it seems unlikely that Kashani and Behbahani knowingly cooperated with the CIA. The Rashidians almost certainly helped organize these demonstrations, though it is not clear how they did so. The notorious mob organizer Sha’ban Ja’fari also likely played a role. Ja’fari apparently was a sub-agent in the TPBEDAMN network under Jalili and Keyvani, so he may have received money from them to organize anti-Mosaddeq demonstrations. In addition, the SOMKA Party and a pro-Shah wing of the Pan-Iranist Party, which CIA officers had often hired through TPBEDAMN to stage demonstrations and attack Tudeh rallies, were active in these demonstrations.⁶¹

On the morning of August 19, crowds began to form in the bazaar area in south Tehran. It is not clear how these crowds formed, though it seems likely that some of their members were organized by the CIA team’s contacts and others joined spontaneously. The CIA history states

that Jalili and Keyvani were in the bazaar area in connection with their propaganda activities and began to lead these crowds, working with their sub-agent Mansur Afshar and two others named Majidi and Rezali. Jalili led one crowd to the parliament building, stopping along the way to set fire to the office of Foreign Minister Fatemi's newspaper, Bakhtar-e Emruz. Afshar led another crowd to sack the offices of the Tudeh newspapers Shahbaz, Besu-ye Ayandeh, and Javanan-e Demokrat. These or other crowds also sacked the headquarters of the pro-Mosaddeq Iran Party and burned the Tudeh-sponsored Saadi theater. Jalili led a crowd to the military police headquarters and secured the release of Colonel Nasiri and General Batmanqelich from prison. The crowds shouted pro-Shah slogans and forced passing motorists to put on their headlights and display pictures of the Shah to make it difficult for Mosaddeq's supporters to identify one another, apparently on instructions from the CIA team.⁶²

When the CIA team learned that these crowds were marching, it instructed the Rashidians and Jalili and Keyvani to encourage the crowds to seize Radio Tehran and to try to persuade the security forces to join the crowds. Army units commanded by members of the military network began to join the crowds, and by 10:15 am pro-Shah forces controlled all of the main squares in Tehran. More crowds came from the bazaar area into central Tehran and were joined by onlookers who feared a return of the "Tudeh" mobs of the previous days or had become disillusioned with Mosaddeq for other reasons. Five tanks and 20 trucks filled with soldiers joined the crowds. Trucks and buses loaded with Bakhtiari tribesmen and other civilians arrived in Tehran from outlying areas, presumably funded by the CIA team's contacts. By noon, anti-Mosaddeq army and police officers had largely taken over leadership of the crowds. These crowds did not encounter resistance from substantial pro-Mosaddeq or Tudeh crowds, presumably because of the chaos and confusion of the previous days and the decisions by Mosaddeq and the Tudeh leaders to keep their supporters off the streets.⁶³

The combined military and civilian crowds began to clash with pro-Mosaddeq military units and take over key locations in the early afternoon. They seized the central telegraph office and the ministry of press and propaganda, enabling their leaders to send messages to other cities encouraging uprisings against Mosaddeq. Other crowds attacked police headquarters, army headquarters, and the ministry of foreign affairs, where bloody fighting continued until late in the afternoon. Two thousand people backed by a tank staged a noisy demonstration at the Soviet embassy. Trucks and buses brought civilians and army personnel to the facilities of Radio Tehran, north of the city, and seized the station just after 2pm, after a brief clash that left three people dead. Various speakers then began to broadcast statements encouraging Iranians to support the coup, including some who apparently had been assigned this task under the coup plan.⁶⁴

General Zahedi had been hiding for two days in the home of one of the CIA officers. At about 4pm, Roosevelt drove to Zahedi's hideout to arrange for him to broadcast a statement over Radio Tehran. Soon after, Guilanshah, who had been hiding in another CIA officer's home,

arrived at Zahedi's hideout in a tank and brought him to Radio Tehran. Zahedi then broadcast a statement at 5:25 pm explaining that he was the legal prime minister and that his forces were now largely in control of the city.⁶⁵

The decisive battle between pro- and anti-Mosaddeq forces occurred at Mosaddeq's home, which had been heavily fortified by loyalist troops. Early in the afternoon of August 19, a General Nakhi, who was apparently an agent of the CIA station, assembled members of the Imperial Guard and attacked Mosaddeq's home, which was defended by pro-Mosaddeq army units backed by three tanks. Bloody fighting ensued. Six tanks that had been involved in the seizure of Radio Tehran drove to Mosaddeq's home and joined the fighting. The two groups of tanks exchanged fire for two hours, using armor-piercing shells, and the three defending tanks were destroyed. The anti-Mosaddeq forces then destroyed the walls surrounding Mosaddeq's home and attacked the house itself. The defenders were eventually overwhelmed, in a fierce battle that reportedly took 200 lives. One hundred other people were killed in fighting elsewhere in Tehran that day. Mosaddeq escaped over the roof of his house, but surrendered to Zahedi's forces the following day. Looters dragged Mosaddeq's possessions into the street and sold them to passersby, and his house was set on fire. The Shah, still in Rome, shook violently when he heard that Mosaddeq had been overthrown and asked a reporter "can it be true?"⁶⁶

Anti-Mosaddeq forces also triumphed outside of Tehran. In Tabriz, Mohammad Deyhim, the head of a small organization called Fadakaran-e Azerbaijan (Devotees of Azerbaijan) and apparently a sub-agent in the TPBEDAMN network, led forces that seized Radio Tabriz in the late afternoon. In Isfahan, Anti-Mosaddeq forces seized the radio station; and clergymen, military officers, and followers of Baqa'i then broadcast statements in support of the Shah. In Mashad, pro-Shah forces looted the shops of Tudeh sympathizers and searched for Tudeh members. Other cities and towns soon fell to anti-Mosaddeq forces as well.⁶⁷

The Aftermath of the Coup

In the days after the coup, Zahedi's forces mopped up the remaining pockets of resistance. Zahedi declared a curfew in Tehran and deployed troops and tanks throughout the city. He closed Iran's borders to prevent fugitives from fleeing. Army and police units broke up scattered pro-Mosaddeq demonstrations in Tehran and elsewhere, and pro-Shah forces held demonstrations. The security forces hunted down Mosaddeq's colleagues and Tudeh Party members, arresting many. Pro-Mosaddeq newspapers were harassed or closed down. Zahedi made a speech promising to raise wages, reduce the cost of living, provide free medical care, pave roads, mechanize agriculture, permit political freedom, and hold new elections. The Shah flew back to Iran on August 22 with an Iraqi fighter escort, unsure of the loyalty of his own air force. Shaban Ja'fari organized crowds to welcome him. An honor guard met the Shah at the airport but was kept 50 yards away to prevent an assassination attempt.⁶⁸

