

Farmanfarmaiyan: Higher up that, you know, they didn't want us doing certain things, certain activities, that kind of stuff. It didn't affect any of my level.

Q: Did you ever hear any kind of complaint against the project? Any complaints about the people who worked in the project?

Farmanfarmaiyan: There were a lot of people in the villages, even among the villagers, they were cynical. A lot of them were very, very cynical about the whole thing. They weren't, you know, just bowled over by the whole thing at all. They were very cynical, I think and I sort of -- In Iran we have this concept of Qesmat, fate. It's certainly in the villages. Certainly it's a very, very strong concept there. It was "Well, if it's good today, its' fine and if it's not that's fine, too". I don't think any of them were sitting there thinking this is going to make or break their life; it's going to change them dramatically. I don't think so though the teachers, the students did take it very seriously. I think Hushang, personally, his personal existence there served as an arbitrator through many, many of their problems; whether it was a marriage problem or a father having a problem with a disobedient son, whatever. Hushang came to be known as an arbitrator and someone they highly respected. I think his person was taken very seriously, which was a good thing. The project, as a whole, I think was taken with a grain of salt, actually. And in the end they were probably right.

Q: There were no specific serious complaints against any of the people there? I mean, were they [unclear] or whatever relationship to different men and women, you know, or whatever? In terms of honesty, in terms of anything like that? Do you remember anything like that?

Farmanfarmaiyan: I don't, you know, but I'm sure those things did arise. I'm sure those things did arise. I don't remember any specific examples of that happening, though it seems to me that there was a couple of times where the project had gone out of it's limits. In fact, when Majid was building another -- Majid was building a house in the mountains and there were complications about that. They didn't like that. There was some kind of a complication involved there, I think. Pursoltan had joined the project at that time and she handled things very well, also. I think managed to, you know, soften it over. But I don't remember any specific things.

Q: Now, I remember there were meetings between the staff people and meetings with the staff people and the villagers. Do you remember any of that?

Farmanfarmaiyan: There were meetings like that but there were -- Really, what it was was the staff and the villagers that were working with them. It wouldn't just be any villager walking into a meeting like a town meeting. It was really -- There was

a bunch of villagers, students and people working for various reasons there, and they would come into our big hall into the meetings and they would talk about various problems and issues and how we're going to go about this, that or the other. It wasn't what you're thinking in terms of having all the village come up to a meeting to talk with the project and see what the project was doing. There wasn't that, no.

Q: So, in fact, ~~in~~ terms of interaction between the village and the workers, ~~which~~ was I think one of the ideas that started the whole project, it ~~never~~ really happened ?

Farmanfarmaiyan: Well, I think it was one of the purposes of the project but I think, also, the purpose was to do it through mediation and in that sense they were successful. In other words to go to -- Instead of being their own mouthpiece they eventually wanted the villagers to be the mouthpiece to the rest of the villages. In fact, this was one of my problems is that they weren't, because of Hushang. Hushang was becoming, himself, so much over glorified that that was almost being side stepped and the villagers themselves were no longer being taken as seriously. That was going to be a problem. If you weren't from Tehran, did you have credibility? If you weren't from outside "Mikham Begam". If you weren't from, you know -- Then did you have the credibility of one of the project people or one of the things. That was one of the fallacies within the project because they left what? And the idea was that when they left it would

still be functioning. It wasn't happening. What was happening is that they were taking their word. And the question is, did those people that they were training, did they come with the same credibility? To my mind, no, you see. And that was one of the problems that I had with the whole project. I really don't know how it ended up. As I say, seven months just doesn't really give you much time to get your teeth into it or take anything out of it really.

Q: Do you remember how your day went there? I mean could you describe a day in Alashtar?

