The Rise and Fall of The Pahlavi Dynasty

Memoirs of Former General Hussein Fardust

Translated and Annotated by

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DELHI
Dedicated to my wife, Akram, and my daughter, Homa, for everything.
Colonel and headed Mossad’s station in the secret Israeli Embassy in Tehran.

A few weeks later, Nimrodi came to my office. He bade me a good morning and offered me a sum of over 60,000 tums.

“What is this money for?”, I asked.

“Since the establishment of Israel’s extraterritorial bases in Iran, we have paid this much on a monthly basis to Alavikia for his cooperation with us, and we continue to do so to you as his successor”, he said.

I rejected his offer. Then, I directly went to Alavikia’s residence to inquire about the issue. He confirmed that payments had been made. He accepted my view that it was amounted bribe. However, I refused to accept the money and Nimrodi did not insist.

Anyhow, since probably 1958 Israel had established three bases in Iran. The bases were in Ahvaz in Khuzestan Province, Ilam in Ilam Province, and Baneh and Marivan in Kurdestan Province. In all these areas, SAVAK had its stations too. The targets were Iraq and the southern littoral Arab states. The bases recruited local agents in order to better carry out their espionage missions. The recruited agents were mostly Iraqis but later, agents from Kuwait, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, and even Saudi Arabia were recruited to the Ahvaz base. The bases were gathering the latest information on the internal situation in Iraq and especially on the government-owned organizations. A copy of the reports prepared by the Israeli bases was sent to SAVAK’s Second Department.

Iraq was of special importance to Israel and, therefore, great attention was paid to the developments taking place in that country. Gradually, the bases, which enjoyed all kinds of facilities, extended their activities to the southern Arab states.

“Mossad stations outside Arab areas in the Near East are generally under diplomatic cover within the embassies and consulates of Israel. There are stations in the United States, most of the European capitals, Turkey, Iran (during the Shah’s time) and strategic centres in Latin America, Africa and the Far East. Operations range from formal liaison exchanges with host services through unilateral projects to special executive actions directed against Arab terrorists. There are also smaller stations, which run mostly unilateral operations and handle local liaison on such matters as Arab terrorists....
authorities had registered in the organization or did so when appointed to a key post. It could easily be claimed that Freemasonary organizations were the most important political groups which administered the affairs in the country for a long time. Wealthy families and many distinguished personalities joined the new setup and carried out the recommendations and the designs of British leaders.

Freemasonry in Iran came into existence under the title of "Pahlavi Lodge" led by Javaheri with the approval of the Shah. Earnest Proun who was a conduit between Mohammad Reza and the Lodge was the most influential figure in the group. As I said earlier, Proun took me to Javaheri's residence for a meeting, and tried to convince me to join the organization but I refused since I was not interested to align with them.

Since the very first day of SAVAK's birth, Americans assigned the 3rd Department to collect information about the activities and investigate the role of foreign bureaus or international organizations operating in Iran. The investigation included Freemasonry and Bahaism as well. The American advisor at the 3rd Department was closely supervising the study and passed the required information on to CIA station chief. A permanent two-member section within the 3rd Department was charged with supervising Freemason and a few other groups operating in the country. The section released two bulletins a year about Freemasons. Although the Shah was aware of Freemasonary activities in Iran, a copy of the bulletin was sent to him through SIB to study.

The unfavourable reputation of Freemasons and a growing opposition to the activities of the group forced the Shah to keep his relations with them strictly covert but he always backed them in a way or another.

The Shah was regularly kept up to date on the latest function of the organization. For their part, Freemasons always expressed loyalty to Mohammad Reza and supported his throne.

The publication of a three-volume book under the title of "Freemason's Lodge and Freemasonary in Iran" written by Ismael Rain inflicted a heavy blow to the organization because it disclosed the names of many of its members. I understand that the disclosure was orchestrated by the Americans to reveal the strong hold the British had over the Iranian ruling clique. Americans had two clear intentions behind the disclosure: first, to lay the blame of past mistakes at the feet of the British and Freemasons and to bring both into ill repute; secondly, to gradually isolate British policymakers in order to pave the way for U.S.-backed agents to seize key posts.