In the following months, Zahedi gradually eliminated all major sources of opposition. He crushed occasional National Front and Tudeh demonstrations and carried out a wave of arrests, jailing some 2100 people by the end of 1953. These arrests severely weakened the National Front and the Tudeh, and the surviving members went underground. Mosaddeq was tried in November 1953 and given a three-year prison sentence, after which he lived under house arrest until his death in 1967. Hossein Fatemi remained in hiding for many months but was eventually arrested, summarily tried, and executed. Several other top National Front leaders were given long prison terms. Pro-Mosaddeq Qashqai tribal forces staged an uprising near Shiraz in September but were surrounded and disarmed by army units, leaving them powerless; their leaders were then sent into exile. Some 3000 alleged Tudeh members were dismissed from government service in the months after the coup. The armed forces were purged and some 1800 pro-Zahedi officers were promoted. The parliamentary elections of early 1954 were thoroughly rigged, preventing a significant opposition presence from emerging in this body. In September 1954, the secret police dismantled a large Tudeh network in the armed forces, breaking the back of the Tudeh Party. Zahedi even turned on Kashani and Baqa'i, restricting their activities and eventually banishing Baqa'i to a remote part of Iran for several months. By the time the Shah dismissed him in April 1955, Zahedi had created the foundations of an authoritarian regime that remained in place until the 1978-1979 revolution.⁶⁹

The United States played a key role in facilitating the creation of this authoritarian regime. The CIA station gave Zahedi roughly \$1 million in cash immediately after the coup. Within three weeks the U.S. government gave Iran an additional \$68 million in emergency aid, accounting for one third of the estimated \$200 million in oil revenue the country had lost since May 1951. During the next decade the United States gave Iran an additional \$1.2 billion in aid. CIA officers helped put down the September 1953 Qashqai uprising and a November 1953 National Front demonstration in Tehran. They used TPBEDAMN to support the Zahedi government and helped Zahedi's chief of propaganda, Esfandiar Bozorgmehr, who had worked in the TPBEDAMN network, carry out similar activities. The CIA station also gave Zahedi intelligence on the Tudeh and played a minor role in rigging the 1954 parliamentary elections. In September 1953 Colonel Meade was sent to Iran under cover as a military attaché to organize, train, and command a new intelligence unit, which later evolved into the Shah's dreaded security agency SAVAK. It was this unit that broke up the Tudeh military network in September 1954. After Meade left Iran in early 1955, CIA personnel continued to work closely with this organization until the early 1960s, when relations became more distant. The United States also played a key role in arranging the October 1954 agreement under which Iran resumed its oil exports, giving the Iranian government a rapidly increasing source of revenue that helped defuse popular unrest in the following years.⁷⁰

Most key participants in the 1953 coup were rewarded handsomely for their efforts. Batmanqelich was named army chief of staff and later served as Minister of Interior. Farzanegan was named minister of post and telegraph. Bakhtiar was promoted to general and appointed

martial law governor of Tehran. Meade's intelligence unit was set up within Bakhtiar's martial law administration, and Bakhtiar later became the first head of SAVAK. Nasiri also was promoted to general, and he later headed SAVAK as well. Ardeshir Zahedi served in a series of top government positions and was later Iran's ambassador to the United States for many years; he also married (and divorced) the Shah's daughter. The Rashidians became very wealthy in business, profiting from their close ties to the Shah. Kermit Roosevelt traveled to London a few days after the coup, where Churchill told him "if I had been but a few years younger, I would have loved nothing better than to have served under your command." The Dulles brothers asked Roosevelt to lead coups in Guatemala, Egypt, and other countries in the following years but he refused, saying conditions in those countries were not favorable. He retired from the CIA in 1958 and was given the National Security medal. He then held a top position in the Gulf Oil Company and later established a successful consulting business, taking advantage of his close connections with the Shah and other Middle Eastern leaders. Most of the other American participants in TPAJAX went on to have very successful careers in the CIA. Most of the British participants were very successful as well.⁷¹

Conclusion

Perhaps the most striking aspect of the coup is the dramatic change of fortune that occurred between the first coup attempt on the night of August 15-16 and the second, successful attempt on August 19. The key change that occurred is that anti-Mosaddeq crowds somehow formed on the morning of August 19 and were soon joined by army and police units and additional civilians. The combined crowds clashed with pro-Mosaddeq army units and seized key locations, establishing control over Tehran and overthrowing Mosaddeq's government by the end of the day.

Several key issues bearing on these events remain unclear. First, it is not clear exactly who organized the crowds that emerged on August 19 and, in particular, how much of a role the CIA team played in organizing them. Second, once these crowds had been organized, it is not clear how many Iranians spontaneously joined them and thus to what extent the events of August 19 reflected genuine popular discontent. Finally, it is not clear how important the CIA team's actions during the previous days – such as the pre-coup destabilization campaign and the "black" Tudeh mobs – contributed to the discontent that fueled these events. While it seems certain that the CIA team played a crucial role in the events of August 19, we have no way to determine the extent to which Iranian actors – such as Kashani, Behbahani, and the people who spontaneously joined these crowds – independently contributed to them. Since almost all of the key participants in these events have passed away and much of the existing documentary record has already been examined,⁷² these issues probably never will be fully clarified.

Nevertheless, we can draw several conclusions about why the second coup attempt succeeded. First, despite the premature failure of the coup plan, it is clear that the CIA team's

meticulous preparations for the coup were crucial to its success. The CIA's prior development of the TPBEDAMN network and Britain's development of the Rashidian network gave the CIA team invaluable assets for implementing the coup. The CIA sent several energetic, resourceful officers to Iran to carry out the coup. The military network developed by the CIA team provided much of the leadership for the army units that acted on August 19. The CIA team's pre-coup destabilization campaign and its efforts to gain the Shah's cooperation undoubtedly very much influenced the events of August 16-19. Finally, the safehouses and other facilities of the Tehran CIA station and the money, forged travel documents, and other items the CIA sent to Iran in advance were essential for carrying out key aspects of the coup.

Second, after the initial coup attempt collapsed, the resourcefulness and determination of the CIA coup team were crucial to the success of the second attempt. The CIA team made various efforts to publicize the Shah's dismissal of Mosaddeq and appointment of Zahedi. It took steps to generate support for Zahedi in the armed forces and persuade the garrison commanders in Isfahan and Kermanshah to cooperate. Working through Jalili and Keyvani, it organized "black" Tudeh mobs that helped create the chaos that emerged on August 17 and 18. Ambassador Henderson apparently played a crucial role in persuading Mosaddeq to bring the security forces back into the streets on August 18. The CIA team and its Iranian agents made various efforts first to organize the crowds that emerged on August 19 and then to steer and coordinate these crowds as they moved through Tehran. The members of the CIA team undertook these actions in an atmosphere of considerable danger, and after they had been ordered to stop the operation and leave the country. By all accounts, Kermit Roosevelt was the mastermind behind these activities and displayed considerable ingenuity and bravery. He clearly deserves much of the credit – and blame – for overthrowing Mosaddeq. Of the Iranian participants, Jalili and Keyvani, the Rashidians, and Ardeshir Zahedi seem to have been the most resourceful and courageous.