Farmanfarmaiyan: One of the things I should say before -- Another project that I had there was this carpet weaving project. Evidently, in years gone by, Lorestan used to have a tradition of carpet weaving and Majid wanted to reinstate that. Hunan was picked because I was there; I could supervise it or whatever. It was a small enough village that they could work with it in the village as a whole. Hunan was picked as a satellite village for this project. We brought in a specialist; a carpet specialist who knew how to dye the wools, give the patterns, weave them, the whole works. He was a wonderful man from Kashan. He actually stayed -- Did he stay in my area? I don't remember. Well, you know, he stayed I think with Kheyrali. He stayed with Kheyrali in a room that Kheyrali had. He had the actual boiling pots for the coloring and everything in where I was living. I had a little court yard and then there was

a small, little room where we put this huge deeg for coloring. That was fascinating because then I learned all about how you make the different colors from -- All natural because what's happening in today's, you know, it's all chemical. The natural sources are being lost. I don't know, maybe they're being found again but at that time there was a concern in Iran about losing the natural dyes. He was training people to do the natural dyes. Kheyrali, in fact, was supposed to be learning this. We'd set up a couple of looms at people's houses. We chose one or two girls, young girls, seven, eight years old. There must have been four of them and we put up the looms. They were standing looms as opposed to gleem. This was actual "Farsh"; this was carpet. Then they were given the pattern and the wool that we had dyed ourselves. It was very interesting. One or two rugs have actually been produced. They were not as refined as you think of a Persian rug but it was a good start. It was a very interesting part of the project. Then that little man went back to Kashan. I don't know what ever became of him. He was a character, learning all about his life. He, of course, thought I was crazy as well. He just was totally, you know, in awe of what I was doing there. I think a lot of it had to do with because I was young as well, you know. If I had been older I think maybe not so much question. But I was only nineteen, twenty, myself. I was twenty at that time.

Anyway, what my daily life was. Well, I'd get up. Actually, I'd jump up because we didn't have bathroom in the house. I used to run three miles out to the bathroom. That was one of my major

banes of my existence there was not having a toilet. The toilet, the common bathroom there, as you can imagine, was in such horrible condition. Eventually I insisted that they dig it up because they used to put stones in it. They didn't have toilet paper. They used to literally use stones to clean themselves with. I was -- We finally got an "Aftabeh" what do you call it? A water, hand thing for cleaning. And we had to tie it to the door because it would get stolen. That was a concern. We had them build another bathroom facing away from Mecca, needless to say. In fact, that was an issue. It was definitely an issue. Anyway, so we got that fixed. It was never perfect, believe me. Anyway, I used to get up and run down there and then I'd wash my face and hands, that's all. I used to go to town, to Alashtar, to take a shower once or twice a week. That was a luxury. I cut my hair real short so that it did not become an issue. I used to wash my face and hands, brush my teeth in the Cheshmeh. There was a little area which ran through my court yard. It was sort of like having my own private Cheshmeh. It was very nice. And then I would either go out into the village and see one particular family or one child or if it was my day for having the women come in, they would come in in the morning. This would be, I'd say -- I would get up at around six there. Then they would come in at around eight and we'd talk for a while. Then they'd go off and I'd pretty much -- Around ten by the time we weighed them all and I wrote things. I used to write all the things down and talk about it. Of course, then it was a great pleasure for them so the longer I stretched it the better

it was. And then we would talk and see how the kids were doing. None of the children, it was interesting, would let them touch me. None of the children would let me. I mean, you don't know. I mean it's one thing for a baby not to know a stranger but I mean these kids would scream, you know, like you were going to kill them; that type. So I didn't attempt after a while. I would look at the kids and talk to them about cleanliness and things like that. A lot of them had eye problems. Conjunctivitis and things like that. I'd tell them if I thought they should go and check it out with the doctor. A lot of them would have horrible burns because in their homes, which were just Kahgel. They were just mud houses, in the center would be a stove, and they would just leave these children there and they would often get up next to the stove and burn. They would come in with these absolutely horrendous burns. I mean, they'd just make your stomach turn. I used to have real fights with them. We were devising a system where we could bring in chicken feed and put it around the stoves. I mean, I don't know if any of that was going to happen or not. We would talk about that.