Bahais were another sect under the surveillance of the 3rd Department. The department prepared a comprehensive report about the activities of Bahais every three months. The Shah was fully aware of Baha establishments and of high level posts held by Bahais, and he used to show his goodwill to them.

Bahais were in prominence even during Reza Shah. The former monarch appointed Assadollah Sanie, a famous Bahai, his aid-de-camp. Sanie’s influence increased during Alam, Mansure, and especially Hoveida. He was War Minister during Hoveida’s cabinet for some time. The most prominent Bahai during Pahlavis was Abdolkarim Ayadi. Abdolkarim’s father had chosen the surname “Ayadi” meaning “elements or hands” because he was one of “Ayadi Amrollah” (Elements of God’s Order), a close group to Abass Afandi. Abdolkarim’s blessings helped many other Bahais to seize top posts during Mohammad Reza’s reign. He played a decisive role in having Amir Abbass Hoveida, a Bahai, appointed Prime Minister. Hoveida’s father had also been one of the close associates and special writers of Afandi.

The activities of Bahais were jeopardized only once when Hojjatoleslam Falsafi, a famous preacher, lashed out at the sect. In an attempt to pacify public wrath, Mohammad Reza ordered the demolition of Hazirat-al-Qods, a holy place for Bahais, in Tehran. The Shah ordered Ayadi to leave the country for a short time. He stayed in Italy for nine months, and returned home after the situation returned to normal.

Bahais are not allowed to assume political posts without the prior permission of their top leader in Aka, a Bahai holy site in Israel. They are required to confine their activities to trade and agriculture.

“So, why have you accepted a political post?”, once I asked Sani.

“Leader permits us to accept political posts in exceptional cases”, he replied.

Bahais believe that Iran is the “Promised Land” for Bahais and therefore assuming political posts in Iran was not prohibited. All the Bahais I have met do not have a feeling of being Iranians. It was clear to me that they were spies. The Shah not only did not show any sensitivity towards the growing power of Bahais in Iran.
but also he explicitly disclosed that he was happy to see them in important posts because they did not conspire against him. The powerful Bahais did everything to improve their financial position and take the upper hand in handling the country’s economic affairs. I did not know any poor Bahai during this period. Many districts in Tehran were under Bahai’s virtual control.

In 1975, Shah’s personal office (under Moinian) handed over to SIB a complaint. The letter said Hojabr Yazdani, a wealthy influential individual, had confiscated lands of shepherds and villagers in Sangsar. The Shah ordered to investigate the case and report back to him the outcome. I dispatched two SIB officers and a SAVAK photographer to the area. The officers reported that inhabitants of Nazaranabad in the mountains of Sangsar are all Bahais. Yazdani was their leader. They had seized lands of neighbouring Muslim-inhabited village. The evidence was collected, and was handed over to the Shah. The following morning, Ayadi telephoned me and said Mohammad Reza had shown him the report. He said the report was biased, and urged the Shah to dispatch an unbiased team of experts to re-investigate the case!. I said the documented report was accurate, and that there was no need for a re-investigation. Anyhow, nothing was done to return the lands to their Muslim owners. A year later, I learned that Yazdani was engaged in big land transactions in Tehran. He was always escorted by his two bodyguards.

During the reign of last Pahlavi monarch, Bahais launched an extensive campaign propagating Bahaism in Iran. They used girls as means of luring men to convert to Bahaism. They also prescribed marriages between Bahais and Muslims. Iran had the biggest Bahai population in the world after the United States. Bahais who are mostly living in Chicago, U.S. are a powerful community. During the height of Bahais power in Iran, Bahaism was among the religions mentioned in employment application forms in government departments but it was dropped from the forms after their holy site was demolished in Tehran. Since then, they were introducing themselves as Muslims!