Third, it seems clear that both Mosaddeq and his colleagues and the Tudeh Party made crucial tactical mistakes during August 16-19 that contributed very much to the success of the second coup attempt. After August 16 the Mosaddeqists did not organize large demonstrations to rally their supporters and intimidate their opponents, and Mosaddeq banned all demonstrations. On August 17 Mosaddeq failed to deploy the security forces to stop the "Tudeh" mobs that were beginning to create chaos in Tehran. He also failed to restrain Foreign Minister Fatemi and others who denounced the Shah and called for the abolition of the monarchy, fueling the growing chaos. Mosaddeq then changed course on August 18 and had the security forces attack the "Tudeh" mobs, adding further to the chaos and enabling elements of the security forces to join the anti-Mosaddeq crowds the following day. Tudeh leaders pulled their cadres off the streets when the security forces attacked the "Tudeh" mobs, leaving them unavailable to confront the anti-Mosaddeq crowds on August 19. The passivity of the Mosaddeqists and the Tudeh toward the events of August 16-19 stands in marked contrast to their actions during earlier confrontations and undoubtedly contributed to Mosaddeq's downfall.

Finally, it must be added that Mosaddeq's opponents enjoyed a great deal of luck during the fateful days of August 16-19. After the initial coup attempt failed there was not much reason for optimism, and, indeed, many members of the coup team gave up hope. The change of fortune that occurred during these days resulted from the confluence of many disparate events whose occurrence and timing were crucial to the success of the coup. If any of these events had turned out differently, Mosaddeq might not have been overthrown.

Notes

¹ Wilber, Donald N. 1954. Overthrow of Premier Mosaddeq of Iran: November 1952-August 1953. Central Intelligence Agency, p. 1; Woodhouse, C. M. 1982. Something Ventured. London: Granada Publishing, pp. 117-120; interview with George Middleton (London, January 16, 1985), who was the British chargé d'affaires in Iran in October 1952. Wilber's Overthrow was leaked to The New York Times and published on its internet site (www.nytimes.org) in April 2000, though the names of most of the Iranian participants in the coup were blanked out. The internet site cryptome.org subsequently obtained and published most of these names, which is where I obtained them. It is not clear who leaked Overthrow. However, Wilber once cryptically suggested that he might release the unsanitized version of his memoir, which was heavily redacted by CIA censors, in the year 2000. See Wilber, Donald N. 1986. Adventures in the Middle East: Excursions and Incursions. Princeton: Darwin Press, p. 158. See the Louis article in this book for a full account of Britain's efforts to overthrow Mosaddeq.

² Wilber 1954, p. 1; Woodhouse 1982, pp. 117-120; interview with Henry Byroade, Potomac, MD, August 7, 1984; Roosevelt, Kermit. 1979. Countercoup: The Struggle for the Control of Iran. New York: McGraw-Hill, p. 117. Byroade and other State Department officials had discussed carrying out a coup against Mosaddeq with the British in July 1952, but soon concluded that there was "no reasonable alternative" to Mosaddeq. See "Anglo-U.S. Discussions About the Persian Internal Situation and the Oil Question," July 29, 1952, PRO, FO/371/98691; "U.S.-U.K. Approach to Dr. Mussadiq," July 31, 1952, PRO, FO/371/98691. Woodhouse says the cool U.S. response to their proposal led British officials temporarily to give up on the idea and even reduce their payments to the British agents who later played a key role in the coup. See Woodhouse 1982, p. 123. Roosevelt had been thinking about undertaking a coup against Mosaddeq since the summer of 1951. See Roosevelt 1979, pp. 191-195. For a good account of Zahedi's background, see The New York Times, August 20, 1953.

³ I interviewed four of the five CIA officers who carried out the coup in Iran; one other CIA officer, five U.S. Foreign Service officers, and a U.S. naval attaché who were stationed in Iran at the time; five CIA officers who worked on Iran at CIA headquarters during the coup; a British SIS officer and a Foreign Office official (George Middleton) who played important roles in these events; a U.S. army officer who played a key role; and one of the main Iranian participants. I agreed to keep the names of most of these people confidential. Except where noted, I have corroborated all of the details I report from these interviews with a second source. For my earlier account of the coup based mainly on these interviews, see Gasiorowski, Mark J. August 1987. The 1953 Coup D'Etat in Iran. In International Journal of Middle East Studies, vol. 19, 3:261-286. The CIA history is Wilber 1954, cited in note 1, above. The CIA produced at least two other histories of the coup, including Koch, Scott A. 1998. "Zendabad, Shah!": The Central Intelligence Agency and the Fall of Iranian Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddeq, August 1953. History Staff, Central Intelligence Agency. A heavily redacted version of this document was released to the National Security Archive recently under the Freedom of Information Act. It contains no significant revelations about the coup.

⁴ See Gasiorowski, Mark J. September 1998. Trying to Revisit the 1953 Coup in Iran: The CIA's Response to a Freedom of Information Act Request. In Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations Newsletter, vol. 29, 3:11-14.

⁵ See the chapters in this book by Behrooz and Byrne, and Gasiorowski, Mark J. 1991. U.S. Foreign Policy and the Shah. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, pp. 50-56, for more extensive analyses of the Tudeh Party and the considerations that motivated U.S. policy toward Iran in this period. The biggest concern U.S. officials had about the Tudeh was that it had established a large network of officers in the Iranian army. In May 1952 they estimated that this network contained 280 officers, but they later learned that it was much larger. See "Political Trends Between March 1952 and the Fall of the First Mosaddeq Government," September 15, 1952, U.S. National Archives (USNA), Record Group 84, Box 29; Behrooz, Maziar. 1999. Rebels With a Cause: The Failure of the Left in Iran. London: I. B. Tauris, pp. 12-13. The Tudeh also had heavily infiltrated the interior ministry. See Gurney to Henderson, August 30, 1952, USNA, Record Group 84, Box 32. Nevertheless, it is clear from Behrooz's chapter that U.S. officials overestimated the threat posed by the Tudeh. In an ominous development, Anatoly Lavrentiev, who had been the Soviet ambassador in Czechoslovakia during the 1948 coup there, became Soviet ambassador to Iran on August 1, 1953. See Koch 1998, p. 46.

⁶ Gasiorowski 1991, pp. 67-71; Cable, James. 1991. Intervention at Abadan: Plan Buccaneer. New York: St. Martin's Press, pp. 48-49; Henderson to Acheson, August 3, 1952, USNA, Record Group 84, Box 29; "Anglo-U.S. Discussions About the Persian Internal Situation and the Oil Question," July 29, 1952, PRO, FO/371/98691; "Anglo-U.S. Discussions on the Persian Situation," July 29, 1952, PRO, FO/371/98691; "Record of an Interview with Mr. Acheson on 31st July," July 31, 1952, PRO, FO/371/98691; "U.S. Proposals for a Joint Approach to Dr. Mussadiq," August 12, 1952, PRO, FO/371/98693.

