And Ehsan used to say, "There are seven thousand colonels in the army and neither you nor I know the name of which one it will be." [chuckles] Assuming that it would be a military coup.

And I'm still not sure that ultimately and after the revolution the final solution may not be a military coup. But if one of the numerous colonels in either the Iranian Army or in the "Pasdaran-e Enqelabi"--"the revolutionary militia" or whatever, it ultimately will be a military person. Perhaps one of the reasons why they wish to continue the Iraq-Iran War is that they're not quite sure what might happen when all those fighting men from the frontier are left unoccupied with the frontier business and turn their attention towards the Capital.

Q: Well, of course, every revolution does need an opponent.

Avery: Exactly.

Q: I mean, somebody has to come forward and save the country from it.

Avery: Yes. [chuckles] That's one way of putting it.

The young officers at the head of SAVAK -- one or two of whom I knew -- They used to complain to me about the corruption of the older statesmen of Iran and tell me that it was these men the Shah most deplored.

Q: Like who?

Avery: Well, I suppose they were thinking of some of the old hangers-on members -- those men who were put into higher committees --"shorahay-e 'ali"-- of which there were a number made (I always believed) as slots in which to fit aged senators and Majles deputies. People like Asadi of Khorasan and those people.

Q: And they were corrupt?

Avery: No, not necessarily. A lot of them were not so corrupt. Corruption was (I think) very often a characteristic of people described as "tazeh be dowran resideh"-- as people who were upstarts who were more likely to be corrupt. A lot of the older statesmen -- people who were far too dignified and far too rich anyway to need to be corrupt. They were people "khanevadehdar" and they "had families." People knew who their fathers and mothers were (to use the common expression).

Q: What about some of the old politicians? Did you ever meet some of them -- for instance, the two Entezam brothers ['Abdollah and Nasrollah]?
Avery: Yes.

Q: I mean, 'Abdollah I knew very well. He was a very wise and good man -- great friend of Hoveyda. And he said that he couldn't talk about anything political with Hoveyda, that he was just totally closed to any suggestions.

Avery: Yes. Well, the Entezams were exceptionally fine men. Yes, I did know them. They were exceptionally fine men.

There were others. I knew Matin-Daftari quite well, too. He was (I think) a lightweight. But he was a man of great integrity and seriousness.

Q: And he was put aside?

Avery: Yes.

Q: Why?

Avery: He was Mossadeq's son-in-law, of course.

Yes, he confined himself to being the Head of the United Nations Organization, that sort of thing. [He was the] father of Hedayat Matin-Daftari who became a politician and tried to form one of the parties that emerged after the revolution. He's now, of course, living abroad in Europe in exile after a period of living in hiding in Iran.

Of course, I knew him and the younger generation -- Parviz Raji and young men like that. They were sort of children and protege of mine -- people whose parents I knew and who used to come and see me when they were on holiday from their universities in England -- Cambridge in the case of Raji and Matin-Daftari, both of whom were up at Cambridge University.

The older people -- Yes, I met numerous numbers of the old political circles whose names I can hardly remember now. Seyyed Ziyaoddin, of course, I used to go out and see quite often. He was a fascinating character. But with him I talked mainly about the past. I mean, I got him to tell me his experiences in making a coup d'etat. The coup d'etat of February the 21st, 1921, he said was his coup d'etat. It was the coup d'etat that, of course, brought Reza Shah to power. He, generally speaking, deplored the lack of development in Iran's natural resources -- agricultural resources particularly. He was very much a back to the land man. He wanted the Shah to encourage farming. He deplored the importing of meats and of grains in the country which he said should be self-supporting in both.

Q: That's right.

Avery: In lamb and in grain.

He was also a neutralist, really. He always had been after all. He believed in equal handed friendship towards the Soviet Union and towards the West.

Q: Nonalignment.

Avery: Nonalignment. And he was keen on that. But of course, he had apparently no power, though he did talk to the Shah. I think about once a fortnight he saw the Shah. And I think in those days (this was in the 1950s) he was still in a position to make himself heard by the Shah.

