

بنیاد مطالعات ایران

Foundation for Iranian Studies

INTERVIEWEE: GEORGE LENCZOWSKI

INTERVIEWER: GHOLAM-REZA AFKHAMI

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PREFACE

This manuscript is the product of a series of tape-recorded interviews conducted for the Oral History of Iran Program of Foundation for Iranian Studies by Gholam-Reza Afkhami with George Lenczowski in Berkeley, Ca., in November 30, 1984.

Readers of this Oral History memoir should bear in mind that it is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, narrator and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. Foundation for Iranian Studies is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

George Lenczowski was born and raised in Poland. During WW II he joined the underground Polish resistance and later on became a functionary of the Polish Government-in-exile in London. Between 1942 and 1945 he was stationed in Tehran as a diplomat, where he first became acquainted with and interested in Iran. Upon his return to the West, Dr. Lenczowski left public life for a career in academia. He became a renowned specialist of the Middle East and an expert on Iranian Studies. During his career as a political scientist, Dr. Lenczowski has written much on the Middle East in general and on Iran in Particular. Moreover, Dr. Lenczowski has visited Iran on numerous occasions and met with an array of Iranian statesmen. His views therefore, blend his scholarly vision with first hand personal experiences, and produce illuminating insights into Iranian politics.

SPB

Interviewee: George Lenczowski Interview #1
Interviewer: G.R. Afkhami Place: Berkeley, California
Date: November 30, 1984

Q: Professor Lenczowski, would you kindly tell us something about your own background: where you were born; how did you come into contact with Iran? What in Iran, in fact, seemed interesting to you, attracted you? Anything that seems to be of interest to yourself in this preliminary way.

Lenczowski: Well, I'm a Polish-born person. I have studied in Poland, France, and England. My formal degrees are in law: I collected three degrees in law, and have a doctorate in law from France. I entered, as a young man, the Polish foreign service, and asked for an assignment in the Middle East. Initially, it was not in Iran.

Then, soon after I joined the foreign service, the War broke out. Then I joined the military and participated in the campaign of the Middle East and North Africa against the Axis. I was an officer in the Polish forces that were under British command.

At a certain point in 1942, I was transferred from the military back to the diplomatic service of the Polish government, which was then in exile in London, as many other Allied governments whose countries were occupied by the Axis powers. There was a Polish embassy in Tehran, and I was appointed press attache with the Iran First Secretary. My job was essentially

very political, and it put me in touch with many political personalities in Iran.

Then the War ended. The Yalta agreement was concluded, which determined the fate of Poland, and I decided not to return to Poland, but to come to the United States. Because I had high academic degrees, I was qualified to teach, and I embarked upon an academic career that brought me -- with a few preliminary years of teaching in the east of the United States -- to California. I have been at the University of California since 1952. I established myself as a specialist on the Middle East, in politics.

I was always fascinated by the Middle East, and I'm that I had actually, all together, three experiences in the Middle East. I was stationed once in the British Mandate of Palestine. Then I had the military service, that ranged from Libya through Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, up to Iraq. Eventually, I resumed the diplomatic service in Iran.

In Iran during the War, I was stationed between '42 and '45. These were very eventful years, in which I came intimately into contact with the Iranian political process. This served me in good stead, because later, as an academic in the United States, I was able to resume my direct contacts with Iran by traveling frequently. In fact, from 1955 on, I never missed a year in traveling to Iran. Every year, I would go to the Middle East to make a round trip that included, usually, Lebanon, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the Persian Gulf, very often Iraq and Syria -- and invariably, Iran.

During the visits to Iran, I would see a great range of people. I would see political leaders, academic leaders, journalistic leaders -- many of whom I knew from my earlier days as press attache. I knew, for example, Abbas Mas'udi and his brother Javad Mas'udi. My especially good friend was Dr. Mostafa Mesbahzadeh. And a number of other people. I knew leaders of various political parties, of whom many were in existence during the War. I established, also, pretty close relations with the royal court, which led me into a number of audiences with Shah Mohammad Reza Shah. I think that during those years, I must have been received between twenty and twenty-five times by the Shah, and in this sense I think that I was one of the few unofficial Americans (that is, those who did not serve in any diplomatic capacity) who saw Iran so frequently. In fact, I believe that perhaps only among those Americans whom I know and who had close contact with Iran, only Kermit Roosevelt might have been seeing the Shah more often than I did.

There was first, I would say, a degree of, perhaps, probing. The Shah knew about my background and about the fact that I was teaching about Iran and the Middle Eastern subjects, but perhaps he still did not fully trust me, initially. So our conversations, initially, were -- I would say -- on the more formal side.

Q: Still, though, Dr. Lenczowski, when you say initially, you are referring to what years, now? The fifties?

Lenczowski: The 1950s. From the mid-1950s to 1960 or so. Later, however, the Shah became -- so to say -- accustomed to me, and I think became convinced that I'm genuinely a friend of Iran, that I am motivated by the desire to see the Iranian and American relations flourish, follow a friendly course; and that I was wishing the best for Iran in terms of its security, in terms of its development; and that I had basically a positive attitude towards the Pahlavi regime. Which I did, and which I still continue to have now, because I consider the Pahlavi regime as the regime of modernization, and as a regime in which both rulers, I believe, had proper priorities in foreign policy.

Now, on this larger issue, I may say, I like to compare three persons. I like to compare [Premier Mohammed] Mossadeq, the Shah (I mean Mohammad Reza Shah), and [Ayatollah Ruhollah] Khomeini. Each of them selected one country that was the greatest danger to Iran's survival. Mossadeq claimed that it was Great Britain. Had he done this, perhaps, essentially earlier -- if he were alive at that time -- maybe he might have been right, but even then it might have been dubious. Anyway, at the time when Mossadeq appeared as Prime Minister on the scene, Britain was already a tired lion, relinquishing her imperial control. To focus on England as a principal danger to Iran, just because of the accident of the quarrel over the revenue from Anglo-Iran Oil Company, I think was a completely mistaken policy, and was presenting great risks to Iran in terms of its survival, because it was placing greater emphasis on Britain than on Russia.

Then, to Khomeini, the greatest danger -- and "Satan," as he says -- is the United States, which to me is a completely irrational view, because the United States -- to be sure -- possessed an influence in Iran, but the United States never coveted Iranian territory or Iranian resources. There might have been some differences over minor matters with the two countries, but the priorities were very similar.

Finally, the Shah selected as the principal target of his concern, the Soviet Union -- Russia. In other words, the northern colossus that historically was a great danger to the survival of Iran -- and still is.

Now, if you compare the views of these three men, to me, there is not the slightest doubt that the Shah was the most rational and the wisest of the three. Both because I both as an American, and because of my Polish background and because I know what happened to my own country, Poland, as regards to Russian imperialism, I am very much aware both of Russian and Soviet imperialism and danger to all of its neighbors, I could not help but only to agree and share the Shah's concern as regards to priorities of Iranian foreign policy.