"With the advent of neo-colonialism and the introduction of imperialists to remote countries, a flood of researchers from imperialistic governments, particularly Britain and the Czarist Russia, began pouring into Islamic countries and, under various pretexts, primarily set to learning the different dimensions of the culture of the Islamic nations and peoples. Mr. Hemfer (founder of Wahabism and the instigator of Mohammad Ben Abdul-Wahab), in his memoirs, says: “The British Foreign Secretary told me that about 5,000 spies and experts on cultural issues had been deployed in the remotest parts of the world to obtain sufficient intelligence on nations and their customs and traditions”. On the other hand, the Ottoman Empire which was gradually being weakened, had turned into a field of rivalries between the British and the Russians, each trying to pave the way for its own future domination by penetrating into intellectual, political and social groups.

One of the best known conspiracies by the imperialists in this connection was this same issue of “religion making, sectarianism and creating gaps in the Muslim ranks”, just as the history of coming into existence of many of the present beliefs, concepts and parties in the Islamic countries go back to those days (such as Zionism in the Middle East, Babism, Bahaism and Kasravism in Iran, etc.).

Bahaism was a rather successful experience by imperialism and the enemies of Islam, although it did not prove much benefit to its original promoter, Russia. Since its genesis, however, it has acted as a political party, opposed to Islam, disuniting people and paving the way for the superpowers' penetration into Islamic countries, especially Iran. Here, we shall endeavour to describe the background which caused the Russian government to exploit it to create a new faith called Bahaism.

Following the death in 1825 of Sheikh Ehsaee who had managed to launch a new school of thought, called Sheikbia, in Iraq’s Shia teaching centres during the tumultous atmosphere of the time between the Osoolis (those believing in rational principles to understand the rules of scripture) and the Akhbaris (those who believed in traditional narratives without applying intellect or rational principles), the ground-work had been laid by Ehsaee for misuse by imposters by virtue of omitting two precepts, namely “resurrection” and “justice”, from the religious precepts and their replacement by a fourth precept called “the fourth pillar” (belief in the existence of a deputy and direct link between the Imam and the people during the Imam’s absence). Following his death, his disciple, Seyed Kazem Rashti, attempted
to propagate his ideas, thereby gradually increasing the gap between the mullas of the new sect and those of Shi‘ism. Rashi, who, according to many historians and history books, was not from Rasht but from Vladivostok in Russia and was a political agent of the Russian government, had in his class a young man from Shiraz, named Mirza Ali Mohammad.

After Seyed Kazem’s death, Ali Mohammad Shirazi claimed deputyship and attracted some people around himself in Iraq. Among his disciples, there was a man by the name of Sheikh Issa Landarani whose real name, according to his own confessions and the documents published by Czarist Russia, was Kiniaz Dolgorouki who, in the beginning, during the rule of Fath Ali Shah, had been an employee and a translator of the Russian Embassy in Tehran. He had then gone to Russia and, upon his return to Gilan, had introduced himself as a Muslim by the name of Issa Lankarani. Wearing the clergy attire, he went to Iraq on an intelligence mission for his government to gather intelligence about the situation in the Iraqi religious teaching centres. There he attended the classes taught by Ali Mohammad Shirazi who claimed to be the deputy of the absent Imam Mahdi. This same person (by the fictitious name of Sheikh Issa) was later sent to Tehran as the Russian Ambassador, at which time he supported Bab to Isfahan and, according to admissions by Bahais, was the cause of Bahai’s release from prison.

Shirazi’s psychological disorder, his strong ambitions for leadership, continual instigations by Sheikh Issa Dolgorouki, and the susceptible circumstances created by Rashii all united to induce Ali Mohammad to proclaim himself the justice-administering world saviour by pretending to be the “Promised Mahdi of Islam”, and thereby attract the wretched and oppressed people to his beguiling mirage, which caused three civil wars in three sensitive regions of our country and shed much blood.