Not until after 1963 the Shah became impervious to counsel and advice from people like Seyyed Ziyaoddin. Though it was already, in 1950, that people like Ebrahim Khajenuri, a Senator, vowed that Shah had said he would never be a Senator or selected as a Senator again because he'd spoken to the Shah -- as I mentioned on an earlier tape -- in terms of the necessity of the Shah reigning rather than ruling.

Then, of course, one met dutiful old men like Nezamossoltan who'd been one of those ambassadors wise enough not to receive the Shah when the Shah fled the country under Mossadeq's government. Of course, some of the ambassadors forgot (as I told Nezamossoltan) that they were appointed as ambassadors -- as a "safir-e kabir". They were appointed by the Shah, not by the Prime Minister. Nezamossoltan in Rome had misinterpreted the terms of his "Farman" of appointment and when the Shah arrived in Rome, had failed to greet him. So he was --

Q: Oh. But isn't that disloyal skunk behavior?

Avery: [chuckles] Yes.

Q: It makes me boil.

Avery: Yes. Well, it made the Shah boil [chuckles], too.

So poor old Nezamossoltan was left in exile in his country place -- a place called Galanduak outside Tehran where one visited him and where he played at being a Sufi, but I think only played at being a Sufi. But anyway, he had the "Farman" framed on the wall.

I said, "Look at the "Farman". Didn't you read it to see what the terms were? Mohammad Reza Pahlavi appointed you," and so on. [chuckles]

He was very contrite, very repentant of what he did and always hoping for a reconciliation, which half-heartedly (I think) in the end came. The Shah wasn't as vindictive as a lot of people have accused him of being.

Q: Well, he wasn't vindictive enough, really. Otherwise, he would have got rid of Khomeini.

Avery: Yes.

Then of course, one knew Hasan Pakravan very well -- that rare phenomenon of the very, very cultured military officer fond of poetry, highly literate, marvelously influenced by his French mother Amineh Pakravan. A very cultured and pleasant man. One talked a lot with him. Well, of course, I saw Hoveyda quite a lot, too.

Q: Yes, but Pakravan was very loyal and at the same time as being very cultured and intelligent.

Avery: Yes.

Q: And he was the head of the --

Avery: SAVAK.

Q: SAVAK Organization. So what his assessment of the situation? Surely you could talk to him.

Avery: Well, I did. We talked very frankly.

Pakravan's appointment to SAVAK was a hopeful sign. It seemed to indicate the possibility of some kind of relaxation of the severity on the Shah's part. He was a liberal man -- no torturer. He was not the kind of man who one felt uncomfortable in the presence of and wondered whether he'd be capable of taking one's fingernails out one by one -- not at all. He was a very mild and congenial man. But of course, he, like everybody else of any intelligence, was afraid of the Shah's arrogance. An arrogance -- in which I must repeat the Shah was very Iranian -- very much like many young Iranians. The Pahlavi regime spread arrogance. A lot of people became very arrogant. Young men behind hotel reception desks -- very arrogant, very rude.

I remember my horror in 1975 when I was there with an international conference sponsored by the Empress and Hoveyda. I remember be so perturbed, so shattered when some of the American delegates to this conference came to me and said, "You're an expert on Iran. Can you please tell us why Iranians are so rude?"

And I said, "But to think that I should have lived long enough to be asked this question about one of the most scrupulously courteous and polite nations in the world."

Q: Exquisitely polite.

Avery: Exquisitely polite. But they said, "But we don't see it."

I said, "No. Because they're giving back to us, the

manners that they have seen us display. They've presumably seen casual hotel receptionists who turn their back on the customer or hand them their key in surly silence or whatever." Because I saw this kind of behavior so un-Iranian. But then, these young men behind hotel desks were in an un-Iranian situation. It was all an artificial Western situation in a Western style hotel. It wasn't Iranian at all, so they didn't behave like Iranians.

I did, myself, go quietly to them and had a quiet word with them. I told them, I said, "These people think "ke shoma yek kami biadab hastin, khoshetan nemiyad az shoghletun?"
and sort of cajoled them and, you know made a bit of a joke of it.