Q: Dr. Lenczowski, your personal acquaintance with the late Shah started, you said, sometime in the early or mid-fifties, to which we will return.

Lenczowski: Formally, I was introduced to him in 1945, at the Nowrouz reception as a member of the diplomatic corps, but that

was purely formalistic. So the real relationship began in the mid-fifties, as you point out.

Q: Your book -- I suppose your first major book -- Russia and the West in Iran -- came out when?

Lenczowski: In 1949.

Q: And you'd pretty much done a great deal of study concerning Iran's international position, Iran's relationship with the Soviet Union on the one hand and Great Britain on the other -- and the West in general -- and Iran's pivotal position, perhaps, in those areas. So that when you came to visit the Shah for the first time, you had certain such ideas of what was right and what was wrong, and how he would react to it.

What I would like to ask you now is perhaps if you would -- in your own words and the way in which you would, yourself, construct this -- talk about the Shah as you saw him, both in terms of a time axis (1955 to the last time that you saw him, perhaps); and possibly talk in terms of the changes that you saw in the man; and then on the other axis, perhaps in comparison -- as you just did, in this particular point with Khomeini and with Mossadeq -- with some other leaders, perhaps in the Middle East: in terms of personality, in terms of perception, in terms of the way in which he acted, too, to various points, various issues, various people.

Lenczowski: All right. First of all, let me say that my interest in Iran began with Iranian foreign policy and the status of Iran and position of Iran in international relations. I was concerned about Iran's security as well as Iran's survival; I was concerned about the whole of the Middle East, because the Middle East was threatened by the Soviets as it was threatened previously by the Axis powers. So when I wrote the book, Russia and the West in Iran, this was my main motivation. I had, of course, to pay attention to some internal problems, to the extent to which they were connected with Iran's international status and security. That's why I called it Russia and the West in Iran, and I dealt with the problem of tribes, with the problem of the political parties, the intelligentsia, and a few other internal problems. But the main emphasis was on the relationship with major powers; in this case, of course, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and eventually the emerging interest of the United States.

Because this book was written only four years after the end of the War, in 1949, it was really the first political analysis of Iran published in the West, and it attracted a good deal of attention -- and I would say rather favorable attention, except, perhaps, for the Communist sources, because I was very critical of the Soviet policies, and I exposed everything they have tried to do, both inside Iran and in Azarbayjan and in Kurdistan. For many people, it was an eye-opener. They did not know how much the Soviet Union intrigued, and how much she was bent upon expanding her dominion over Iran.

Because this book attracted a good deal of attention, it came also to the attention of the Shah and his prime ministers and ministers. So I became rather early -- as an author -- pretty well-known in Iran, on a comparative scale, at least to those who read and who are aware and conscious of political problems. Moreover, one or two lectures I gave at the Iran-America Society were also focusing on similar problems, and they were attended often by Iranian senators, ministers, and so on.

Well, as regards, now, the relationship with the Shah and as I saw him: I believe, certainly, through these years of his rule, as I was observing him, the Shah gained much more in self-assurance. Initially, I still remember his visit in California, it was in 1950 or '51. Or perhaps in '52. At that time, the American ambassador to Iran -- this was the time of Mossadeq's crisis. The American ambassador to Iran was Henry Grady, former professor of economics from Berkeley. I remember, I attended a reception for the Shah in San Francisco, in which Mr. Grady, our ambassador, referred to the Shah in this way --

Q: I'm sorry; just that we had a little bit of lapse here, let me ask you something. You talked about Mr. Grady. Grady seemed to have a little -- Iranians do not think very highly of Grady. Grady seemed to have a little trouble with the American administration at the time. Do you --?

Lenczowski: I don't think I could make many comments on it, but I am mentioning him because Grady referred publicly, in the

presence of the Shah, to his relationship to the Shah in those terms: "We have every week lunch together with His Majesty, and it is my privilege and my pleasure that I look upon His Majesty almost as my son or my nephew." Now, imagine an American ambassador saying that about the Shah. I think it was done with the best possible intentions, and the Shah, of course, accepted it also pleasantly, but certainly it placed the whole relationship into a sort of patron-client relationship or whatever; paternalistic. The old gray-haired American ambassador and the young Shah, who was just in his thirties. Now, this could not have happened ten or fifteen years later, and I would say that as the Shah weathered all of this Mossadeq experience and became entrenched -- particularly after, from 1953 to 1963 -- he gained greatly in self-assurance.

Q: Let me stop, then, and then come again.

[interview interrupted]

Dr. Lenczowski, you were just talking about the changes that you saw in the Shah during these years that you were familiar with him and with Iran. You were talking about this in terms of your first meetings with him. If I recall correctly, it was Grady's meeting with the Shah and the way in which he referred to him, that seemed to be a little patronizing. Would you like to go upon that?

Lenczowski: Yes. The relationship later, of course, changed completely, because first of all, Grady disappeared from the

scene and was replaced by other ambassadors. I would say that there was no question that any other American ambassador would be patronizing in his attitude toward the Shah. On the contrary, the ambassadors became very conscious of the fact that the Shah was a powerful person, and that they should treat him with all due respect, as a sovereign of a strategically important country and a friend of the United States. I would say that the apogee of this attitude among the American ambassadors was reached under the ambassadorship of Ambassador McArthur, who not only was very respectful to the Shah, but who even -- I would say -- exaggerated a little bit by being, perhaps, a little obsequious even, in the sense that he never registered any -- at least, in the conversations with such people as myself or other visitors that I know visited him and talked to him about the Shah -- he never registered any dissent from anything that the Shah would say. He acted almost as the Shah's spokesman, which struck some Americans as a slight exaggeration.

Q: May I interject here for a moment -- There was a rumor in Iran that you yourself might become American ambassador to Iran. Was there anything to it? About the same time that Ambassador McArthur --

Lenczowski: These rumors were flying here and there, and the fact is that under the Nixon -- and then Ford -- administration, I was offered, twice, certain federal positions. One was to become a deputy assistant Secretary of Defense in the Nixon

administration -- a job that was taken eventually by my former student, Robert Pranger, at my recommendation, because I was at that time too committed to certain other projects to be able to take this job. Another, under the Ford administration in the early days: I was offered a job of the head of Social Sciences section of the American delegation to UNESCO [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization], possibly with the rank of ambassador; I don't know. Again, it required a lengthy stay in Paris, for which I was not prepared; and I was not terribly anxious to go to Paris, because I visit Paris anyway every year. So the glamour of being in Paris was not so great, and I did not think that the job in UNESCO was challenging or important enough, so I refused it. That was the degree of my involvement, or possible involvement, with the federal government.

As regards the Iranian thing, there might have been rumors, but I was never formally approached regarding this matter.