Anyway, they would go off at around ten or whatever and I would pretty much have the rest of the day to myself, which I would spend in a different manner. Either with Kheyralli or I'd go off with Hushang who'd come in sometimes and take me with him on his projects to Pedesk to all the other villages. Whatever he was doing he'd often take me with him. And then sometimes I'd go into Alashtar for lunch. I had my own jeep so I was free to come and go. I'd go into Alashtar for lunch, otherwise if I'd stay at

home I would just have mast. I used to have bread and mast there a lot and sometimes I would have meat; maybe two or three times a week for lunch. And onions. God, I used to eat onions all the time. Once in a while we'd have a khoresht. Kheyrali would make me a qeymeh khoresht. And then in the afternoons, again, either I would be working with rangraz, the person doing the carpeting. We'd do that -- At least a couple of hours a day was involved with the carpeting; the coloring and going and visiting the carpet; the looms, seeing how those are doing. I was really an apprentice to that whole thing. It was more a learning process for me watching that. Again, a lot of the time was spent speaking to individual households.

There were always incidents. For example, Hunan was set on a hill and when the rains would come it would literally erode out sections of -- In Pedesk there had been a massive flood and they had dug flood canals and things there. I had started, also, the same project in Hunan to start a flood canals. There was a huge argument about it. It took me weeks to deal with, because of who's land it should go through. It was just a tiny canal. I mean it was maybe six inches across. It wasn't a huge gutter or anything like that. But just to allow the natural flow of the water to bypass the village. All the land around belonged to somebody so somebody felt that there land was being intruded on. Great debates and discussions would ensue about why this should be put up and finally we convinced whoever it was that it should go up. Hushang helped me on that one, too. I don't think I would have been able to convince anybody alone.

In the evenings -- Sometimes in the afternoons I would go horseback riding. It was beautiful. It's just incredible, the mountains out there. It really was for me, personally, a fairy tale life. I mean it was just so blissful you can't imagine. Then I would have dinner. Hushang would generally come back for dinner there. Then I would read. I had a lot of books and I, also, everyday would write in my daily diary, which unfortunately is lost. I don't have it or otherwise this interview would be much more interesting. It was a very sort of a sleepy life but there would be every day particular incidences which would, you know, --

For example, another thing that I just remembered was that we were trying to build the hammam. To fix up the hammam of Hunan. There had been one in previous years; the bath house. For some reason it had become defunct and that was one of our projects. So I used to check on that and see how that was going and talk to the construction people. It was an endless battle of trying to get anything done. Nothing just happened. It was very -- I don't know if it's true of all villages, I don't know if it's true as a generalization but there appeared to me a characteristic of apathy. I think it's again this concept of Qesmat; the fate. That disbelief. Is this really going to work? Is this really going to happen? We'll just, you know -- There was a lot of that. Getting things done there was like pulling teeth in a lot of ways. Eventually the bath house did happen and there was this big debate: should we let it be free or should we have them pay and this, that and the other. Finally

we decided we would have them pay ten riyals. I mean, what is that the equivalent of? It must be --

Q: Ten cents.

Farmanfarmaiyan: Ten cents. Ten riyals because for no other reason but that they would feel that this belongs to them and they have to take care of it and give them a sense of pride in it. We felt, we hoped that if they would have to pay for it that they would take care of it. You know, if you pay for something you're not going to just treat it badly. Because it needed upkeep and you had to keep it clean and take care of your things when you left and make sure and like that. And then we had to regulate the men and women hours, things like that. These are things that would come up all the time. There would be a family dispute that would come up and they would ask me to go over there and deal, not with the man, with the woman. Apart from Kheyrali there were other people in the village who used to beat their wives regularly. Quite a horrendous state. The irony, of course, in the end when I left -- I probably never would have left. The irony of it all was that Hushang used to go there and mediate and say, "My God, man," -- I would deal with the women he would deal with the men, you know. I would try to soothe the women and he would try to talk sense into the men. He would say, "For God's sake, you know, this is not how you deal with human beings," and of course, the irony of it is that I ended up leaving the whole project because he nearly killed me when he

beat me. So that was really --

Q: How was that relationship?