I said, "yek kami bashshashtar bashid." [chuckles] You know, "be a little bit more merry with them" and so on.

But there was this arrogance. But it was the arrogance of people who, deep down in their subconscience, were (I think) confused. They were in a world that wasn't their world and which they didn't quite understand. Because these young men weren't highly educated people. They were put clapped into a uniform or nice blue jackets and trousers, and put into this strange position. Sometimes [chuckles] they were very amusing. I mean, sometimes, of course, they were quite obviously agents or part-time agents for the Security Organization.

I shall never forget myself arriving on one occasion at one of the great hotels of Tehran. I wasn't, in fact, staying at it at that time. I only stayed in big hotels like that when I was somebody's

guest [chuckles] -- the government's guest or something like that, as I was once or twice. But I shall never forget arriving. I think I was going to see somebody at the Hilton (I think it was). One of these boys behind the reception desk says, "salam 'aleykom aqa-i... shoma indaf'eh Shah ra mibinid?." [chckles].

I said, "I've never seen the Shah". "Shoma ra ehzar nafarmudand?"--"Haven't they sent for you" and so on.

Well, he was a boy who -- First of all, I didn't know him, but he knew who I was. So he was rather (I think) giving his role away. He was obviously somebody who had been informed -- been advised, "Look, watch [his] movements and whom [he is] visiting and seeing" and so on. So there was apparently that going on. Which led to a great deal of distrust.

Amin Saikal, in his book -- one of the numerous books that's been written about a revolutionary Iran and Iran on the eve of a revolution -- I remember one of the points he made.

Q: Who?

Avery: Amin Saikal, an Afghan journalist, a lecturer in America and Australia. But his book was published by Princeton.

One of the points he makes is the degree of suspicion -- the rifts and divisions in society that became characteristic of Iran in the later years of the Shah's reign -- suspicion.

Q: Generally, Iranians -- rather like the Russians, in fact -- are a bit paranoid. So if they have a good reason to be, then it clearly gets out of hand.

Avery: Yes.

Q: Everybody -- One was told that one's gardner was a member of SAVAK. He was nothing of the sort.

Avery: No.

Q: But it's just exaggerating.

Avery: Yes. They get very suspicious, very paranoid.

Q: But Russians are like that. That's why they can't handle, really, the international situation at the moment.

Avery: [chuckles] Yes. And of course, the other problem is that Iranians always (I think) tend to believe they're living in an Iran-centered world. [chuckles] It seems so that they're convinced that Iran is of infinitely greater importance to, for example, the governments of the United States of America or Great Britain or of the U.S.S.R. when, in fact, it isn't.

Naturally, this is a theory that is somewhat given enhanced credence by the role played by students of Iran like myself. I mean, we think about Iran, talk about Iran in a way that must make people think that we believe Iran to be immensely important. And there is a tendency -- Iran has a kind of aura -- a cultural aura, a splendor of legendary history and actual history -- to create a tendency of the world to regard Iran as very important.

Iranians, themselves, are certainly immensely imbued in the sense of their universal cosmic significance. I think all this is exaggerated. But I will say, of course, that there is a perennial quality about the products of Iranian genius that does, of course, give it a certain special aura in the field of culture. It's an aura that it shares with the ideas (I use the word "ideas" deliberately) of Ancient Greece and the idea of Italy. Renaissance Italy. These -- Iran, Greece and Italy -- And for this reason, I'd like to preserve the use of the word "Persia" because, of course, for the European Iran is Persia. The Greeks were the first impresarios, so to speak, of Iran for the Europeans called Iran Persia, using the name of a part for the whole. Because, of course, Iranians are constantly having to explain to westerners that they have always called their country Iran and thought of it as Iran. I like the word "Persia" because Persia, Italy, Greece are words in European cultural concepts which stand for a special cultural area and for a special series of cultural phenomenon.

One doesn't think of Iranian poetry. One doesn't think of Iranian rugs. One thinks of Persian poetry. One thinks of Persian rugs. One doesn't think of Hellenistic poetry, Hellenistic drama. One thinks of Greek drama, Greek tragedy. And similarly Italy is a word which for me spells paintings, art, terraces with balustrades and urns on them with flowers drooping down from the tops of the urns.