To return now to the position of the Shah, I would say that particularly from 1963 on, that is the launching of the White Revolution, the Shah gained greatly in self-assurance. When you talked to him, you felt that he knew what his program was. He had crystallized, in a way, his ideology, his program, and he was very confident in himself. In the mid-seventies, particularly in connection with the oil crisis and certain other crises in the Middle East, I would say that the Shah displayed not only supreme self-confidence, but even, perhaps, a degree of assertiveness, of this type that he would be inclined almost to preach or sermonize

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to the visitors who visited, in pointing out the mistakes that certain western governments were making, whether it was in the field of energy or in some other policies.

Some critics at that time would call it, perhaps, even arrogance on his part, because here was a leader of a medium-sized country -- not a super-power -- who was trying, in a way, to teach and preach to the leaders of the great powers of the West. That, perhaps, rubbed some Western newspapermen the wrong way. I understood that situation very well, and I never had actually any unpleasant moment, I would say. In fact, as the time went on, my relationship with the Shah became more personal and more cordial.

Q: Let me ask you a question in connection with what you were just saying. In fact, there are two sides to this. One is the sort of line that is being propagated by the left, really -- communists of various sorts, leftists of various sorts -- that tends to depict the Shah as an American Stooge; that he did whatever the Americans or the United States government wanted him to do. That's one side. The other side is that there are statements made by people like, let's say, Secretary [William E.] Simon and others that all the time that he -- meaning the Shah -- seemed to suffer from delusions of grandeur, that he had become a megalomaniac or intimations of that sort; not always in the same way.

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Now, you knowing him and knowing Iran and knowing the United

States -- and also the other sides -- how do you see this? How do you react to it?

Lenczowski: Well, first of all, I absolutely reject the thesis that he was an American stooge. I think the Shah was a real and very genuine Iranian nationalist, not of the negative Mossadeq type, but of and in the tradition of his father, who wanted to assert Iran's sovereignty and independence, who wanted to unite the country, build it a nation, build it a state. He looked upon the United States as a very important factor in defending and in protecting Iran against the ever-present Soviet danger and Communist danger, but no more than that, it seems to me. He had moments of disagreement with the United States. Certainly, it was demonstrated in the early sixties when he made certain arrangements with the Soviet Union to buy Soviet arms. He did not fully agree with the United States on a number of issues: for example, on the American approach to Pakistan, particularly during the Pakistan-Indian War. The Shah was a man of independent judgment, but realistic enough to know that in this world dominated by two super-powers, he had to make a certain choice. In other words, he did not quite believe in official neutrality and the fact of neutrality, even though in the later stages of his reign, he would call the Iranian policy here and independent Iranian policy. But I think that at the bottom of his heart, he always realized that if he lost the American friendship or American interest in the survival of Iran, he would be digging a grave under Iran, that Iran needed sort of an

alliance relationship, as does western Europe, after all. This does not mean that [British Prime Minister Margaret] Mrs. Thatcher is our stooge, or that [Chancellor] Helmut Kohl in Germany is a stooge, or [French President Francois] Mr. Mitterrand, but all of these people appreciate simply the reality of American power in protecting them from Soviet onslaught.

Q: Did you ever talk to him personally, in your meetings with him -- Did you ever talk to him personally about these matters, about --

Lenczowski: I talked about a number of issues, really, in these twenty to twenty-five audiences that I had with him. I am actually reluctant, even, to call them audiences, because it sounds too formal. It's good for an ambassador; I was a private citizen. I was a professor and writer. I had conversations, simply with him, and I would say these conversations were probably franker than those that he had with ambassadors, because the ambassadors are under constraints of official instructions. They cannot ask certain questions that may be embarrassing to them or to the Shah. I had no constraints whatsoever. I only had to watch in order not to irritate him. We were sometimes frank, and I'm afraid that on one or two occasions I might have overstepped the boundaries and asked a question that annoyed him somewhat, but it only proved to be the kind of a frank relationship that we have both developed, to use the French expression, "toutes va la position equalite," because he was a

ruler and I was just a private commoner from another country.

But now to move to this other thing, namely, whether he was developing megalomania or whatever. Simon, as you know, used some rather abusive words (our Secretary of the Treasury at that time). I would say that certainly with the growth of self-confidence and the tremendous influx of oil money and fantastic development in the third and fourth five-year plan, plus the throwing of his weight in the Persian Gulf, in Oman, the Shah, perhaps, could be excused for developing a certain over-confidence and adopting sometimes this sermonizing kind of attitude towards other powers, our Western powers. Some people may call it megalomania; maybe it's an exaggeration, but certainly, let's remember one thing: After all, he was a ruler in an authoritarian country. I don't like to call him a dictator. He was not. There is a difference between a king and a dictator. But he was an authoritarian ruler, certainly; ruling by other methods than his father, and paving the way, still, for other methods for his son. But nevertheless, it was essentially an authoritarian system. In an authoritarian system, you just don't tolerate dissent, number one; and number two, you are in a way gradually -- because of the nature of authoritarianism -- becoming insulated from other influences and possibly criticisms.

So what was possible in the 1960s, for example, when Hosein Ala' and some other leaders visited him and asked him, for example, not to take too violent measures against the opposition that waged an onslaught on him because of the agrarian reform in 1962, now these elder statesmen could still visit him and tell

him these things. To be sure, they paid a penalty for this, because they were never later invited to serve in high positions. So the others learned, and the others were more careful to warn him or criticize him. In this way, he was becoming gradually more and more insulated from criticism, from dissent; and that, of course, might have affected his general attitudes. Well, some people were calling it megalomania. I think it's too harsh a word, but certainly there was, perhaps an overflow of self-confidence at one time or another. But this only shows that he was far from being an American stooge or anybody else's stooge.

Q: When you talked to him, I presume that you had talked also about American, United States politics. Did you get a feeling that he does know, he understands the intricacies of American domestic politics and its effect on American foreign policy?

Lenczowski: Definitely. I think that he understood it very well. He understood the American political process, and in fact, more than once we discussed the dilemmas of one or another American president, and the American presidents' relationships with the Senate and Congress of the United States. For example, there were the problems of armaments, the problems of oil and so on and so forth; and the problem of general American commitment to one or another type of political action or alliance. The Shah, I think, understood all of this very well, to the extent that he would discuss, even, with me, the major or certain political personalities in the United States. He was watching.

He was a good observer. He knew who was standing for what among the leaders of the American Senate, or even what were the slight nuances and differences among the attitudes of American cabinet members. I was very much impressed by his knowledge. He was a very well-informed person.