In his confessions in this respect, Dolgorouki has written: “... I gradually approached him and became one of his closest friends. I invited him to my house several times, where I mixed his water-pipe tobacco with Indian hemp juice and hashish. During his ecstatic moods I encouraged him to stand up against the Shia mullahs and to claim superiority.”

Such circumstances gave rise to Ali Mohammad’s claim of Mahdism and even prophecy and divinity and so a new sect called “Babism” (which later changed to Bahaism by Hossein Ali Mirza’s claim) was created by Shirazi and, in fact, under the leadership of the Russian spy. Ali Mohammad Bab’s propagation of superstitious and sacrilegious ideas sent him to prison. However, he was released from prison by Manouchehr Khan Motamedodoleh, the governor of Isfahan who was born an Armenia and was from Georgia in Russia and, with the Russian Government’s help, had penetrated the Qajar establishment as an enemy and had a deep dislike for Isfahan’s Shia mullahs. Manouchehr Khan brought Bab to Isfahan and provided him with propaganda facilities. As stated in “Summarised History” by Nabid Zarandi, “Manouchehr Khan himself endeavoured hard to spread the faith”. Dolgorouki has written in his book: “As soon as I received information that Bab had arrived in Isfahan, I wrote a friendly letter to Isfahan Governor Motamedodoleh, asking him to protect him as my good, respected friend.”

As is evident, the agents of Czarist Russian government spared no effort to protect him and to spread the new faith. Even when, under pressure from Iranian mullahs and the people of Isfahan, ordered him to arrest and exile Bab to Maku, northwestern Iran, Manouchehr Khan refused to enforce the order. “Sayyah’s Personal Memoirs”, a book written by Abass Afandi (the third Bahai leader), states on page 16: “... Manouchehr Khan sent him out of Isfahan with a group of his riders. When they reached Mouchekhkhort, they were secretly ordered to return to Isfahan, where he securely sheltered him in his own house.”

This fact was divulged after Manouchehr Khan’s death, when Bab was exiled to Maku. After some time he was imprisoned in the Chehrig Castle, and finally in 1850, he was hanged in Tabriz after trial. Although Bab expressly repented twice, his real instigators, the Russian agents, did not allow the disturbance to die down and, even to his death, encouraged him to make baseless claims of disuniting effect.

During Shirazi’s imprisonment, unpleasant events took place at the hands of Babis in Zanjan, Ghazvin, and Mazandaran at foreign instigation and by the makings of people such as Mirza Hossein Ali. (a pleasure-seeking Iranian who took over the leadership of this new religion, claimed Babism and later claimed...
to be Baha Ullah, or Glory of God, and even God) as well as a prostitute by the name of Qaralein. History is ashamed to relate such events. The blood of hundreds of innocent men, women and children was spilled. The political disorder at the time, the Shah’s chronic illness, repercussions of the instability of his reign, the Qajar family’s quarrels over the throne, the existence of ignorant and oppressive governors and incompetent clergy, prevalence of religious gains, the uprising by the Afghan people, British support for separation of the Afghani region, dispersion of Iran’s 60 thousand men army as a result of British threats, expansion of the influence exercised by the Russian, British and French embassies in Iran, and riots by the people of Khorasan against the ruling class created such an atmosphere that enabled the Babis to strengthen themselves and thereby give rise to the bloody events at Sheikh Tabassi Castle as well as the tragic events in Tabriz and Zanjan. Amir Kabir who sensed British and Russian imperialism to be behind such events, decided to crush them. However, in the wake of his death, foreign embassies proceeded with their schemes until August 1952 when the Babis tried in vain to assassinate Nasserddin Shah. Following this attempt, Baha Ullah was arrested, convicted and sentenced to death. However, he was released from prison at the Russian Ambassador’s support and mediation and was saved from certain death at the recommendation of Emperor Nicholas Alexander KK, whereupon he was exiled to Iraq with the remnants of the Babis. During their ten years in Baghdad, they continued with their sedition, causing disunity and diversity among the Muslim community as well as committing crimes, most of which are recorded in history books. They were finally summoned to Constantinople by the Ottoman Government. The fact is that the Ottoman Government initially sought to use them as a means to weaken the Iranian Government. But, as soon as it found out about their secret connections with the Russian and British embassies in Turkey, it put a stop to their activities, and finally, under pressure from the people who had grown impatient with their atrocities, it divided them into two groups one of which, called Babia, headed by Sobhe Azai, was exiled to Cyprus, and the other group, headed by Baha Ullah, was exiled to Akka in Palestine. The Babia group in Cyprus abandoned its activities and is now almost extinct. But Baha Ullah in Palestine, with the help of the British government, who were at war with the Ottoman Government, as well as Abass Afandi’s activities and his trips to Europe and America and the support he received from the Zionists who contemplated to set up a government and to occupy Palestine, was able to set up an organization in Palestine, modelled on European political parties, at a site called “Beitol Adl” (House of Justice) in Haifa. This same establishment gradually became an authority for taking decisions on Bahai activities in all countries, and was turned into a fundamental pillar for establishment and entrenchment of the regime occupying Qods (Jerusalem). Following Baha Ullah’s death, Abass Afandi and Shoghi Afandi respectively took over the leadership of the affiliated party.9