All this cultural delicacy, the filigree, the changing patterns and colors of rugs, the marvelous, intricate meters and the enamal-like imagery of Persian lyrical poetry. All these things which are of such importance and such a paradoxically, perennial hardness and toughness -- a resilience -- For they survive when kingdoms, shahs, governments, schemes for the getting of oil for the

exploitation of areas, have all collapsed. These threads (as it were) -- these silver threads -- of cultural fruitfulness and reality continue.

This is why Iran continues to be of such immense importance to me. I've just discussed the fact that it's not as significant as [chuckles] people think it is. Now I'm telling you that in fact, of course, in a different area -- on a different level -- it is of vast significance on this cultural level. Because its poetry, literature and its artifacts have a truthfulness.

[end of side one of tape four]

Avery: Its artifacts, its poetry, its literature have a brilliance and a truthfulness -- a reality -- which are totally indissoluble, unerasable that must go on so long as there's a human mind and a human eye capable of discerning what is really good and responding to it. Then these qualities of Iranian civilization will continue to survive.

Q: Well, certainly the golden age of Persian poetry is unequaled in the world. I mean, its the greatest poetic monument that mankind has ever built. Its absolutely unsurpassable. No other poetry can compare with it -- in splendor.

But together with that persiacentricity that you mentioned, and parallel to it, unfortunately, is the other side of the coin which is this terrible, deep self-deprication and masochism and really not valuing themselves for what they are good at that has also characterized modern Iran. They're much kinder to foreigners. They're much more trustful of foreigners. They hated each other. This is what I noticed when I (as a sort of

almost a foreigner) went back there.

Why is it that these people who are so hospitable, so kind to foreigners are so awful to each other?

I think again they share this with the Russians and the Irish. I always think that they tempermentally -- the Russians, the Irish and the Persians -- are very similar. And this is another trait that they share. It's like -- If you go to
Ireland you receive such exquisite hospitality and kindness and generosity from people who next thing, in the street, are bombing each other and killing each other. The same with the Russians. I can't understand how it came about -- this total hatred of the self in Iran which one noticed in the last twenty years or so.

Avery: Yes. Well, there's a strange paradox there because I've talked about arrogance. But at the same time there is a kind of self-deprication, as you put it. I'm glad you used the word masochism because I've always felt that there is an underlying masochism in Iran.

The only Iranian authority I've come across who actually mentions it explicitly is Zabihollah Safa in his history of Iranian literature, Tarikh-e adabiyyat-e Iran, in which he talks of it in terms of the very early poetry -- the poetry of the Samanid

era and the Ghaznavid and Saljuqi era -- which the poets arrogantly addressed their Turkish slaves using the imperatives " "biya" -- "come, bring," et cetera, which he says denotes a kind of arrogance. But at the same time in the poetry and later in the Sufi poetry, there's always this business of, you know, "My breast is bare. Stab it. Capture me. Hang me from the saddle strap of your saddle." This is very masochistic in this tendency to speak in terms of wanting to be captured, wanting to be raped, wanting to be --

Q: Murdered.

Avery: Murdered.

Q: Martyred.

Avery: Martyred and so on.

Q: Which again, Khomeini has played on very cleverly.

Avery: But Khomeini, who is an extremely artful character, has used these psychological traits. And I am loath to venture into it myself because I'm not a trained psychologist. But I do wish somebody would write, as it were, a psychological study of Iran based on evidence from Iranian literature. Because I think the psychology of Iran is very fascinating and has a great deal to do with the turns its history's taken and certainly when its rulers like Esma'il the Safavid and Shah 'Abbas the Safavid and Khomeini arise who are capable of playing on their psychologies, then it is apparent that it is in that psychology that the key to the control and manipulation of the Iranian people does lie. And its a key that such men get hold of and a key they turn.

So that masochism has always struck me as being evident. It gives them a positive as well as a

negative aspect. Because it does mean that Iranians will suffer far more for far longer than most human beings seem to be capable of.

