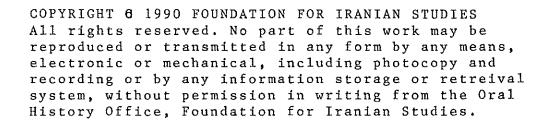
Foundation for Iranian Studies Program of Oral History

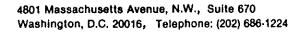
SEPEHRI, HOSEIN

INTERVIEWEE: HOSEIN SEPEHRI

INTERVIEWER: MAHNAZ AFKHAMI

WASHINGTON, D.C.: AUGUST 1988





PREFACE

This manuscript is the product of a tape-recorded interview conducted for the Oral History of Iran Program of Foundation for Iranian Studies by Mahnaz Afkhami with Hosein Sepehri in Washington, D.C. in September 1988.

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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این جانب متن ونوار مصاحبه های انجام شده در ارتباط بابرنا مه " تاریخ شفاهی ایران " را به بنیا دمطالعات ایران هدیه میکنیم تا در اجرای برنا مه های آموزشی و تحقیقاتی بنیا دمورداستفیاده قرار گیبیرد.

ملاحظات:

مماحیه شونده مماحیه کننده مرازی از این ما ادر ۱۹۸۸ تا ریخ

موضوع نواد: گارزی - سازمان نزیم

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HOSEIN SEPEHRI

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Born in 1933 in Beerjand, Hosein Sepehri completed his high school education in tehran and his university studies, in the field of agricultural sciences and engineering, in England. Upon returning to Iran in 1957, Sepehri entered the Plan and Budget Organization and began his government career as an agricultural expert in Khuzestan's developmental projects. His later responsibilities included: chief of Plan and Budget Organization's bureau in Khorasan, deputy governor of Khorasan and head of the agriculture division of the Plan and Budget Organization. In the years prior to the revolution, Hosein Sepehri was deputy minister of agriculture.

Due to his direct involvement with a number of developmental projects and his various planning and executive responsibilities in the Plan and Budget Organization and the ministry of agriculture, Hosein Sepehri's first hand knowledge of Iran's developmental process and of a number of key players in this process could be of value to the reader of this memoir.

SUBJECT PAGE

Educational background in Iran and Great Britain in the field of science and agricultural engineering; employment in the Plan and Budget Organization(PBO) in 1957 and direct involvement with a number of developmental projects in Khuzestan; the significant role played by Abolhasan Ebtehaj in the planning and implementation of these projects; participation of American, British and Dutch companies in such projects:

Voluntary sale of privately-owned lands in Khuzestan for use in developmental projects; Ebtehaj's efforts to obtain a \$40 million loan from the World Bank; promotion to chief PBO's technical bureau and deputy governor in Khorasan; PBO's relative independence from government during Ebtehaj's tenure; a favorable review of the goals, policies and accomplishments of Ebtehaj: 4-7

Description of the functions of the agriculture bureau of the PBO; reasons for the critical stand taken by Seyyed Jalal Tehrani, Khorasan's governor, against shah's land reform program; the process of decision-making for developmental programs at provincial levels;8-10

An analysis of the land reform program and its negative effects on agricultural productivity and rural population; viewing the shah's land reform as the root cause of the revolution by destroying the traditional classes and causing the emigration of peasants from the rural areas; the problem of irrigation and water shortage in Iran; references to population density prior to land reform program;

Increase in the developmental budget in the latter part of 1960's; the process of allocation of resources to various sectors and the chronic rivalry between different ministries and institutions for ever larger share of available funds; difficulty of overtly opposing shah's views in the meetings of the Supreme Ecoconim Council;

The increasing reluctance among cabinet ministers to Voice critical views regarding shah's projects or proposals; shah's insistence on being personally involved in decision-making in all major areas; an appraisal of

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a number of ministers of agriculture particularly Mansour Rowhani; recollecting Rowhani as a hard-working honest, farsighted and patriotic man of action: 17-21

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The project to increase Iran's production of agricultural goods; a review of the areas in which Iran was relatively self-sufficient in the years immediately prior to the revolution; an analysis of the causes of the revolution with an emphasis on economic and political "corruption" and a hasty and ill-conceived land reform program:

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