Here let me explain about the term “British Tudehis”. It became a common phrase on the lips of the people during Mohammad Reza’s reign. I have little knowledge about its foundation and its leaders, but certainly, British intelligence agents were behind the party. Most likely, Assadollah Alam was the topmost member and leader of the party. The party came into prominence after August 19, 1953 coup. Alam did nothing without receiving orders from the British, and certainly a large number of its members had previously been agents of London who had performed great services, and, therefore, deserved posts of a ministerial nature or the like at the Court.
banquet and reception in the Oriental splendour of the old Golestan Palace. Affairs of state delayed our honeymoon for a few days, but then we had a long-awaited time together on the Caspian.”


Ahmad Shafiq was son of Shafiq Pasha, chief of Egyptian King’s office. Shafiq Pasha was sent to exile in Europe after Foad replaced the king. Ashraf’s decision to marry Shafiq annoyed King Farooq who saw the marriage detrimental to the special relationship between the two monarchical families. Mohammad Reza ignored Farooq’s anger and accepted Ashraf’s request to allow her marry Shafiq. The fruits of their marriage was a boy and a girl. The boy whom they decided to call Shahriyar later became a navy officer and was assassinated in Paris after the 1979 Islamic revolution. Ashraf’s daughter, Azadeh was crazy-sex like her mother. Above collected by the compiler of Fardust’s memoirs, the Institute for Political Studies and Research, published as footnotes in the Persian text of the book.

For details please see Twentieth Century Iran, Hossein Amiradeghi and R.W. Ferrier, William Heinemann Ltd., 1977; p. 102.

11. Above from All Fall Down: America’s Tragic Encounter with Iran; Gary Sick, Random House, New York, 1985; p. 47.

12. For details please see The Shah and I, Memoirs of Assadollah Alam.

13. Above from All Fall Down: America’s Tragic Encounter with Iran; Gary Sick, Random House, New York, 1985; p. 11.


Chapter 4
PAHLAVI DYNASTY, WEST’S ESPIONAGE BASTION

1. Please see The Return of the Ayatollah, Mohamed Heikal; Andre Deutsch Limited, 1981-1983; p. 16.


3. “One other significant military official whom I very seldom met and with whom I cannot recall ever having had a social conversation was General Fardust, the inspector general of the realm. He, like Qarabaqi, had been one of that select group chosen to be classmates and companions of the Crown Prince, and he was now reputed to be closer to the Shah than any other officer; the monarch used him as his “eyes and ears”. By making him inspector general, the Shah fashioned an instrument of loyalty in whom he had complete confidence and who could act discreetly to check information he received from other officials. General Fardust constantly made unpublicized trips throughout the country, investigating not only military matters but also civilian government activities. He was particularly respected and feared among the bureaucracy, because his reports could result in the rapid termination of a career or even in a criminal action that brought corrupt officials into disrepute. Please see Mission to Iran, William H. Sullivan, W.W. Norton and Company, 1981; pp. 76-7.