Q: That's right.

Avery: They have a tolerance of suffering in excess.

Q: A very high threshold.

Avery: A high threshold in excess of many human beings. I'm so glad you used the same vocabulary that I've thought of in this context -- this high threshold.

When people asked me, in the early days of the revolution, how long it could go on for. I said, "Oh, ten years at least." And they'd be surprised. And I'd have to tell them, I'd say, "Yes, but Iranians will suffer insuperable horrors of torment for far longer than anybody else." And the reign of Nader Shah is the case in point. There's evidence in one of the

annals of that reign of how we used to sit in our tents at night and wonder to each other how long we could stand it -- the cruelty and tyranny and terror that this man spread. So, once again, Iran is falling out of the frying pan into the fire. What is it? "az chaleh be chah oftadeh"--from a reign of terror and tyranny into a reign of terror and tyranny. It makes my heart bleed for the unfortunate people of Iran who never seem to get the government they deserve.

Hedayat Matin-Daftari used to go and see his old grandfather, Mohammad Mossadeq, when I was living in Tehran in the 1950s. And he'd come and tell me of some of Mossadeq's observations as Mossadeq based his study of law in the house in the country where he was confined in his later years after his release from prison.

One day, Hedayat came to see me and he said, "My grandfather was saying that he loved an English saying. He was very fond of it. He thought it was so accurate. 'Every people gets the government they deserve.'"

Well, [chuckles] I must say that I see what he meant as the ousted Premier, that they got the Pahlavi back in power. But I think the trouble with the Iranian people is that they do not ever get the government they deserve. For they are not wicked enough to deserve the kind of governments they almost invariably seem to suffer from.

Another of the remarks Hedayat Matin-Daftari told me his grandfather made was he said he used to find him walking up and down saying, "pedar sukhteh mardom"--"what swines the people are," I suppose you could roughly translate into English.

Q: That's right.

Avery: The people, the swines -- what swines the people are.

And when asked why he brought this odious remark about the people up so often, he said, "Well, they let me down." He felt that he'd been totally let down by the populous of the country he had tried (he felt) to serve and to rescue from the Pahlavi

tyranny.

Q: Sure, but that is what also the Shah felt.

Avery: He felt terribly disappointed in the people. The Shah, of course, did, too.

Q: The Shah did, too. Because everybody tried to do something. Somebody threw a bullet at him or did something.

Avery: Yes.

Q: And eventually he lost respect for them.

Avery: Yes. I think in the end the Shah hated the Iranian people, was always my feeling. He really actively disliked them, which is a pitty.

But the Iranians are not very easy to govern. Never have been. It's a highly heterogeneous nation. It's a very fragile unity, you know -- Iran is. " Shahanshah"-- king of

kings -- The assumption being that there are many Irans and many leaders in it.

When people ask me about possible future developments, well, of course, one can't make predictions. It's very difficult to make predictions about Iran.

But I do sometimes believe that there might be a kind of inevitability about history. The history of Iran in the past has always meant that when a central paramount power collapses a period of disintegration follows of regional autonomies -- moluko- tavayefi, local princelies, local kinglets follows.

Well, with the collapse of the Pahlavi one could say that a central paramount government was destroyed. And I can't help wondering whether, perhaps, before another one arises in the place of the present dictatorial regime, Iran might ultimately not have to go through this phase of molukotavayefi, of semi-autonomous, regional --

Q: But, you see, as you said, the psychology of Iranians contributed to their history. But it's also really, or more so, the other way around -- that this history of Iran has contributed to this --

Avery: Psychology.

Q: Psychology of masochism and self-deprecation. Because every time they've tried to build up and raise their head, in came another rush of central --

Avery: Invaders.

Q: You know, invaders -- central Asian invaders or anybody. And they sort of beat them on the head again. So they developed this fatalism on the one side that you know.

And another thing is that you shouldn't attach too much importance to the goods of this world because you don't know how long it's going to last.

Avery: They're too ephemeral.

Q: All that has contributed to this psychology and sort of it becomes, then, a vicious circle.

Avery: Yes.