That brings me, perhaps, to another part of your fundamental question; namely, you were first asking about the Shah on the comparative scale between the earlier parts of his reign and the later, and then on a comparative scale as regards other leaders in the Middle East. I have been fortunate to get acquainted with most of the leaders of the Middle East over these years, at one time or another. For example, in Saudi Arabia I was a personal guest -- even at meals, at least three times if not four -- of King Sa'ud. Then I was a personal guest in Taif of King Faysal. Then I got acquainted with King Khaled and with the present King Fahd. When he was minister of education, he came to Berkeley and sat in my class, in order to listen to how I lectured -- although his English is not too good. So this gives you a certain idea of my exposure to the Saudi establishment. I am speaking just of the rulers, not to speak of many other people around them who I knew rather well. I met Nasser, I met Regent, Abdol Ala' Shukri al-Kuwatli, President of Syria. I met King Hosein a number of times, and the Crown Prince Hasan; and President Shamun of Lebanon. And a number of Iraqi leaders like Abdol Ala' in the good old Nuri days. And Abdol-Karim Qasem with whom I had a lengthy interview at the time of the Kuwait crisis. And Abdol-Salam Aref and Abdol Salam Jallud, the prime minister

of Libya. All that is to give you a certain range of my exposure to the leaders of the Middle East.

I would say this, that among all of these leaders, I would range the Shah as the most intelligent of them, and the best-informed -- in a rational way -- about international politics, strategy, and the American political process. I think he stood higher in his intelligence than Nasser, although there are many good things to be said about Nasser, too. However, one thing we must acknowledge: The Shah did not have the charisma, the way his father had. His father was a powerful father figure. The Shah, no matter what he tried to do in terms of public relations, did not somehow manage to achieve that appeal to the wide masses. he was never really, it seems to me, popular, either with the masses of his people or with foreigners. They might have respected him or feared him, but it was not the kind of appeal that his father had or Nasser had. For example, I had a conversation with Nasser over the crisis in the Yemen, in which we exchanged very controversial views. That is, we disagreed with each other. But Nasser -- even although he was talking nonsense according to my criteria -- did it in a very charming way. He was laughing, and you could sense how this man has a magnetic kind of influence upon the Egyptian masses. I don't think the Shah ever had that.

Q: How do you think he felt in this line with foreign leaders? Let's say with American leaders. Did they seem to like him, or

did they tolerate him, or did they simply reject him? Did they hold him as an ally, or how did they react to him?

Lenczowski: Because I was never an insider into the American administration, I cannot really say for sure what they really thought of the Shah. I have a feeling that perhaps President Carter might have had a little -- I don't know, almost an inferiority complex vis-à-vis the Shah. This is because the Shah had already been on the throne over thirty years and had had such a tremendous wide exposure to world affairs and to world leaders, and here was the president of the United States, formerly a small businessman, the owner of a warehouse and peanut business, catapulted into this presidency. I cannot say; maybe I am unjust towards Carter, even in saying this, but I do not feel that I have the proper grounds to say anything about this; although I do believe that he was respected by all the American presidents, because he made a point that whenever a new American president appeared on the scene, he would visit him in Washington, and expect a re-visit in Tehran. These visits of the Shah were for the purpose of both exploring the general international situation and, from the Shah's point of view, gauging how much he could count on the United States on serving as a kind of an ultimate grantor of Iranian survival, in terms of armaments, in terms of cooperation on economic matters, and so on.

Q: Let me ask the same question from another side. You, in fact, talked personally to the Shah I suppose since the

Eisenhower administration -- would I be correct in assuming that?
-- until the end.

Lenczowski: Yes, that's right.

Q: Did you ever have occasion to gauge his assessment of the American leaders? How he reacted to them.

Lenczowski: Well, it's not easy to say. I think that implicitly he had a great respect for the Eisenhower administration. Whether he had a personal respect for Eisenhower as a president or for Secretary Dulles, it's harder for me to say, but after all, it's their determined policy that was decisive in throwing support of the Shah during the Mossadeq crisis. After all, it was a very decisive moment in his life.

I'm not too sure about his reactions to Lyndon Johnson or Kennedy, for example. I'm less sure. I do not have much evidence. I think that the relationship with Nixon was a good one, because this corresponded to the Nixon Doctrine, which said that we -- Americans -- are not going to overextend our responsibility or responsibilities all over the world; we are going to help those who want to help themselves, and arm them if they wish. Indeed, under the Nixon administration, almost a carte blanche was given to Iran to acquire many sophisticated American weapons. So this was a pretty good record, and I think Nixon and the Shah established a good working relationship.

Q: Let me just continue this line for one more step. In terms of his understanding or his reaction to other regional leaders -- Did you ever get, for example, to talk to him about how he felt about Nasser, perhaps, or Sadat? With whom, obviously, he was very closely related. Particularly with the Saudis or the others, did he --

Lenczowski: I definitely have impressions because we discussed these things with him. The Shah was decidedly anti-Nasser, considering Nasser as a disturber of peace in the Middle East, and considering Nasser's pan-Arab nationalist claims as being grossly exaggerated. In other words, he would recognize the legitimacy of Arab nationalism, to be sure, but he would not recognize the legitimacy of Nasser's revolutionary crusade to meddle in the affairs of other Arab countries and even beyond that, and try to upset their internal orders.

Now, his basic policy toward Saudi Arabia was one of friendly cooperation. He wanted Saudi Arabia to be stable, but he realized that the Saudis were somewhat suspicious of Iran in the Gulf region. Furthermore, interestingly enough, the Shah had doubts about Saudi stability. Let's remember that the Shah made several attempts to establish a closer relationship with the Saudis, on the basis of Islamic cooperation. Interestingly enough, because he was a secular-minded leader, the Saudis, of course, were not: But Nasser preached Arab nationalism, and the Saudis countered it by playing down nationalism and playing up Islam. Therefore the kings of Saudi Arabia -- particularly

Faysal -- would visit the Shah in Tehran, and would expect and get his visit in Saudi Arabia.

It's very interesting that about that time -- that was in the 1960s -- I edited a book under the title, The Political Awakening in the Middle East, which was really a book of readings. Among these were certain Saudi reform programs and certain readings about Iran and so on. Well, I allowed myself to call one section of this book, "The White Revolutions" -- in plural, putting two countries into it, namely Iran and Saudi Arabia. Because, I felt that there was -- despite all their differences -- also this similarity, that the two regimes were monarchies; they were authoritarian monarchies; and both in their own way tried to reform and modernize their countries. Of course, the Saudis on a much more modest scale, and much more careful scale, because in the Wahabi country they could not do certain things that the Shah was doing. Nevertheless, Faysal did go, on some occasions, counter to the opinion of the Ulama' for example, by allowing the shopkeepers to sell records with music. There were certain attacks of Saudi fundamentalists, smashing the records. Well, there were these examples of certain modernisms on Faysal's part.