5. For details please see Documents from the U.S. Espionage Den: America—Supporter of Usurpers of the Qods, The Centre for Publication of the U.S. Espionage Den’s Documents, p. 283.


7. “Israel’s principal intelligence and security authority is the Va’adat Rashet Hasherutim (the Committee of the Heads of Services), generally known as Va’adat. It coordinates the operations and
activities of its members. Mossad Letafkidim Meyouchadim (the Secret Intelligence Service) or Mossad, its common name, has the primary responsibility for foreign operations and is subordinate to the Prime Minister. Sherut Bitachon Klali (counterespionage and Internal Security), popularly known as Shin Beth, is responsible for security and is directly subordinate to the Prime Minister. Agaf Modiin (Military Intelligence) has the main responsibility for strategic military intelligence and communications intelligence and is under the command of the Chief of Staff of the Israeli Defense Forces. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs provides support in research and political planning to the Israeli intelligence community.”


8. “Yacov Nimrodi (was) one of the richest men in Israel. An Iraqi Jew and a former Israeli military attache to Iran, he had established the first official government-run arms channel between Israel and Iran in the early 1960s. In 1967, after the Middle East war, he came back to Tel Aviv and made presentations to the chief of the General Staff of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). He wanted to be a military governor of the West Bank, which had just been captured. … when the IDF general staff told them that they were not ready to appoint him, he told them that if he did not get the job he was going to leave the army and become a millionaire …

He surprised all. As soon as his resignation from the military went into effect, he returned to Tehran. Because of the friendship he developed with the Shah, Nimrodi, reached an agreement that any arms coming to Iran from Israel would have to be brokered by him—with a built-in commission.”


Chapter 5

SECRET AGENCIES DURING PAHLAVIS

3. Kermit Roosevelt, a crucial CIA figure during the 1953 coup in Iran, in his book Countercoup writes that Iran and Israel had excellent though informal relations. These relations, he says, became closer in later years when certain Israeli friends discreetly joined the CIA in helping to organize and give guidance to a new Iranian security service. The Israeli action was entirely ‘under the table’, essentially a clandestine operation - but it was of great assistance to the Iranians.


Chapter 6

INTERNAL SECURITY DURING PAHLAVIS

2. Ibrahim Yunesi, translator of the book, Edmondz, Kurds, Turks and Arabs says, “Sadat of Egypt was mediating between the Shah and Saddam. In late February 1975, Barezani dispatched a delegation to Egypt to see what were the alleged secret negotiations in Baghdad between the representatives of Iran and Iraq. Sadat received the Kurdish delegation and ensured them that there were no talks being held at all. He betrayed them.” Above collected by the compiler of Fardust’s memoirs, the Institute for Political Studies and Research, published as footnotes in the Persian text of the book.

3. Molla Mustafa Barezani died a slow death from cancer in the United States from 1976 to 1979. Molla Mustafa’s son, Masoud, who had joined the KDP in 1963, was elected to succeed his father as KDP leader. Masoud Barezani and his KDP welcomed the victory of the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran and in his interviews with domestic and foreign papers attacked the Pahlavi regime and the United States for their treason against the Kurds. Above collected by the compiler of Fardust’s Memoirs, the Institute for Political Studies and Research, published as footnotes in the Persian text of the book.

4. Compiled from international wire services published in international newspapers.


6. On the same day SAVAK issued a statement: “Since, according to reliable information and sufficient evidence, Mr. Khomeini’s attitude and provocations have been considered contrary to the interests of the State, and to the security, independence, and territorial integrity of the State, he has been exiled from Iran effective November 4, 1964”.

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