Q: But one doesn't know how long this will last.

The ultimate, of course, danger is the takeover by Russia. Or don't you feel that?

Avery: The risk of Iran's being dismantled as a nation, of course, has persisted ever since 1800 and certainly in modern times. And there is a risk that the Soviet Union may take the northern provinces -- Gilan, Azarbay –

jan, Khorasan even.

But that could possibly only happen in the event of detente between Russia and the United States.

But I think the worst that would probably occur is that Russia and the United States might decide if Iranian expansionism -- for example, this idea of exporting the revolution -- were to persist and to create grave apprehension on the part of the U.S.S.R and the U.S.A. who would both have reason for grave apprehension if exporting the Iranian revolution became a fact. If that threat were to amount to anything, then I think the worst that would happen would be that the Russians and the Americans would come together. And a detente between Moscow and Washington in itself would be enough to terrify any Iranian government. Because one thing that any Iranian government fears is the two superpowers. They like to feel they might be able to play off against each other coming together. And it may be that the worst that would happen would be a repetition of the Anglo- Russian Agreement in 1907 -- the division of Iran into a northern and southern sphere of influence. The Gulf and the oil bearing Arabian side of it being in the Americans' sphere of influence and the northern provinces of Iran being in the Russians' sphere of influence. That might come about.

I don't think, however, that even that will come about. Because for one thing, I think the threat of the exportation of the Iranian revolution is being daily curtailed. I think the ruling authorities in Iran are turning away from that threat now increasingly and making the fact that they are more and more public. Because they realize that this is counter-productive. It's going to create a great deal of enmity and would encourage detente between Russia and America.

And secondly, I don't think that Russia and America -- I don't think that either of them wish to be any more implicated in Iranian affairs than they can possibly help.

And as for the invasion of Iran by either Russia or America or both -- I don't think it's at all

likely that either Russia or America want to become involved in actually ruling Iran -- ruling Iran being such a very difficult matter.

Q: Some people say that Afghanistan was just a stepping stone.

Avery: Well, Russia's had a very bad experience in it's attempt to dominate Afghanistan.

No, I don't believe it was a stepping stone to actually ruling Iran. It might have been a stepping stone towards the neutralization of Iran. But it took place, after all, after the Americans' use of Iran as a base that had been nullified by the Iranian revolution. So I don't think very much will happen there.

Already there is evidence to my way of reading the situation -- that Iran is reacting somewhat apprehensively (full of apprehension and anxiety) to the signs that are already developing of detente between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R.

So I find it strangely difficult. I find Western commentators and observers and diplomats strangely impervious to what seems to me to be an absolutely undeniable fact that one thing that would frighten a country whose independence has, after all (over the past hundred and fifty or hundred and eighty years or so), very often depended on its capacity to play off two great powers against each other is the converse fact of any sign of detente between the two superpowers must be something they dread more than anything else.

Q: But now to go back to, for instance, 1949 -- What happened with the Azarbayjan, taking back the Azarbayjan? What was the actual political background to that?

Avery: What's the time? God, everything. 1946?

Q: 1949 -- when Azarbayjan was --

Avery: Was it 1949? I thought it was 1946, 1947. But never mind. Yes.

Q: No. It went over after the war to the Russian side.

Avery: Yes, yes.

Q: And whatever his name was -- the man who set up the government.

Avery: Pishevari.

Q: Yes, Pishevari. And then it was taken back by the Persians -- wasn't it?

Avery: Yes.

Q: 1949?

Avery: That's right.

Q: How did that come about? I mean, was it as it is the result of some kind of an entente between the powers?

Avery: No. It was (in my opinion) entirely the result of the enormous diplomatic skill and cunning of Qavamossaltaneh. Qavam was the greatest statesman in the Orient, in my opinion, possibly from Nuri al-Said of Iraq. And Qavam went to Russia, negotiated the northern oil but didn't remind them that no concession could be effected unless ratified by the Majles and that the Majles could not be elected unless every foreign soldier was off Iranian soil, according to a law passed by Mossadeq -- not very long before.