Once, during a conversation with the Shah (during Faysal's reign), I referred to these two white revolutions, the Iranian and the Saudi. I must say this was one of the few occasions when I got a negative reaction from the Shah. He simply expressed it even facially. He made a sort of facial expression of annoyance, as if he wanted to get rid of some bothersome fly trying to sit

on his nose, you know, and he made a deprecatory gesture when I spoke of the Saudi "white revolution." He did not want, of course, this word -- that it was his monopoly in a way, in Iran, to be spread --

[end of side one, tape one]

Lenczowski: We were just speaking about the Iranian-Saudi relationships, and the fact that the Shah was rather unhappy when I made a remark that Saudi Arabia also had a sort of a white revolution. He made a deprecating gesture at that time, which led us to a further discussion of the Saudi situation. Let us remember that Saudi Arabia, on a few occasions, had some dissent movements, in fact, some fifteen years ago, and that was about the time when we were talking to the Shah about it. There was an attempt in the Saudi air force at some dissent, and many Saudi air force officers were arrested. I know about it intimately, because one Saudi air force officer, a lieutenant colonel, was taking a doctorate under my supervision here in Berkeley. He was lucky to be in Berkeley, because if he were in Saudi Arabia, all sorts of pressures might have landed him in the midst, perhaps, of this conspiracy or whatever, and he might have suffered. So we were speaking about the situation in Saudi Arabia with the Shah, and when I asked him whether he thinks that Iran and Saudi Arabia should cooperate for the sake of stability, he said definitely they should, but he has grave doubts about Saudi stability. It now sounds paradoxical, because they have survived and seem to be still well-entrenched, while he is no more there.

Q: Dr. Lenczowski, before we move out of this discussion of the Shah and his personality and the way in which he reacted to various phenomena, I would like to ask you this question. From what you say and from what other people have said, he seems like a man who knew what he was doing, and like a man who was intelligent enough to understand his surroundings. And he seems, at least, to have had the ability to get other people to do what he wanted them to do; certainly, Iranians. To some extent, one could say this about his relationship with outside, non-Iranians; certainly with some of the westerners and others. Yet, in the last year of his reign, he seemed to have shown a great deal of psychological paralysis, a lack of ability to react, a lack of ability to make decisions. At least on the surface, this is how it looks. Some people have made a great deal of this. Would you react to this?

Lenczowski: Yes. I would say that this kind of psychological paralysis -- to which you refer -- that occurred in the last year of his reign, could be ascribed -- as I see it -- right away to three factors. One was his own illness, which was a terminal illness, and he was aware of it but the other people were not. Secondly, there was a shock of these monster demonstrations against him, where the people who were privileged by him, the intelligentsia, the bureaucracy, were marching out in the streets against him. Bank employees and so on. That's what you were calling thanatos -- suicide on a national scale. I think it must have been a terrible shock to him to realize that so many people

are willing to do it; that the girls in the university, who really owed the fact that they were students in the universities to him, to his secularizing policy, to his pro-feminist liberation policy -- were now putting on scarves or veils to conform with the pressures of the Islamic leaders. That must have been a terrible shock. He had never experienced demonstrations on this big a scale, unless they were the Tudeh demonstrations before under the Soviet aegis. But this came from inside Iran.

And the third was the mixed signals from Washington. Certainly, they were mixed; there is no doubt. There is plenty of documentation on this. Ex-President Carter's own book, Brzezinski's book, Vance's book, the book by Michael Edean and William Lewis on the American debacle in Iran, and so on. Or Rubin's book on Paved with Good Intentions. The signals were very mixed because the Carter administration concentrated, or made human rights a central point of its foreign policy. To be sure, not unanimously. Brzezinski certainly was not of this opinion, but the others were. While at the same time, he was calling the Shah his best ally. So when we read the record of American-Iranian relations during the Carter administration, it's a dismal record of very mixed signals. No doubt, even a person not as sick as the Shah was already at that time could be confused.

Q: On the other hand, there were people at the time -- and certainly this has an even longer background -- who talked of the

Shah or called him all kinds of names. A very ferocious leader, so to speak, someone who would easily -- presumably -- resort to killing people in order to remain in power, or to get his own way. Again, I'd like to have your reaction to it in terms of your personal contact with it. Did he ever look to you as someone who was capable of doing this? Or did you ever get the feeling that this man was able, in effect, to do this kind of thing?

Lenczowski: Well, I know from the record that the Shah, at one time or another, was willing to resort to massive violence, particularly in 1962 during the first agitation of Khomeini. But at this time, he acted under the advice -- very decisive advice -- of Assadollah Alam who convinced him that he should not hesitate to use force. He was probably right, because the Shah used force and prevailed. Unfortunately, he did not have this type of decisive advice in 1978. Or course, perhaps in 1978, precisely because of these mixed signals from Washington -- to which we referred previously -- he would hesitate to do this. There was undoubtedly some change in his attitudes. But in the private conversations with him, I never felt that he was a recklessly cruel man. I am pretty sure that his father would have reacted with brutality against this kind of thing. I think that he was already a little too -- shall I say -- civilized, too mollified by his western experiences, by living in Switzerland, by knowing what democracy was about, to say to himself, "All right, I'll go and shoot the people to the left and to the right." This, by the way, might lead me to another remark here

in my reminiscences; namely, that when Amini was prime minister in the early 60s -- and he was an old friend of mine still from wartime. When I was press attache, I already knew him. I lived in his mother's house, as a matter of fact, in the Parke (Fakhroddowleh). So I knew him and I had an easy access to Amini. I must say that the Shah appointed Amini reluctantly as prime minister. Amini was the last prime minister that I knew who would say, "I have got the power now, and people are polite to me." No other prime minister would say that to me. Egbal would not say that, Alam would not say this but Amini did. So at that time, I had one or two conversations with the Shah. At the beginning of one of the conversations, I said to the Shah, "Well, Your Majesty, you have a prime minister who has shown a good deal of courage." And the Shah asked me, perhaps with a tone of annoyance, "In which way?" I said, "Well, he placed a number of generals under arrest for corruption. That does require some courage." And the Shah answered very decisively, "He did not place the generals under arrest. The commander-in-chief places the generals under arrest, and I am the commander-in-chief." So he tried to deprive Amini in the way of the privilege of making this decision. Then I mentioned a few other merits of Amini in terms of settling the business with the oil companies and other things, and the Shah was obviously somewhat reluctant to hear of this. This was just another example of a slight difference of views that emerged in our conversations with the Shah. I was never aggressive, but I tentatively would say those things, and I would immediately sense when the Shah did not like what I was

saying. Again, I have the feeling that no American ambassador could have said these things to the Shah. That was my special privilege as a private person.