⁷ "Internal Situation," n.d., PRO, FO/248/1531; Henderson to Acheson, August 11, 1952, USNA, Record Group 84, Box 29; Henderson to Acheson, September 28, 1952, USNA, Record Group 84, Box 42; Henderson to Acheson, October 8, 1952, USNA, Record Group 84, Box 28; Henderson to Acheson, September 26, 1952, USNA, Record Group 84, Box 29. Kashani, Zahedi, and Nader Batmanqelich (see below) had worked together with German agents against the allies during World War II. See "Index Guide to the Franz Meyer Documents," May 25, 1943, USNA, Record Group 59, Box 5192. Ironically, Kashani even solicited U.S. support during this period. See Henderson to Acheson, November 9, 1952, USNA, Record Group 59, Box 2853. For an analysis of Kashani's prospects at this time, see Central Intelligence Agency, "Prospects for Survival of Mosaddeq Regime in Iran," SE-33, (October 14, 1952, Truman Library). Zahedi turned against Mosaddeq after the July uprising. See Henderson to Acheson, October 17, 1952, USNA, Record Group 84, Box 29. For detailed overviews of these events, see the chapters in this book by Azimi and Katouzian.

⁸ Central Intelligence Agency, "Probable Developments in Iran Through 1953," NIE-75, (November 13, 1952, Harry S. Truman Library, Independence, MO), pp. 1-2; U.S. National Security Council, "United States Policy Regarding the Present Situation in Iran," NSC-136/1, November 20, 1952, in U.S. Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-

1954, Volume X: Iran, 1951-1954, (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1989), pp. 529-534. Anthony Cuomo, who was the U.S. embassy's specialist on the Tudeh Party at the time, told me in an interview (Rome, January 5, 1985) that the Tudeh really was not very powerful and that higher-level U.S. officials routinely exaggerated its strength and Mosaddeq's reliance on it. Two CIA officers stationed in Iran at the time told me the same thing. Moreover, the CIA's anti-Tudeh covert operations (described below) made the Tudeh appear more powerful and more active than it really was.

⁹ Central Intelligence Agency, "Probable Developments in Iran Through 1953," NIE-75/1, (January 9, 1953, Truman Library), pp. 1-2; U.S. Department of State, Office of Intelligence Research, "Iran's Political and Economic Prospects Through 1953," Intelligence Report No. 6126, (January 9, 1953, Truman Library).

¹⁰ Acheson, Dean. 1969. Present at the Creation. New York: W.W. Norton & Co. pp. 683-685; interviews with Byroade, Mattison (Bethesda, MD, July 30, 1984), Roy Melbourne (Chapel Hill, NC, February 1, 1984), and Kermit Roosevelt (Washington, June 5, 1985); Roosevelt 1979, pp. 9, 16, 95, 126. Henderson's biographer erroneously argues that Henderson was a driving force behind the coup. See Brands, H. W. 1991. Inside the Cold War: Loy Henderson and the Rise of the American Empire, 1918-1961. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 279-280. For a very different view, see Melbourne, Roy M. 1997. Conflict and Crises: A Foreign Service Story. Lanham: University Press of America, ch. 9. Roosevelt told me that Goiran and several CIA Iran desk officers opposed the coup. The Goiran quote was related to me by a CIA officer who worked closely with him in Iran at the time. The CIA history by Wilber says Goiran left Iran as part of the CIA's "war of nerves" against Mosaddeq. See Wilber 1954, p. 30. This implausible statement may have been an attempt to downplay Goiran's departure at this auspicious time.

¹¹ "The United States' Ideas of a Settlement of the Oil Dispute," October 20, 1952, PRO, FO/371/98702; interviews with Roosevelt and another CIA officer. For a good overview of the Eisenhower administration's foreign policy views, see Gaddis, John Lewis. 1982. Strategies of Containment. New York: Oxford University Press, chs. 5-6. The main advocate of a coup in the Tehran embassy at this time was Roy Melbourne, the chief political officer.

¹² Wilber 1954, pp. iv, 2-3; Department of State, Foreign Relations, pp. 696, 698, 702-703, 713. The meeting at which Dulles informally approved the operation is described in Roosevelt 1979, pp. 120-124. This is probably the meeting of February 18 described in Louis's chapter in this book. Ambrose, Stephen E. 1999. Ike's Spies: Eisenhower and the Espionage Establishment. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, p. 200, states that Eisenhower approved the coup five weeks after the early February meeting, but gives no source for this statement. In March, Iranian General Nader Batmanqelich asked Henderson whether the United States would support a military coup against Mosaddeq. U.S. embassy personnel talked to Batmanqelich but concluded he was not capable of carrying out a coup. See Wilber 1954, pp. 2-3; and Roosevelt 1979, p. 130. Batmanqelich later played an important role in the coup and was named army chief of staff by Zahedi. The "TP" prefix identified TPAJAX as a covert operation carried out in Iran. "TP" was also an acronym for the Tudeh Party, and "ajax" was the name of a common household cleanser, so "TPAJAX" implied an effort to "cleanse" Iran of the Tudeh.

¹³ Heiss, Mary Ann. 1997. Empire and Nationhood: The United States, Great Britain, and Iranian Oil, 1950-1954. New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 169-175; "Political Summary," February 11, 1953, PRO, FO/371/104574; "Dr. Musaddiq's Quarrel With the Shah," February 23, 1953, PRO, FO/371/104563; "An Assessment of the Internal Situation in Persia," March 2, 1953, PRO, FO/371/104563; "Internal Situation," n.d., PRO, FO/371/104563; Azimi, Fakhreddin. 1989. Iran: The Crisis of Democracy. London: I. B. Tauris, pp. 306-307, 320-321; "Internal Affairs," February 24, 1964, PRO, FO/371/104562. See also the chapters in this book by Azimi and Katouzian on these events. Mosaddeq ended the oil negotiations on March 9 but did not publicly announce this until March 20. See Department of State, Foreign Relations, pp. 704, 717. Zahedi's son Ardeshir approached the U.S. embassy several times in February 1953 and explained his father's efforts to replace Mosaddeq. See Henderson to Dulles, February 23, 1953, USNA, Record Group 59, Box 4110. Katouzian, Homa. 1990. Musaddiq and the Struggle for Power in Iran. London: I. B. Tauris, p. 183, states that the CIA was involved in the kidnapping of Afshartus. I know of no evidence to support this claim, and I think it is highly unlikely. It is widely rumored that the British were involved. See Azimi 1989, p. 320; and Iran Times, May 31, 1985. After the Afshartus murder, Kashani helped Zahedi avoid arrest by giving him asylum in the parliament building. See "Summary for the Period April 30-May 13, 1953," June 23, 1953, PRO, FO/371/104568.

¹⁴ Roosevelt 1979, p. 134; Byroade interview. For a good discussion of Mosaddeq's relations with the Tudeh in this period by a close observer, see Love, Kennett. 1960. The American Role in the Pahlavi Restoration On 19 August 1953 (unpublished manuscript). The Allen Dulles Papers, Princeton University Library, pp. 20-27. Iran expert Richard Cottam still opposed the coup. See Gasiorowski, Mark J. Obituary of Richard Cottam. Summer/Fall 1997. In Iranian Studies, vol. 30, 3-4:415-417.