Farmanfarmaiyan: It was -- Well, of course, he was much older than me. He was in his forties and I was in my early twenties. For me he was such a fascinating character. He really was a very good man but I think his only fault was that he could not accept any kind of criticism. He was incredibly benevolent and wonderful, as long as he was in total control. The minute his authority or his opinion was questioned incredible rage would come into him and he couldn't deal with it. He just could not deal with any form of criticism. As I got to know him better and better -- I absolutely worshipped him. I just thought he was the greatest thing. I thought he was so wonderful not only in terms of my relation to him but in what he was giving these people. I now see it as a total patronizing effect. It was not a positive. It was, if anything, a negative impact that he left with these people because he left them hopeless. He left them helpless. He left them with no tools to decide and to develop for themselves because they were so dependant on him in the end to do it for them. Yet, again, through my lack of years or whatever, I saw him as such a tremendous person, good hearted and wanting to help these people. I really respected and admired that in him until as time went on and I got to know him better through my personal relation with him as well as through the project I could see that he had a tremendous fear of being

questioned. A very deep fear of being questioned. I don't know where that came from but he couldn't take that. He would cause a lot of problems and complications if he couldn't get his way, which is what happened with me. I just left. I couldn't stay there any longer. It was clear that I had to leave. It was very sad because I was just getting very involved in it and really wouldn't have left. I probably would have stayed at least a year, a year and a half or whatever. I had also made a very close friend in Pursoltan. She was also very close to Hushang. That caused a little bit of a problem between us, I think. It was a very fascinating time.

Q: Your relationship with Hushang was known to the villagers?

Farmanfarmaiyan: Well, evidently. They used to call him -- Someone told me later they used to call him, what? Something Eshqi. The used to call him "the lover" when I left. After I left they used to call him Eshqi. Or was it something Eshqi? They used to call him Saraspi which in Lory means "white headed one", which is one for the wise one. That's what villagers called him, the wise one and they really thought of him as that. He was trying to make that position for himself. This is what I only saw as I got to know him how wrong it was. Instead of really trying to give his capabilities to these people so they could handle these situations, especially youth, he didn't want them to have any of that. He would fight them if he saw they were going independent, he would fight it. He wanted them to be

dependent on him, which was a horrible thing. It was really a very sad thing for the project.

Q: The relationship where they called him "the lover" and so forth, this didn't bring any antagonism or outrage?

Farmanfarmaiyan: It's funny, you know, I expected it, but it didn't. I think we were subtle enough about it that, even though we were living together, theoretically everybody was living together. All the project people lived together in the same building so the fact that, you know, I was in a place with two rooms it's easy enough for that image to be kept. Even though he was distinctly and clearly in my room with me, there were two rooms in the building. I think if they wanted to think that it wasn't happening they still could. Otherwise, yes, I mean I often expected it to have an explosion. Of course, the project people knew. It wasn't, you know -- Hushang would often overtly show affection towards me. I mean he'd never kiss me in public or anything; he favored me very clearly in anything. It's funny, he was the worst, when I came in terms of mocking me and my family name and everything and who I was. By the end of it, that last couple of months of it, he wouldn't tolerate that. If anybody would make any comment about me he wouldn't tolerate it, you see, and that was very funny.

Q: Now, between the other people who worked on the project and the people who were being trained from among the village, there

were women, too. I understand there were girls in the --

Farmanfarmaiyan: From the village. Yes, absolutely.

Q: Now, did anything come up in terms of antagonism against this because they were relating to the men rather freely? Was there any antagonism

Farmanfarmaiyan: There were. That was one of the problems. A lot of -- Even with the kindergarten teachers, the parents and the villagers, a lot of them wouldn't let these girls because they were in the same classroom with boys. Evidently there was one or two incidents where the two -- A girl and a boy Behvarz, got married. Whereas it wouldn't have been an arranged family marriage. It was arranged by themselves and that was not done. Some of that did exist, but, you know, I never got behind closed doors in that sense to see how intense that antagonism was. Though, I heard often cases where -- There was one instance they had a very good Behvarz woman and the father had pulled her out. They were very upset and they were trying to get the father to let her come back to the project but he felt that it was too liberal and that he couldn't let it go on like that.