So that he then came back. The Russians found themselves in the position of not being able to get their concession for oil unless a Majles were elected and not

being able to see a Majles elected unless Russian soldiers left Iranian soil. And so they had to evacuate Azarbayjan. Of course, then the army marched in and the Shah always claimed that he and his galant army

had regained Azarbayejan from the Russians. But it was Qavam's diplomacy that had done it. And Qavam was the man who, as one of my old Iranian friends used to say, had regained a province for Iran. So that was in brief the story of

Azarbayjan. He'd owed nothing to America or to the British or to any of the other professed friends of Iran. It was entirely the Russian --

Ultimately, it was probably that Joseph Stalin had stopped needing the diversion he wanted to create while he consolidated Russia's position in eastern Europe -- that aspect of post-war diplomatic history that historians (so far as I know) have not yet gotten around to clarifying. But leaving that aspect of it aside, Qavam's subtle diplomacy did a great deal.

Q: Qavam is probably the only politician in history who actually managed to hoodwink even Stalin.

Avery: Yes. That's what I meant. Yes. Qavam is one of my great heroes.

Q: Because even Winston Churchill, who saw through Hitler and saw through everybody --

Avery: Didn't see through Stalin.

Q: Didn't see through Stalin. But Qavam did and managed to get the better of him.

Avery: Yes.

Q: Let us go back to the N.I.O.C.

After the Shah came back and Mossadeq was put under house arrest or whatever it was --

Avery: Yes.

Q: I think that the Shah behaved rather magnanimously towards

Mossadeq.

Avery: Oh, I don't think he did at all. At least he didn't kill him.

Q: That's what I mean.

Avery: He hated him. Well, he had him tried.

Q: Well, he could easily have killed him.

Avery: I suppose he could.

I would have thought it was hardly magnanimous -- politics, perhaps, but not magnanimous.

Q: And so there was the consortium. Now what happened then? I mean, who arranged the consortium and what happened?

Avery: Oh, that was arranged mainly (with the Shah's acquiescence, of course) to reactivate the oil. It was part of the deal, I suppose, for the return of the Shah to his throne. But I wasn't in on those details. It was J. Edgar Hoover, wasn't it, that had a lot to do with it? Was it Hoover? I can't remember now.

Anyway, the consortium's set up. 'Ali Amini, of course, on the Iranian side was the most instrumental in actually arranging the details.

Q: What do you think of Amini? He's one of the old guard, of old --

Avery: Oh, I've always had a very strong spot in my heart for Amini. I think he's a perfectly sincere, old fashioned Iranian gentleman who had nothing to gain by being corrupt, and therefore, uncorruptable -- patriot. Oh, one of those Iranians who have an awful big stake in Iran. I mean, I think Amini's totally admirable, totally patriotic Iranian.

Q: And then, so they came to a deal --

Avery: If only the Shah had been willing, which he never was, to trust people like Amini and to listen to their advice he might still have been there or at least his family might. The Shah, of course, couldn't bear people like Qavamossaltaneh and Amini because they represented a threat to him. He thought wrongly, I think. But he thought it.

Q: He thought that they represented a threat.

Avery: Yes.

Q: Well, what kind of a threat?

Avery: Well, to him they were representatives of a much older regime. They were both Qajars on their mothers' side. Fakhreddowleh -- I mean, his mother was a daughter of Mozaffarodin Shah -- a lady I have the honor of knowing -- very, very formidable and a very grand lady indeed.

The Shah felt a sort of inferiority in the presence of such people. Because these people were part of an older Iran that had been important and influential long before anybody had ever heard of Reza Khan Mir Panj, the Shah's father.

Q: Well, you know, frankly, I don't go along with that, to tell you the truth, Peter. I'll tell you why. Because if you go back also to the origin of the Qajar, who was Mohammad Khan Qajar. I mean, it is always like that. Indeed, if you go back to the origin --

Avery: Mohammad Khan Qajar will know perfectly well who he was. He was traceable back at least as far as the Mongols. The Qajas were nobles who came to the west with the armies of Genghis Khan.

Q: I know. But what I mean is that, you know, you have to start somewhere and --