¹⁵ Wilber 1954, pp. iv, 3, 5, E5; Wilber 1986, chs. 1-11. Ironically, Zahedi had told a British official in August 1952 that he opposed the growth of U.S. influence in Iran. See "Internal Situation," n.d., PRO, FO/248/1531.

¹⁶ Wilber 1954, pp. 5-10, A1; U.S. Department of State, "Memorandum of Conversation, Subject: Iran," May 16, 1952, USNA, Record Group 84, Box 29; "Assesses the General State of Affairs in Persia," May 28, 1951, PRO, FO/371/91542. The British had arrested Zahedi during World War II for helping German agents plan "a concentrated move against allied troops," who were occupying Iran in conjunction with the war effort. See "Article by Brigadier Fitzroy Maclean, M.P.," 27 August 1953, PRO, FO/371/104570; and Maclean, Fitzroy. 1950. Eastern Approaches. London: Jonathan Cape, p. 266.

¹⁷ Wilber 1954, p. 7; Woodhouse 1982, pp. 111, 117-118; Dorril, Stephen. 1999. MI6: Inside the Covert World of Her Majesty's Secret Intelligence Service. New York: The Free Press, p. 571; interviews with Middleton, the SIS officer mentioned in note 3, and a retired CIA officer who later made a study of the Rashidian network; "Internal Situation," n.d., PRO, FO/248/1531; The New York Times, October 14, 1952. Ironically, the Rashidians were very anti-American. See Woodhouse 1982, p. 111. When told about the Rashidians, the Tehran CIA station stated that they were not nearly as powerful as Darbyshire claimed. See Wilber 1954, p. 7. The "British"

wing of the Tudeh Party was headed by the Lankerani brothers, according to the retired CIA officer cited here. Another retired CIA officer told me that a third of Iran's parliamentary deputies in 1951 were on the British payroll. The British also worked against Mosaddeq through a prominent labor leader named Amir Kaivan. See "Trade Unions in Persia," June 1, 1952, PRO, FO/371/98731.

¹⁸ Wilber 1954, pp. 7-8; confidential interviews with four retired CIA officers who worked on TPBEDAMN. One of my sources told me TPBEDAMN could place articles in over 30 Iranian newspapers in the late 1940s. The CIA also translated and published several pro-Western or anti-communist books and disseminated them in Iran under TPBEDAMN, including God's Green Acre: Moslems in the USSR, a "black" book ostensibly written by the Tudeh that accused Iran's Shi'i clergy of practicing witchcraft, and a "black" fictionalized autobiography of the Iranian exile poet and Tudeh member Abol Ghassem Lahuti, which gave a very bleak view of life in the Soviet Union. A retired CIA officer told me that Wilber wrote the witchcraft and Lahuti books. For a reference to the latter, see Wilber 1986, p. 191. Another retired CIA officer described Wilber to me as a "master propagandist." Ja'fari apparently was called "the brainless" because he rammed a jeep through the gate of Mosaddeq's house during the February 1953 crisis. See The New York Times, August 23, 1953.

¹⁹ Roosevelt 1979, pp. 78-81, 91-94, 98; interviews with Roosevelt and two other CIA officers who worked on TPBEDAMN; Wilber 1954, pp. 7-8; Gaddis 1982, p. 157. Roosevelt told me Jalili and Keyvani organized the anti-Harriman demonstration on their own, not on behalf of the CIA. The Tudeh apparently organized its own anti-Harriman demonstrations at this time as well.

²⁰ Wilber 1954, pp. 8-11, A1-A8, B2. The U.S. embassy had learned in April that the Qashqai were making plans to march on Tehran in support of Mosaddeq if a coup attempt was made against him. See "Change of Government Tribal Administration," April 10, 1953, PRO, FO/371/104565. This is probably why the coup planners were concerned about a Qashqai reaction.

²¹ Wilber 1954, pp. 11-13. See Katouzian's chapter in this book for an account of the Amini-Qashqai "plot." The CIA was working closely with the Qashqai khans at this time. See Gasiorowski 1991, p. 54. Goiran therefore may have thought he could persuade them to turn against Mosaddeq, which U.S. officials apparently tried to do at some point. See Beck, Lois. 1986. The Qashqa'i of Iran. New Haven: Yale University Press, p. 153. The Qashqai later sent threats to Roosevelt when the coup was underway. See Roosevelt 1979, p. 152. The Amini brothers mentioned here were Minister of Court Abol Qasem Amini and Gendarmerie commander General Mahmoud Amini. Both were on good terms with Mosaddeq. The Shah told Henderson that the two brothers wanted to establish "a stop-gap nationalist government to be followed by a strong government." See "Ambassador Henderson's Report," June 2, 1953, PRO, FO/371/104659. A retired CIA officer who was close to the Qashqai khans at this time told me they were plotting with one of the Amini brothers to overthrow the Shah and destroy the Tudeh Party. He could not recall which brother was involved and what they intended to do with Mosaddeq if they succeeded. See also Brands 1991, pp. 277-279. Abol Qasem Amini was

arrested during the coup by Mosaddeq loyalists, who apparently suspected he was involved. See Wilber 1954, p. 49.

²² Wilber 1954, pp. B15-B17, B20-B24. On p. B21, Wilber states that the CIA team planned to work through four prominent Islamic leaders and a “terrorist gang” associated with one of these leaders. Their names are blanked out in the version of the history published by The New York Times and are not given in the cryptome.org version. (See note 1.) However, it is obvious from the Times’ version that the names of these leaders (in English transliteration) are nine, nine, seven, and six characters long and the name of the “terrorist gang” is seven characters long. These leaders therefore were probably Ayatollahs Behbahani, Borujerdi, and Kashani (or possibly Falsafi) and the clerical activist Navvab Safavi; and the “terrorist gang” was probably the Fada’iyan-e Islam, which was led by Safavi and is often called “Fadayan” in English. Note that the history states (p. 91) that the Islamic leaders who were to organize bast protests eventually refused to cooperate, and it gives no indication that they cooperated with the coup plot in any way. This is discussed further below. These Islamic leaders almost certainly were not told that the CIA was behind these protests. The Fada’iyan and many prominent clergymen strongly opposed Mosaddeq. See Katouzian 1990, ch. 12. The history states (p. 20) that the Pan-Iranist, SOMKA, and Toilers parties would play only minor roles in these activities, presumably because they had split and become much weaker by this time, as discussed below.

²³ Wilber 1954, pp. B2, B11-B12, B15, B17-B18. The history (p. E22) states that no military officers were bribed to participate in the coup, but it is not clear what else the \$135,000 given to Zahedi could have been used for.

²⁴ Wilber 1954, pp. 18, B3-B10. Schwartzkopf’s son, who had lived with his father in Iran during 1942-1948, commanded U.S. military forces during the 1991 Persian Gulf war.

²⁵ Wilber 1954, pp. B13-B15, B23-25.