Q: Do you remember any religious apostle or any religious ceremonies at any time you were there?

Farmanfarmaiyan: I really don't. Absolutely none.

Q: Absolutely at all?

Farmanfarmaiyan: That's exactly it, that's why I'm saying -- Well, eid-e qorban. I remember eid-e qorban because at eid-e qorban everybody came over to Hunan. All the project friends came over to Hunan and we had a feast there. We had a lamb and, of course, it went out to the village, what was left. We all ate together. [unclear] and Majid was there at that time so we were all there together. Any kind of prayer, nothing of that nature.

Q: Did the villagers pray?

Farmanfarmaiyan: I never saw them. Never. Now, they might have but there certainly was never any public at all. In Alashtar maybe more so. I'm now thinking of -- I might be mistaken. It seems to me I remember hearing the "Azan" there. It seems to me I remember hearing that but obviously it wasn't such a prominent characteristic that it, you know --

Q: No fasting as far as you know?

Farmanfarmaiyan: No.

Q: Nothing for religion?

Farmanfarmaiyan: Not at all.

Q: Now, what was the attitude within the staff people concerning Majid?

Farmanfarmaiyan: Well, I'd say that was an interesting problem. I think they had, as we say in Persian, "Dastesho khondeh bunand". I think they had figured him out, in a sense. Majid, to them, was the dreamer. He was definitely the project manager. He was the man who had to go get -- Whatever had to get through, you know, on Tehran side, that was the one who had to do it. They had no question about that. He was the authority. He was the top man. There was no question about that. The question was that when Majid would come sweeping in, maybe -- Let me see, when I was there three or four times. Once he came with [unclear], too. He would come in and in a sweeping manner for two or three days with thousands of ideas. "Oh, we have to do this, we have to do that." And everybody would sort of sit there like this, you know, and off he'd go. They'd say, "Okay, back to life" because really he would do that. He would come with hundreds of ideas and he always had very good ideas but they weren't necessarily functional. They weren't necessarily something that could be implemented immediately. Often they were contradictory to what had been already implemented. In the short amount of time that he was there it wasn't always easy to get him to understand that. This is where I came in handy because they wouldn't ever be free to speak their mind entirely to him. None of them. Not even Hushang would ever be totally open with him. You know, they were

a little bit, you know, he was the big guy from Tehran. They all knew that he had access to the Princess and whatever and they were all sort of a little bit reserved with him in that respect. So, this is where my person came into play because it would come through me if they wanted him to know something and he would come through me if he wanted to understand something. It was very funny, especially at the end when I had finally broken through and I had established my own identity. I think finally by the end a lot of these people had a genuine affection for me and it wasn't anymore an issue what I was. So, when they did want to get a message across to Majid they would come to me. And Majid at the same time would say to me, "Am I getting the whole truth?" He'd often ask me that question. "Am I getting the whole truth?" and "What's going on here? What does this really mean?" You know, those kind of questions. I don't know if my interpretations were right or wrong but he would get my view of it and sometimes, obviously, I didn't have the full picture but I think that for the people at the project, Majid really didn't know what was happening. He had more ideas. He was more theoretical. He was more imaginative. These were people that were trying to do it functional. He'd come in and he'd go and he'd see various projects and he'd pat little kids on the heads and admire this and that and "isn't it wonderful" and all that. He wasn't really hard core there. I think Majid should have lived there. He should have lived there. Well, of course, he was building that house to go and live there. But even that for example, it was totally off in the mountains. It was because it

had a beautiful view. It was crazy. I mean it was just crazy and I told him so at the time. He was dividing himself. He was separating himself up there. He was building it with the fireplace and I mean total -- It did not mesh with the land; with the people; with the earth. It really didn't and they knew that. They sensed that, both the people in the project and the villagers to the extent that they had any communication with him. I'm talking to you, you have to appreciate, all in retrospect. At the time so much of this didn't occur to me and I mean I always thought Majid was wonderful whatever he did, you know. He was, he always had fabulous ideas, but in retrospect I'm telling you that so much of it was ethereal; it wasn't reality; it wasn't here. They knew that. If I didn't, they did. I think the project members knew that.