Now, there was another example, when I had this sort of a potential disagreement with the Shah. This was during the elections or electoral campaign either in 1962 or '63, because there were two following each other, as you know. During one of these campaigns -- during which, by the way, Asadollah Alam as the minister of interior was conducting quite a vigorous campaign to have the government derailed -- there were elements of opposition. I asked the Shah, "Your Majesty, we have this electoral campaign. Will you allow the opposition to be represented in the parliament?" He said, "Oh, sure, we have the Melliyun and the Mardom Party." I said, "Your Majesty, I know very well that both parties are loyal parties to you, and the Mardom Party is not really a real opposition. The real opposition is represented by other people." He said, "For example, like Mozaffar Baqa'i." And I said, "Precisely. Baqa'i Maleki and certain other people, National Front people." He said, "Oh, I see you know the situation in Iran very well." I said, "Thank you, Your Majesty, but it's about that kind of opposition that I'm speaking." He said to me, with a degree of annoyance, "Professor Lenczowski, why do you want to impose the American type of democracy upon Iran?" I said, "Your Majesty, I'm not such a starry-eyed idealist as to try to impose the American system upon Iran, but I'm asking these questions only out of my genuine interest in Iranian stability, in Iranian

security, and in your own welfare, as a ruler of this country. So please understand that that is my motivation." "Well," he said, "All right, I'll explain it to you. Why does not," he said, "Baqa'i come to me and ask me to do certain things? Instead of coming to me, he is agitating out in Kerman or other places, going out to the streets." Then he said, "And look at these people in the National Front, some of the earlier allies or associates in the National Front. These people --" And you know they were Allahyar Saleh and others. He said, "You know they were drinking the health of Pishavari during the Azarbayegan crisis. How can I trust those people?" I said, "Well, I understand, Your Majesty. Their past may be dubious and I understand that you don't trust them. The point is, do you prefer them to voice openly their grievances in the Parliament if they are elected -- if you permit them to be elected -- or to go and agitate in the streets, and to repeat the Mossadeq era?" And he said, "Now look. If they come to the Parliament, there may be very few of them -- perhaps four or five -- but you remember," he said, "what happened during the Mossadeq era. The original National Front was composed of five, six, or seven deputies in the Parliament, and you know what they brought about. The oil crisis, because they could agitate in such a way in the Parliament as to suborn it and subdue it. That's why I am critical of their possibility of being in the Parliament." "Well," I said, "yes, I understand. That is, in other words, a choice of giving them an opportunity to agitate in the Parliament or go out into the streets." He said, "Look, I will ask you

three questions. First of all, if they are admitted to the Parliament, you know what they will do first of all? They will raise the question of the Iranian-Soviet-American relations, and try to reverse the course that we have taken. In other words, the question even of the Azarbayjan may be reopened; the question of the whole relationship of Iran to the United States, as a friendly cooperation. They will ask for complete neutrality for a balance between Russia and the United States. "Do you, as an American, want this to happen?" I said, "No, Your Majesty." Then the next: he said, "They will try to reopen the oil question, that after the years of travail, three years between '51 and '54, we finally managed to resolve, now they will reopen this question, and open a new Pandora's box for oil troubles. Do you want this to happen?" I said, "No, I don't." Then, he said, the third: "They will question the whole political system in Iran, as it exists. Do you want this to happen, you as an American?" And I said, "No, I don't." "Then you have given me the answers."

Q: That's very interesting; that's truly interesting. Do you think that this was a strategy with which he fended off, so to speak, Western pressure on him to move towards more, perhaps, liberal system?

Lenczowski: Probably. But I think he believed in what he was saying, that it was not merely tactics, or that you call it strategy. I think that he genuinely was afraid that if he gives

too much of a freedom to these people, to voice all of these fundamental objections to Iranian policy and orientation, he will land in big trouble; that he was willing to risk the street agitation, hoping that he would manage it somehow, with Savak or whatever other means, rather than bring a decisive group, loud-mouthed like this, whom he would suspect of being possibly -- some of them -- in the Soviet pay, to constitute a disturbing element in the Iranian markets.

Q: Before we move out of this, let me ask another question. With the Iranians, it is often said that if you want to get the Shah to do something, you've got to get some non-Iranian, westerner, European, especially an American, to talk about those matters. If the Iranians themselves talk to him about this, this genre of opinion suggests, that he probably would not listen, even if there was some merit in it, and even if he assumed that there was some merit in it. But if an American said the same thing, a foreigner said the same thing, he would react to it more favorably. Is this your understanding, also? Do you think that this sort of thing makes sense?

Lenczowski: Well, I had never thought about it exactly in the categories in which you put it, but now, as I think to respond to your question, I would say that there might be, perhaps, some justification for this point of view. This is not because the Shah felt slavish towards any foreigner; but simply because of his authoritarian position, he did not expect his own Iranians to

tell him their true feelings. If they did, you see, he might be annoyed. In other words, I think there was a combination. He, in a way, distrusted the Iranians as regards their advice, because either the advice might be too critical for him to accept, or otherwise it would be too obsequious, and so he would not know, exactly. While a foreigner, particularly in a more independent position, not connected with any formally instructions of the government -- or, perhaps, a man who was heading a government, like a Prime Minister of Britain or the President of the United States, et cetera -- they wish they might have told him certain things, I think, that he would take them into account. But I think the conversations with independent foreigners might have been acting as a kind of a general corrective on his thinking. They would reveal certain aspects of a relationship with Iran, and his relationship to other forces, whether inside the country or outside of the country, which in the conversations with the Iranians themselves would not necessarily produce.

I know one thing, regards the careers of certain Iranians. I was, in a way, probably a bit -- very partially, and perhaps very indirectly and remotely -- instrumental here and there, by saying some good words about particularly my former students and my friends in Iran. I think that under those circumstances, the Shah would probably register in his mind, because even once I had in evidence that we were speaking about someone, and in the next conversation the same name popped up, and the Shah remembered.

Q: If we may now move to the other personalities in Iran with whom you've come into contact. Certainly, those people who became prime ministers or ministers in the government, high positions in the government. Obviously, you've met and you've seen and you've talked to quite a number of people who were in these positions. Did any one -- before we go on, take them one by one -- Is there any one of them that stands out, particularly, in your mind, that you consider to be perhaps different from the others?

Lenczowski: Well, I would range them this way: Mossadeq certainly stands out, but he stands out as a maverick. Some people may call him fanatic, irrational, whatever; he probably was irrational. I would even call him slightly senile, perhaps. But I had a lengthy interview with him, from which I derived very little, because I asked a number of searching questions, and he answered not a single one of them. He engaged in a long monologue in which he repeated all of his political slogans against Britain, against this and that, against the oil companies -- slogans that I already knew by heart, as a student of international affairs and an observer of the oil crisis. It was an utterly disappointing thing, but one thing that stood out about him was that the man was absolutely dedicated to his cause, and felt completely independent of the Shah. So in this sense, only, I rank Mossadeq low on the scale of statesmanship in the true interests of Iran; but he stands out, certainly.

Q: Excuse me. This conversation that you are referring to: This occurred when he was Prime Minister?

Lenczowski: When he was Prime Minister. I saw him in 1953, in the late spring of 1953, and had a lengthy conversation. He greeted me very courteously, but it was an interlude; it was utterly disappointing. I could have played the same record, perhaps even more eloquently than he did, because I knew all of these things by heart.