²⁶ Wilber 1954, pp. 18-19, B1.

²⁷ Wilber 1954, pp. 16-18.

²⁸ Roosevelt 1979, pp. 1-19; Wilber 1954, p. 18.

²⁹ Wilber 1954, pp. 4, 19-21, 30; Roosevelt 1979, p. 139.

³⁰ Wilber 1954, pp. D2-D5; interview with a CIA officer who worked with Farzanegan in TPBEDAMN. Riahi was a member both of the pro-Mosaddeq Iran Party and of a secret, pro-Mosaddeq faction in the armed forces called the Nationalist Officers, which had been led by General Afshartus until he was murdered in April 1953. Following suggestions made by the Nationalist Officers, Mosaddeq had dismissed many senior military officers because they were corrupt or disloyal to his government. See Katouzian 1990, pp. 130-132. Most of their successors were Mosaddeq loyalists, making it difficult for the CIA to organize an anti-Mosaddeq military network.

³¹ Wilber 1954, pp. D5-D8, D10.

³² Wilber 1954, pp. D9-D14, D17. The names of several members of the military network are given on p. D12.

³³ Wilber 1954, pp. D15-D17. Akhavi became “violently ill” during this period, apparently as a result of tension and fear, and was confined to his bed in the following days. Guilanshah had

been plotting with Zahedi since July 1952 and was arrested with him in February 1953. See “Internal Situation,” n.d., PRO, FO/248/1531; and “Musaddiq-Shah-Kashani Quarrel,” March 19, 1953, PRO, FO/371/104564.

³⁴ Interviews with Roosevelt and four other CIA officers who worked on TPBEDAMN. These officers were not sure who authorized the use of TPBEDAMN against Mosaddeq, though most thought it was Roosevelt. I think Wisner and Smith may have approved it as well. Roosevelt was unable to recall to me who gave authorization. For a brief reference to these activities, see Roosevelt 1979, pp. 125-126. It seems very unlikely that Acheson or Truman approved this. Moreover, under the guidelines authorizing CIA activity, covert operations were to be used only “against hostile foreign states or groups or in support of friendly foreign states or groups.” See Leary, William M., ed. 1984. The Central Intelligence Agency: History and Documents. University, AL: University of Alabama Press, p. 132; and Cline, Ray S. 1981. The CIA Under Reagan, Bush, and Casey. Washington: Acropolis Books, pp. 119-26. While the anti-Soviet and anti-Tudeh activities carried out under TPBEDAMN clearly fell within these guidelines, covert operations against Mosaddeq and the National Front clearly did not. The CIA therefore appears to have been acting independently – as a “rogue elephant” – in carrying out these operations.

³⁵ Interviews with the five CIA officers mentioned in note 34. One told me that the CIA placed a cartoon in Iranian newspapers in the fall of 1952 suggesting that Mosaddeq was sexually molesting Kashani. Roosevelt told me about the CIA approaches to Kashani, Makki, and Behbahani. Middleton and the SIS officer mentioned in note 3 told me about the Rashidians’ activities against Mosaddeq and the National Front but could not describe these activities in detail. One of Kashani’s sons apparently approached the British embassy in the summer of 1952 seeking a subsidy for his father. The British refused to provide it. See “Oriental Counselor’s Political and Economic Conversations,” n.d., PRO, FO/248/1520. In May 1952 Robin Zaehner of the British Embassy wrote of efforts to split Kashani, Baqa’i, and Makki away from Mosaddeq that were “created and directed by the brothers Rashidian.” Baqa’i approached the Rashidians for help in August 1952. Falsafi strongly attacked both Mosaddeq and Kashani on at least one occasion, in February 1952. See “Internal Situation,” n.d., PRO, FO/248/1531. After the coup, Falsafi made a speech attacking Mosaddeq and eulogizing those killed during the fighting. See “Tehran Situation Reports,” n.d., PRO, FO/371/104570. On Falsafi, see also Katouzian 1990, p. 172.

³⁶ These are the views of two of the five CIA officers mentioned in note 34. The other three said it is simply impossible to judge the impact of these activities. On the splits in the National Front during this period, see the articles in this book by Azimi and Katouzian. On the splits in the Toilers and Pan-Iranist parties, see “Internal Affairs,” April 24, 1953, PRO, FO/371/104567; and “The Friendly Relationship....” October 6, 1953, PRO, FO/371/104568.

³⁷ “Prime Minister’s Radio Address of July 27, 1953,” July 28, 1953, USNA, Record Group 59, Box 4116; Brands 1991, p. 285; Katouzian, Homa. 2000a. The CIA Documents and the 1953 Coup in Iran. In The CIA Documents on the 1953 Coup & the Overthrow of Dr. Musaddiq of Iran. Tehran: Rasa Publishers, p. 56; Department of State, Foreign Relations, p. 742. The CIA history by Wilber does not say whether the CIA team actually tried to “purchase” members of

parliament, though clearly this was a key element of the coup plan. See Wilber 1954, pp. 18-19. If this occurred, it was almost certainly carried out through the Rashidians, who had extensive contacts in parliament. John Waller (personal interview, Oxford, UK, June 11, 2002) told me he not aware of any effort by the CIA team to “purchase” members of parliament, though he agreed that the Rashidians might have done this without his knowledge. See also note 41, below. On parliamentary opposition to Mosaddeq in this period, see Azimi 1989, pp. 317-330.

³⁸ Wilber 1954, pp. 20-37, 92; Wilber 1986, pp. 188-189; interview with a CIA officer involved in these activities; Department of State, Foreign Relations, p. 739; Newsweek, August 10, 1953, pp. 36-38. Wilber’s history (p. 26) states that this effort included giving a \$45,000 loan to a certain Iranian newspaper owner, who is identified in Azimi’s chapter of this book as Abbas Mas’udi of Ettela’at. Wilber later says (p. 60) that the publisher of Ettela’at had promised to support the coup but then denounced the initial coup attempt after it failed. Six anti-Mosaddeq newspapers suddenly appeared in Tehran in June 1953, perhaps as part of this effort. See USARMA Tehran to DEPTAR, 3 March 1953, USNA, Record Group 59, Box 4113.

³⁹ Wilber 1954, pp. 28-37; interviews with four CIA officers who were involved in these activities. The “sham bombing” was probably a percussion device meant to scare people. Goodwin or some other U.S. official reportedly offered the Qashqai \$5 million to oppose Mosaddeq, but they refused. See Beck 1986, p. 153. The British tribal revolts presumably would have involved Baktiari tribal groups, some of which had longstanding ties to the British and lived near the Qashqai.

⁴⁰ Love 1960, pp. 15-17; Wilber 1954, p. 28.