Q: Now, if you were to sum up the project what areas of strength or what accomplishments and work of the three years? How would you sum it up?

Farmanfarmaiyan: God, that's such a difficult question to say off the top of my head like this. I'll tell you one of the greatest strengths. One of the greatest strengths would have been that if nothing else, the fact that that project went sweeping through that area really did open a lot of questions to a lot of people. Maybe not all of them but a lot of people were sitting there thinking, "You know, our lot could be better," when that project left. If nothing, I'm sure they did establish

that. But there were people that despite this whole Qesmat thing that as I say played a prominent role in there. I think in the children, in the young Behvarz, in the young doctors and the young teachers they had this sense. They had suddenly this curiosity about Korramabad and there was this question, "Could we go to Tehran? Could we go and get a university degree?" If nothing else, it opened those kind of eyes. That, I think, it really deserves full credit for. And, well, just that. On the other side of it is this issue that I was talking about which was predominantly in Hushang, but also to a greater or lesser degree in other project members was this patronizing. Even me. I mean, absolutely, no question about it because as I say I was following those examples that had been set before me. All of us, we had this sort of, I suppose, patronizing image of what our function was there even though it was exactly to the contrary that we were meant to be there. That's really the sad part of it, that we weren't supposed to be there answering people's questions. We were supposed to be there teaching them how to answer it themselves. That was really what Majid wanted. I mean, I'm sure if he hears this he'll be heartbroken. I'm sure I said this to him, myself, maybe in other conversations, but I think in the end his real desire did not happen. Majid's real desire did not happen in that in the long term. I mean maybe the one or two. Even as I say I'm not so sure with the Behvarz and with the agricultural people and all that how much they really understand what they were doing as opposed to just functioning and doing it because someone had said, "Okay, do this." Would they, then, be

able to innovate? Would they then be able to question, "Alright, if we can do A, then can A lead to B?" I don't know that that happened and I would be surprised. I know that at certain levels it certainly didn't happen. You could see that in the kindergarten teachers that I worked with. I think that's the sad thing about it. On the whole the other side of it is that it did open some eyes. It touched many, many lives there. In the six thousand people I don't think there would have been anyone who didn't know about it. There wouldn't have been anyone who didn't have some question in terms of who we are, if not what we're trying to do. You know, they may not have been terribly impressed with what we were trying to do but just by the fact of being there and being so totally different might have opened their eyes a little bit to seeing their lot could be changed. Believe me, their lot needed to be changed. They really needed an improvement in life.

Q: You are saying, from what you describe, the villagers had questions and were skeptical. The [unclear] people had questions and were skeptical, the government certainly had questions and was skeptical. It's interesting that knowing this the project was allowed to happen and had considerable possibilities and resources at their disposal. Do you think that this identity of sentiment concerning the project between the staff and the villagers and the government -- How do you explain that because obviously they had different attitudes and different functions?

Farmanfarmaiyan: Well, I'll tell you, I mean, I was always surprised that the government allowed the project to be happening. I was really surprised about that because there were some pretty heavy political issues going on. I mean some of the messages that the project was giving was that "You don't have to be taking this. You can do something about this. You can rise and rebel." Certainly under there this message was being given. Whether or not they were being given the tools to do it is another question. That was basically what the project message was in there. I don't know -- I was very curious. I really wanted to be in Alashtar when the revolution happened to see how they would react. I bet you they would have been much more alert than a lot of other people, a lot of other villagers in the surrounding area. In terms of the interaction between the villagers, the villagers liked us being there. We certainly weren't a hindrance. We helped them in many ways. We got a lot of things in there for them. We got electricity. We got water to the villages. We put in a whole pipeline way up from the mountain into one village that had never had water. They had to walk miles to get their water. You know, we really did do a lot of things. Of course, all in the guise of having them do it themselves. They were the poor guys that had to dig out the thing and everything but they weren't the people to think of it. You know what I mean? It was, I think that the villagers were skeptical in the sense that they thought we're here today and gone tomorrow. The reason I say that is, also, Kheyralli just said that to me when I left. When I was leaving he was standing

there crying and I was telling him, you know, "I'll be back," and he said, "No, you won't. You'll never be back. You'll all go. This is all going to be finished." And he was right.