Now another person who stands out in my mind is Amini, because Amini was, in my opinion, the last Prime Minister who was loyal to the Shah, but who was independent, who really had a mind of his own, as I pointed out previously (or perhaps; I don't know what I said). He mentioned to me that, "Now when I have power, I can do certain things and people are polite to me, and so on and so forth." He definitely had certain ideas, what to do with the Iranian situation then in the early 1960s.

I would say that the person who was, perhaps, ostensibly the most loyal to the Shah -- at least in terms of his words -- was Manuchehr Eqbal, whom I knew for a long time as the President of the University, as Prime Minister and minister of the court, and to whom I owe many audiences with the Shah, who was arranging this. One audience he arranged with two hours' notice; he was extremely cooperative in this sense. But you never could get out of him an independent judgment. Everything that he would say, he would say, "I'm fulfilling His Majesty's orders," and "According to His Majesty's orders, it's so-and-so." So there was not a

trace or even an attempt to present himself as an independent operator.

I would say Hosein Ala' always impressed me as a man of great wisdom, and certain independence of judgment; although he was extremely loyal to the Shah. In the long run, one of the most loyal, because it was a loyalty combined with a willingness to express some of his views and criticism to the Shah. He was a gentleman of the old school, and I had a very genuine respect for him.

Now, Asadollah Alam was a very intelligent man. He was a real -- I would say -- kind of courtier of Machiavelli type, almost. I think he was very loyal. He was personally -- I mean, he really loved the Shah. At the same time, he was a man of his own independent judgment. That is, he would not conduct an independent policy the way Amini might, but he had his judgment, and I know from certain conversations that I had with him when I happened to be in a group of a few people or a few scholars who were present there. When these scholars were expressing their views, very obsequious to the Shah, and I expressed a somewhat independent point of view on certain aspects of cultural cooperation between the United States and Iran, Alam took my side, and very definitely has shown a certain independence of judgment.

Q: There are American scholars you are talking about, that were there?

Lenczowski: No, these were not American scholars. I was the only American there. And he took my side.

As regards Jamshid Amuzegar I would say this: a man of very high intelligence, very patriotic, but primarily a technocrat. Not very politically acute to the realities of Iran. I think that if Iran had its own political picture well settled, one way or another, he would be a superb administrator. I like him very much: a very erudite man, a very eloquent man. I enjoyed his personal hospitality a number of times. I knew, of course, his brother, also, which was another link. There is still another brother who was in Vienna in the OPEC [Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries].

So these are my impressions of the Iranian prime ministers.

Q: If we may focus on some of them; in particular, perhaps we could start with Mr. Alam. Now you know Alam was a very powerful man in Iran. He was known to be a very good friend of the Shah. A lot of people say that he really did have even more power than the prime minister, and certainly there were areas in which he seemed to have more say as to how things were going to go than anybody else; and these were not very limited areas. Both as Prime Minister and Minister of the Court, he was very close to the Shah. How did you see him? How did you see his grasp of not only internal but external politics? Things that were happening around Iran, movements, that sort of thing.

Lenczowski: Yes. Well, internationally, I think, he was an extremely bright, intelligent person, understanding the mainsprings of international policies, and I think his priorities were similar to the Shah's, if not identical. His main concern was about the eternal Soviet, Russian threat to Iran; the need for cultivating a good relationship with the United States, and so on and so forth.

At the same time, as regards the internal politics, I am less in a position to judge how well he understood the problems that have arisen. Of course, he was court minister in the extremely turbulent period that just was beginning, and this turbulence was particularly, I think, was motivated by the improper influx of money. Here is where, by the way, I am also inclined to blame -- I'm not blaming Alam, I think the Shah, trying to assert his nationalism as a leader of Iran, is a person who is challenging the way the West over the price of oil -- the Shah made a mistake in pumping so highly the price of oil, because today, OPEC is close to disintegration because of this. The big influx of money was a factor, one of the major factors bringing about the internal disintegration of Iran. Lots of money may be a blessing, but it may be a misfortune, and in the case of Iran, unfortunately, it did not bring Iran fortune. It brought greater social tensions, political tensions, than otherwise would have appeared.

Q: I have a couple more things to ask of you about Alam. But before I forget, I think you said something about the Shah playing at least an important role in raising the price of oil.

Some people say that he was very hawkish in this. Some people say that maybe he looked hawkish, but maybe he was not that hawkish. Do you have any particular impression as to how he stood with respect, let's say, to Americans -- American oil companies -- when it came to this sort of thing?

Lenczowski: I would say that he adopted an attitude of criticism towards the oil companies. Initially, generally speaking, he had this kind of hierarchy: first, a great absolutely war against Communism in the Soviet Union, on an international scale. I don't mention fundamentalist Islam; it was an internal matter. Secondly, he would say (I would say), the greed (what he would call it) of the oil companies, of which the majority were American. There was some third point that operated, gone from my mind, that I never can remember. But certainly, he felt that Iran and other oil-producing countries were being exploited, that the West wanted cheaply to develop its own prosperity, its own industries and economies by consuming the cheap oil. I'm not saying anything new; this is very well on the record, actually. The oil was being wasted for being burned in the Western industrial furnaces, in Western cars, while oil was a perishable commodity that should serve, in the long run, countries like Iran through the development of petrochemicals industries, et cetera. Oil should not be burned; there was atomic energy, there were hydrological resources, hydroelectric, et cetera. That is what the Shah believed in, and he mentioned it to a number of people and to me in his conversations, a number of times.

Q: What did he call it? He said it was a "noble element," a "noble -- he had a term for it.

Lenczowski: A "noble resource."

Q: A noble resource, yes. Well, let's look at the same thing you were talking about, from this side. You have a great deal of familiarity with the way in which the oil companies look to the international situation and other leaders and so on. How did they see the Shah?

Lenczowski: The oil companies reacted essentially negatively to this hawkish price attitude on the part of the Shah. The Shah and the Venezuelans, who were leading the hawkish price crusade, in the OPEC. Actually, it was Saudi Arabia that was trying to oppose it. Saudi Arabia was represented by Sheykh Yamani during the OPEC conference in Tehran on Christmas Day, 1973, when the price of oil reached nearly twelve dollars per barrel -- being quadrupled in comparison to the January price of that year, '73 -- Yamani tried to oppose this rise in prices. It was -- in fact, I know the details, the very colorful details -- it was Jamshid Amuzegar who knocked at Yamani's hotel room at midnight --

Q: In Tehran.

Lenczowski: In Tehran, to press Yamani to agree to the raise in

prices, because Yamani was opposing it. Yamani wanted to have an okay of the king, and Amuzegar himself put the pressure on him, and of course he did it on the Shah's orders because there were three items that the Shah had under his immediate, continuous control: oil, armaments, and development plans. On oil, Amuzegar acted under the Shah's orders, and Yamani said, "I will try to contact my king." He called Riyadh; the king was asleep, and they did not want to wake up Faysal. So Yamani reluctantly agreed to it, and the next day he left for Riyadh. I had a series of lengthy interviews with Yamani at his invitation. I went to Jeddah in January to talk to him.