⁴¹ Wilber 1954, p. 31. This passage describes an effort by the CIA team in late July 1953 to prevent Mosaddeq from closing parliament by having his supporters resign. It does not say this was done by “purchasing” members of parliament, but it does indicate that the CIA team had considerable influence in parliament

⁴² See Grady to Acheson, July 12, 1951, USNA, Record Group 84, Box 32; Henderson to Acheson, July 7, 1952, USNA, Record Group 84, Box 29; Henderson to Dulles, February 23, 1953, USNA, Record Group 59, Box 4110. Henderson also initially opposed Zahedi. On February 23, soon after Dulles agreed to back Zahedi, he stated “Zahedi is not (repeat not) [Mosaddeq’s] ideal successor.” See Henderson to Dulles, February 23, 1953, USNA, Record Group 59, Box 4110.

⁴³ Department of State, Foreign Relations, pp. 730-731.

⁴⁴ Wilber 1954, pp. 22-24, 32; note 34 in Azimi’s chapter in this book; interview with Meade, Southern Pines, NC, March 28, 1984. For Ashraf’s account of these events, see Pahlavi, Ashraf. 1980. Faces in a Mirror. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, pp. 134-140. Meade had previously carried out a number of daring covert missions for the CIA. See Copeland, Miles. 1969. The Game of Nations. New York: Simon and Schuster, pp. 50-53, 76-83. Meade told me he also played a minor role in developing the military aspects of the coup plan.

⁴⁵ Wilber 1954, pp. 24-25.

⁴⁶ Wilber 1954, pp. 25-30; “Visit of General Schwartzkopf to Persia,” August 6, 1953, PRO, O/371/104569.

⁴⁷ Wilber 1954, pp. 33-38. Nasiri claimed that the Shah's wife, Queen Soraya, finally persuaded her husband to sign the decrees (p. 38). For a very different account of these events, see Roosevelt 1979, pp. 155-157.

⁴⁸ Wilber 1954, p. 91. See also Roosevelt 1979, pp. 71, 163, who implies that the clerical leaders refused to cooperate because they were not offered enough money.

⁴⁹ Wilber 1954, p. 39. For accounts of how the Mosaddeq government learned about the plot, see the chapters in this book by Azimi and Behrooz, as well as Katouzian 1990, p. 189. The Tudeh had learned about the coup plot well before this time. Details of the coup plan were reported by Tass on July 15 and in Tudeh newspapers as early as August 13. See "Dr. Musaddiq's Move to Dissolve the Majlis," 21 July 1953, PRO, FO/371/104569; and "Persian Army Officers Attempt to Overthrow Dr. Musaddiq," 16 August 1953, PRO, FO/371/104569. However, the Tudeh could not have learned the key details of when and how Mosaddeq was to be arrested until at least the evening of August 13, since the final decisions about this were made only then or on the following day. Therefore, it was the inadvertent exposure of the plot during this period, rather than the Tudeh's previous knowledge of its general outline, that led to the failure of the initial coup attempt. One of the CIA officers involved in these events told me the CIA station believed the Tudeh had an agent in the embassy, presumably among the non-American staff members, who may have revealed the plot.

⁵⁰ Wilber 1954, pp. 39-45; "Persian Army Officers Attempt to Overthrow Dr. Musaddiq," 16 August 1953, PRO, FO/371/104569. The latter document says that when Zahedi's men arrested Mosaddeq's allies, they also robbed them. Wilber 1986, p. 189, strongly criticizes the "military cowards" who refused to act at this time.

⁵¹ Wilber 1954, pp. 45-60; The New York Times, August 17, 18, and 19, 1953; Behrooz's chapter in this book. The Shah claims he left the country in an effort to crystallize public opinion against Mosaddeq. See Pahlavi, Mohammad Reza Shah. 1961. Mission For My Country. New York: McGraw-Hill, pp. 104-105. By coincidence, when the Shah was checking into a hotel in Rome, Allen Dulles checked into the same hotel for a vacation. See Koch 1998, p. 60.

⁵² Wilber 1954, pp. 46, 50-51; interview with one of the CIA participants. On McClure, see Paddock, Alfred H. Jr. MG Robert Alexis McClure: Forgotten Father of U.S. Army Special Warfare. In Perspectives, reprinted at <http://www.psyop.com/mcclure>.

⁵³ Wilber 1954, pp. 58, 61, 64; interview with one of the CIA participants; Department of State, Foreign Relations, p. 747; The New York Times, August 20, 1953.

⁵⁴ Wilber 1954, p. 45.

⁵⁵ Wilber 1954, pp. 45-50, 59; Love, "The American Role," pp. 31-32. The Shah's decrees and the fabricated interview with Zahedi were published in the Tehran newspapers Shahed, Setareh Islam, Asia Javanan, Aram, Mard-e Asia, Mellat-e Ma, Dad, and Journal de Tehran. See Wilber 1954, p. 65.

⁵⁶ Wilber 1954, pp. 51-53, 58; "Approach by the Shah," August 17, 1953, PRO, FO/371/104659; "United States Advice to the Shah," August 18, 1953, PRO, FO/371/104659.

⁵⁷ The New York Times, August 19, 1953; Roosevelt 1979, p. 181; U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, The Mutual Security Act of 1954, Hearings, 83rd Congress, 2nd Session, May 3, 1954, p. 503.

⁵⁸ Interviews with five of the CIA officers involved; The New York Times, August 19, 1953; "Summary of Political Events in Persia," July 31, 1953, PRO, FO/371/104569; Farmanfarmaian, Manucher and Roxane Farmanfarmaian. 1997. Blood and Oil. New York: Random House, p. 294; Behrooz's chapter in this book. These events are also mentioned briefly in Wilber 1954, pp. 59, 63; Lapping, Brian. 1985. End of Empire. New York: St. Martin's Press, p. 220; and Love 1960, pp. 33-34. This "black" Tudeh crowd was similar to the one Jalili and Keyvani had organized to protest the July 1951 Harriman mission. See note 19 and the accompanying text. U.S. embassy personnel noted that the crowds on August 17 contained "an unusual mixture of Pan-Iranists and Tudeh" members. See Mattison to Dulles, August 17, 1953, USNA, Record Group 59, Box 4110. Several of my sources believed Jalili and Keyvani may have worked partly through the Pan-Iranist Party to organize the "black" crowds. One of my CIA sources told me Jalili and Keyvani had active sub-agents in Tabriz, but it seems unlikely that they were responsible for the anti-Shah activity that occurred in the other cities mentioned here.

⁵⁹ Brands 1991, p. 284; Loy Henderson interview, Columbia University Oral History Research Office, pp. 17-18; The New York Times, August 19, 1953; Wilber 1954, pp. 53, 61, 64; Behrooz's chapter in this book. Mosaddeq apparently had a tacit agreement with the Tudeh prior to this time that it would obtain clearance from him before holding demonstrations. The sudden appearance of "Tudeh" mobs on August 17 may therefore have alarmed him and led him to have these mobs broken up. See Henderson to Dulles, August 20, 1953, USNA, Record Group 59, Box 4110. In his August 18 meeting with Mosaddeq, Henderson also denied rumors that the U.S. embassy was harboring Iranian participants in the coup. See Department of State, Foreign Relations, p. 751.