Q: The staff people were, from what you say -- What was their attitude toward the government?

Farmanfarmaiyan: Bad. Very bad. I mean they were all revolutionaries. All of them, I think. Pretty much so except maybe the doctors, you know. There was a bunch of them that were definitely anti-Shah. They were all definitely anti-Shah. That's why I had such a hard problem because my family was so much associated with the government.

Q: How were they allowed to work there, with such freedom; without any presence of the government, you know, all of these revolutionaries?

Farmanfarmaiyan: Well, I think there probably was government. I think they -- A lot of things, like one of the issues they were always talking about among themselves, which one one of them was Savaki; which one was a member of the secret police. I think that there was a little bit of that there.

Q: If there was then how come they allowed them to have such close contact with the people and be so anti-government?

Farmanfarmaiyan: I think that Majid had a -- If it wasn't for Majid it wouldn't have happened. I think that Majid was putting on enough pressure or begging enough or doing whatever he had to be doing in Tehran to get it to go through. That was a very real question. I mean some of these people were blatantly members of -- Hushang, I think was a card holding member of the Tudeh party. They all were very left wing individuals and I think Majid knew that and the people of the government knew that. I think Majid just had his connections; that's how it got done. A lot of things got done that way in Iran. I think that under any other circumstances this would not have been permitted to go on. I'm sure that Savak was watching this if they were. I'm sure there must have been somewhere in there but with a grain of salt. There was one member -- I'm trying to remember now that they used to tease a lot. He may well have really been because he was never fully accepted into the group. They would often not talk about certain subjects when he was around. I don't remember his name right now but he was definitely questionable. Pursoltan has a very strong left background, I mean well known. All of them, heavy left but this is a kind of leftist project. It's sort of a get out and help. It's that kind of a project that would be people of any kind of a leftist tendency, whether registered or otherwise would have an interest in that kind of a project. So that's not too surprising but it was surprising that it was allowed to exist.

Q: Do you think that there were people there who really did have

political plans to use the project as a political vehicle?

Farmanfarmaiyan: You know, I don't know. It's possible. I doubt it though. No one there was well organized enough to do it or if they were they were very, very subtle. Everybody knew too much about each other. You've got to understand we were a small group. We're all sort of bed mates so-to-speak, not physically but we really were in each other's lives and we ate together. Everybody was with somebody at all times. Now, unless three or four of them together were using this as a political machine it couldn't have happened. The reason I doubt that is because to my knowledge none of them came from any one single source. They all came from different areas and they all met there as far as I know. The project members did not all know each other from before. So, in that sense I would say no. I mean, unless someone had afterthoughts and later tried to develop it into that. I don't think so, you know.

Q: Do you have any other comments about the project, summing up?

Farmanfarmaiyan: It was a wonderful experience for me. It was a great learning experience for me dealing with all those different kinds of people. I think I had led such a protected life in Tehran that being exposed to not only the villagers but to people who were, you know, of a lesser -- I don't know. Less fortunate I should say, than I had been in life in any sense, was a wonderful experience. A fantastic eye opener. The whole

country side -- Hushang and I used to go for drives. We went down to Pol-e dokhtar, which is an old Hakamaneshi ruin. We had a fascinating experience. Our electric system went out in the car and we were driving in the dark and this truck with an Iranian driver went behind us and he guided us to this Qahrekhanenh where we had to spend the night. It was all just fascinating. We used to go off on other things. He was a great teacher to me in many senses, and also negatively so. It was a wonderful personal experience if nothing else. I think for everybody there. It touched everybody's lives. We had a very strong family there. Majid gives that to things, he sort of brings things together that way. So, in that sense it was a wonderful thing. I just wish I could have stayed longer. I definitely would have stayed much longer. That's the only thing.

Q: Well, thank-you very much.

Farmanfarmaiyan: You're welcome.

End of Interview

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