Q: This is January, '74.

Lenczowski: No, January, '75. A year later, because I was preparing a book about the activities of Middle East oil in revolutionary -- it was a monograph. So I asked Yamani much earlier for an interview, and I had some five interviews with him. I came to and Jeddah told me at that time that he opposed this policy, but he agreed to it, he could not contact the king, and when he returned to Riyadh, Faysal said to him, "Zaki, if I knew about it, if I were informed, I would not have given you a green light." The reason why the Saudis opposed it, in contrast to the Shah, was that the Saudis, as Arabs, had just been at war (the '73-'74 war) with Israel, and at that time, they as Arabs instituted cutbacks in production and an embargo against the United States, Portugal, Holland, South Africa, and

Rhodesia, because of the anti-Arab policies of these countries; the United States being singled out as the principal hostile state. So, while the other states were divided into neutral and friendly: the friendly states would get as much oil from the Arabs as they were getting before September -- before the War started in October -- the neutral states would suffer some cutbacks, but not an embargo. It was a very sophisticated, well-designed Arab policy to reward their friends, punish their enemies, and tell the neutrals that they should beware.

Here, because of the OPEC decisions, everybody was hit: enemy, friendly power and neutral power, with no difference between them, which in a way frustrated the highly sophisticated Arab political policy. For this reason, Yamani and the king opposed it; and I was of the same opinion, by the way. We fully shared it with Yamani, I said, "You have made a great mistake in OPEC in raising the prices, because it annuls your political policy as regards Arab, Israeli, and American relations. Yamani said to me, "Yes, you are right, because this was one great disservice rendered to the Arab cause, to raise these oil prices." But the Shah was not an Arab. He was not concerned with this. He was interested in developing the country, and there was this mania of engaging in the rapid five-year plans of building the Great Civilization. That is where the Shah became, it seems to me, a prisoner of his own words and slogans.

Q: Let me ask you something else. Of course, when you're referring to the Arab oil policy and politics in this respect,

Israel becomes a very important factor, because the whole thing is directed at somehow controlling Israel. In fact, we could mobilize other forces and soon forces against the Arabs. Now, the Shah and the Iranian government -- the Shah particularly -- was also very conscious of the Israeli position, Israeli relations with the Arabs, the Irani-Israeli relations, and Israel as an ally of the United States, particularly in the area. Did you have any occasion to talk to him and to exchange opinion with respect to Israel?

Lenczowski: Yes, I did, but always on a somewhat reduced scale, because I did not want this subject -- which always constitutes a major point of conversation with the Arab politicians -- to preempt my conversation with the Shah; they were for a limited time, always. But it did pop up a number of times, particularly since 1967, the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Sinai, et cetera.

The Shah conducted a policy of maintaining a modicum of relationship with Israel without any fanfare of an embassy, also, because oriented well, as he was, in American politics, he realized the power of the Zionist lobby in the United States. As a matter of fact, he knew Mrs. [Jacob] Javits, whose husband was a very influential senator, after all, was sort of a consultant or so was receiving some stipend from the Iranian government. I think there was a very realistic appreciation, in the mind of the Shah, of the role that the friends of Israel are playing here in American legislature, in the American media, and in public

opinion in the universities and so on.

At the same time, he was of the opinion that Israel should not be permitted to ride roughshod over the Arabs and occupy their territory, without ever returning it. So he expressed it clearly to me that Israel should withdraw from the West Bank, and that the United States should be putting as much pressure as is politically feasible on Israel, to cause it to withdraw. His reasoning was that if we condone this acquisition of territory by force, what will happen next when the Soviets occupy this or other territory. We have to set an example, that this is not permissible.

Q: Did he emphasize this sort of thing from early on, or was it the latter years of his reign?

Lenczowski: I would say it was particularly since 1967, since the Arab-Israeli War, and perhaps this thing again reappeared after '73; although there was perhaps a little less talk about it since '73, because it led eventually to Camp David and the Shah was then pre-occupied with other things. But certainly, so long as there were cases of violence in the West Bank or a war of attrition between Egypt and Israel in the Sinai, the Shah was of the opinion that the Israelis should withdraw.

Q: I suppose this is telling of the Iranian situation during these periods of time, because we were talking about the prime ministers and others, and again, we came back to the Shah. But

there's something I've jotted down here that's interesting; perhaps I missed it. You talked about a number of prime ministers in Iran, and interestingly enough, you didn't mention Hoveyda who was Prime Minister, obviously, for the longest time during this period. Is there a significance to that?

Lenczowski: Simply because I don't know why. Maybe because Hoveyda did not strike me as an outstanding personality. Maybe he was very clever, but that doesn't mean that we was very wise. I make a difference between these words. To me, Hosein Ala was a wise gentleman of the old school. Hoveyda, I think, was clever. He was a skillful courtier. He was saying things to the Shah that would please the Shah, but I think the role of the Prime Minister is to be a little more than that. It is to protect the sovereign precisely by sometime saying the things that the sovereign may not like, to bring him down to earth from some illusions, to prevent him from becoming a prisoner of his own words or slogans.

My personal relationship to Hoveyda dates to the year 1945; imagine. In fact, the first time when I visited him as a professor, and he was Minister of Finance -- that was sometime in the 1960s or whatever, or early seventies or whatever --

Q: In 1964-65, yes.

Lenczowski: Yes. It was an extraordinary development, because Hoveyda said to me -- I was introducing myself to him, and he

said, "Professor Lenczowski, you probably don't remember me, but I was middle official in the Ministry of Finance, when you were still a diplomat in the Polish embassy, and I remember you from that time." It was an interesting admission from a high dignitary, to say that he was ever "middle official." He had, certainly, these human features, but to me -- I never felt that I gained anything truly valuable in terms of discussing political problems with him. He was too bland. Everything was always fine; there were no problems. Or, if I asked him during one conversation -- because I would pay him during these visits; of course, when I visited the Shah, I got much more satisfaction from my conversations with the Shah than with Hoveyda. I would come and pay him my first visit, on the next day on my arrival in Tehran. I would say -- I would ask him, "Mr. Prime Minister, what would you describe today as the main problem of Iran?" And he would give some sort of -- He would say, "Manpower. We need more skilled manpower." Sure, we knew that, because they were bringing in Pakistani and Indian doctors and nurses and so on, but that was not the kind of talk that I really would expect from my conversation with the Prime Minister. I really never had a very satisfactory conversation with him. It was all great courtesy; many personal courtesies. My wife and I lost luggage once on our way from Jeddah to Tehran, so he immediately mobilized the --

End of interview

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مصاحبه کننده : آقای دکتر غلامرضا افخمی

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