⁶⁰ Wilber 1954, pp. 56-58, 73; Roosevelt 1979, p. 181. One of the CIA officers involved told me that the CIA team planned to launch this uprising on Friday, August 21 – not on August 19 – when the clergy could use Friday prayer sermons to mobilize crowds against Mosaddeq. A report of the plan to organize demonstrations on August 21 appeared several weeks later in The Times of India. See "Transmits a Further Series of Articles," June 16, 1953, PRO, FO/371/104568. The approach to Behbahani presumably was to be made by the Rashidians. Ardeshir Zahedi describes an elaborate plan allegedly formulated by his father after Nassiri's arrest to set up an independent state called "Free Iran" near Kermanshah. See Zahedi, Ardeshir. [no date]. Five Decisive Days, August 15-19, 1953. [mimeograph], pp. 41-62. Local army and air force units would establish a base there and try to take over the whole country. The plan also involved sabotaging fuel, transportation, and communications facilities in Tehran. Although the CIA team discussed a number of contingency plans during this period, none of the CIA officers I interviewed could recall such a plan.

⁶¹ Two CIA officers involved in the coup told me they delivered \$10,000 to Aramesh on the morning of August 19. Neither could confirm that Kashani received this money and used it to organize demonstrations, but both believed he did. One of these officers told me about Ja'fari's

role. Another CIA officer told me one of Kashani's sons visited him after the coup to remind him of the role his father had played. Roosevelt confirmed this in my interview with him. Kashani's supporters claim he opposed the coup and sent a letter to Mosaddeq on August 18 warning him about it, but this claim is problematic. See Katouzian 1990, pp. 173-174; and Azimi 1989, p. 332. Aramesh later headed Iran's Plan and Budget Organization and apparently was killed in a shootout with the police in October 1973. See Johnson, Hubert Otis III. 1975. Recent Opposition Movements in Iran. Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Utah, pp. 237-238. Love 1960, p. 40, says a CIA officer who worked on the Iran desk at headquarters during the coup (but opposed the coup) told him Behbahani was the key figure behind these demonstrations. He also says that so much American currency found its way into Tehran's black market during the coup that the exchange rate fell from over 100 rials to the dollar to under 50 (p. 40). Lapping 1985, p. 221, cites the same CIA officer as saying the Rashidians were involved. Cottam, Richard. 1979. Nationalism in Iran. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, p. 226, says the expression "Behbahani dollars" was in common usage years later to refer to the money used to hire these crowds. On Behbahani's role, see also Shahrough Akhavi, "The Role of the Clergy in Iranian Politics, 1949-1954," in Bill, James A. and Wm. Roger Louis, eds. 1988. Musaddiq, Iranian Nationalism, and Oil. Austin: University of Texas Press, p. 113. The SIS officer mentioned in note 3 told me the Rashidians organized these demonstrations. Koch 1998, p. 63, says the Rashidians were "almost certainly" involved. Roosevelt 1979, p. 186, claims the crowds were organized by the "Boscoe brothers," a pseudonym he uses to refer both to the Rashidians and to Jalili and Keyvani. On the roles of the SOMKA and Pan-Iranist parties, see Henderson to Dulles, August 19, 1953, USNA, Record Group 59, Box 4110.

⁶² Wilber 1954, pp. 66-70; Love, "The American Role," pp. 36-37.

⁶³ Wilber 1954, pp. 67-69; letter from Stephen Langlie, January 31, 2001. Langlie served in the U.S. military assistance mission in Tehran at the time of the coup and saw at least ten truckloads of Bakhtiari tribesmen arriving in Tehran on the morning of August 19. Since the Bakhtiari lived at least one day's drive from Tehran, their trip to Tehran must have been organized on August 17 or 18.

⁶⁴ Wilber 1954, pp. 67-71; The New York Times, August 20, 1953. On p. 71, Wilber says one of Ayatollah Kashani's sons was among the speakers who began to broadcast on Radio Tehran and implies that he had been assigned this task (perhaps unwittingly) by the CIA team.

⁶⁵ Wilber 1954, pp. 72-73. One of the CIA officers involved in these events told me Mosaddeq's police had almost located Zahedi's hideout by this time and would have arrested him within an hour if Guilanshah had not arrived. Zahedi apparently was so nervous when Guilanshah arrived that a CIA officer had to button his uniform. See The Wall Street Journal, October 19, 1979.

⁶⁶ Wilber 1954, pp. 70, 74; Love, "The American Role," p. 39; The New York Times, August 20 and 21, 1953.

⁶⁷ Wilber 1954, p. 74.

⁶⁸ Gasiorowski 1991, p. 86; The New York Times, August 20 and 23, 1953; Henderson to Dulles, August 22, 1953, USNA, Record Group 59, Box 4110.

⁶⁹ Gasiorowski 1991, pp. 86-89. See Katouzian's chapter in this book for a broader discussion of the coup's long-term consequences.

⁷⁰ Gasiorowski 1991, especially pp. 90-92, 101-102. Two CIA officers involved in these events told me Bozorgmehr worked in the TPBEDAMN network. He had been arrested in February 1953 for working with the British against Mosaddeq. See "The Arrest of Editors and Journalists Under Martial Law," February 1, 1953, PRO, FO/371/104561. On his subsequent activities and connections with the CIA, see Gasiorowski, Mark J. November 1993. The Qarani Affair and Iranian Politics. In International Journal of Middle East Studies, vol. 25 4:625-644. Meade became very close to Princess Ashraf during this period and was removed from his position as a result. See Roosevelt 1979, p. 145. On SAVAK, see Samii, A.W. 1994. The Role of SAVAK in the 1978-1979 Iranian Revolution, (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation) University of Cambridge.

⁷¹ Roosevelt 1979, p. 207; Los Angeles Times, March 29, 1979. CIA officer and TPAJAX participant Howard Stone was deported from Syria in 1957 after trying to stage a coup there. He later received the CIA's highest medal. See The Wall Street Journal, October 19, 1979. I have never learned what became of Jalili and Keyvani.

They apparently emigrated to the United States at some point after the coup and eventually died there. In any case, they never became prominent in Iran. Their roles in the coup were not widely known until their names were revealed in the cryptome.org version of Wilber's Overthrow. The CIA later leaked an account of the coup in the American press. See Harkness, Richard and Gladys Harkness. November 6, 1954. The Mysterious Doings of CIA. In Saturday Evening Post, pp. 66-68.

⁷² The CIA apparently destroyed almost all of its records on the coup many years ago. See Gasiorowski 1998. Some useful documents may remain in the CIA's archives or in British government archives, though they are not likely to be released publicly any time soon. Most importantly, the two other CIA histories of the coup mentioned in note 3, above, might perhaps contain important new details. It is also possible that documents bearing on the coup exist in Iran or in private collections elsewhere, though Fakhreddin Azimi and other researchers have gone through the appropriate collections exhaustively. Moreover, it seems unlikely that anyone made more of an effort to clarify these matters while the participants were still alive and memories were still fresh than Donald Wilber did in writing his CIA history. Any other documents on the coup that do exist therefore may not have much to add.