THE SOUTH PERSIAN RIFLES

by

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This thesis attempts to demonstrate how the British Government, through the creation of the South Persian Rifles (1916-1921) tried to protect their interests in south Persia, in the special circumstances of the outbreak of World War I, with the official sanction of the Persian Government. The account is given of the origins of the force, of the differences of opinions on its aims and objectives, of its organisation and strategy, its operations and other activities mainly in Fars. The "Sipahdär" agreement of August 1916 is treated in some detail and the relevance of the non-recognition of the force to the subsequent tribal uprisings and disturbances in Fars is examined. Lastly, the significance of the rôle of the South Persian Rifles is assessed in the light of the 1919 agreement and the aftermath of war, as well as the force's contribution to internal developments.

An attempt has been made to discuss these issues as much from the point of view of the different departments of the Imperial and Indian Governments, as from the Persian standpoint. Events in the south have been treated more fully than hitherto from the perspective of internal Persian history.
In writing this thesis, I have incurred a great debt towards many people and institutions which I would gratefully like to acknowledge. I owe most to Lawrence Elwell-Sutton, my supervisor. His considerable interest in, and knowledge of, the many facets of Persian studies enriched my perceptions and guided my research. His concern, patience, and continual encouragement enabled me to complete this work. John Gurney was always prepared to discuss critically methods and ideas; he was exceedingly generous with his time. Homa Katouzian, Sandy Morton, Mohsen Ashtiani, Reza Shaikh al-Islami, Judy Mabro, Lila Zia, Simon Digby, Bahi Oveisi, Bijhan Kaviyani, Paul Luft, Hedayat, Mariam and Ali Matin-Daftari were willing to listen attentively and to engage in stimulating conversations. Patricia Croner deciphered three Swedish books.

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of Lords Records Office helped my inquiries with their customary kindness. Sarah Graham-Brown and Diana Grimsby-Jones at the Middle-East Centre of St. Antony's College, Oxford, have a special claim on my gratitude.

Dr. Christopher Roads, Deputy Director of the Imperial War Museum, showed me films of his travels along the routes followed by Sykes and the South Persian Rifles; and he very kindly placed at my disposal all the material he had gathered on the subject. Mr. Frank Sykes allowed me to read Sir Percy's correspondence and reports on the South Persian Rifles; and Mrs. C. Howard went through her brother's letters with me. The late Rukn-Zadeh Adamiat patiently answered questions during two long interviews, so did the late Muhammed Ali Raushan, and among many others, Malek Mansour Qashqa'i. Mr. Vernon Daykin has borne with great fortitude the varied alterations that I made, and not only typed the finished draft with exemplary skill but also, on many occasions, acted as an exact and careful editor.

Lastly, I owe an immeasurable debt to my family who have given me their utmost support at every stage.
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## Abbreviations

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.H.</td>
<td>Higri calendar</td>
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<tr>
<td>B.M.</td>
<td>British Museum</td>
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<td>BSOA</td>
<td>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</td>
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<td>CAR</td>
<td>Central Asian Review</td>
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<td>EDEP</td>
<td>Englische Dokumente zur Erdrosselung Persiens</td>
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<tr>
<td>EPC</td>
<td>East Persia Cordon</td>
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<tr>
<td>F.</td>
<td>File</td>
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<tr>
<td>FO/F.O.</td>
<td>Foreign Office</td>
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<td>GFOA</td>
<td>German Foreign Office Archives</td>
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<td>GI</td>
<td>Government of India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFOA</td>
<td>Iranian Foreign Office Archives</td>
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<tr>
<td>IO/I.O.</td>
<td>India Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>JCAS</td>
<td>Journal of the Central Asiatic Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>JIS</td>
<td>Journal of Iranian Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>JMES</td>
<td>Journal of Middle Eastern Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>JRCAC</td>
<td>Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MECL</td>
<td>Middle East Centre Library (St. Antony's College, Oxford)</td>
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<tr>
<td>NPF</td>
<td>North Persian Force</td>
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<tr>
<td>sh.</td>
<td>Shamsi calendar</td>
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<td>P.</td>
<td>Part or paper</td>
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<td>SPR</td>
<td>South Persian Rifles</td>
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<td>SSI</td>
<td>Secretary of State for India</td>
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<tr>
<td>R.M.M.</td>
<td>Revue du Monde Musulman</td>
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<tr>
<td>WO/W.O.</td>
<td>War Office</td>
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</tbody>
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Transliteration

א - ә
וף - ʻах – же
ס - ʻах – же
ט – ʻах – же
כ – Q, q
ג – Gh, gh

The hamzeh and the letter ġ are represented by apostrophe (').

The hamzeh in an initial position has been omitted from the transliteration.

The izärfeh is represented by -e except when the word to which it is attached ends in a vowel, in which case it is written -ye.

The vowel kasrēh is represented by the letter ī but when preceding the letter h in a final position it is represented by ĕ, e.g., Sārim al-Dauleh.

י as a vowel is represented by ī
י as a consonent is represented by y
י as a diphthong is represented by ai
י as a consonent is represented by v
י as a vowel is represented by ū
י as a diphthong is represented by au
י preceded by ġ, not pronounced, is represented by w

zammēh is represented by u

The pronunciations of place names presented certain problems. There are inevitable discrepancies between local pronunciations and the transliterations or transcriptions found in the reports of British officers of the South Persian Rifles. Wherever helpful, I have shown two versions, for instance, Kurdshullī (Kūrshullī), Darrihshūrī (Darashullī),
Shaibānī (Shīvanī). I have not attempted to correct spellings in quotations except when these are clearly incorrect and confusing to the reader, e.g., "Chagodok" corrected to "Chughādak", "Talā-Doz" corrected to "Tal-e Duzā". The proper Persian names in the Acknowledgements are not spelled according to these transliteration rules.

Diacritical marks on names of better known places have been left out, e.g., Kirmanshah, Hamadan, Qazvin, Bushihr, etc., and I have also left unchanged some familiar spellings such as Tehran, Quetta, ulama, Beg, Begī, and Mashālāh Khān.
INTRODUCTION TO THE SOURCES

By far the most well documented source materials relevant to the history of Persia during the First World War generally and of the South Persian Rifles specifically, both in terms of quality and volume, are those of the War and Foreign Office archives lodged at the Public Record Office and the records of the India Office, at the India Office Library in London. The War Office archives (contained in the 106/- series), conveniently gather in one place all information pertaining to the structure, organisation and military operation of the force and papers immediately relevant to the politics of its functions. But much of this material can be found in its original or copy form in the files of the Foreign and India Office records. Thus, material contained in the archives of all three departments, for the most part, overlap, repeat, and complement each other, the commentary notes of each office reflecting different standpoints and providing the essential wider perspective from which to study the history of this force.

While the diplomatic correspondence exposes the formulation and conduct of foreign policy toward Persia in general, the various war diaries and letters of the officers in command of the force, their reports on its progress and various schemes drawn up for its proposed organisation and reorganisation give some idea of how policy was pursued or conducted at a local level. More significantly, as far as Persian history is concerned, these, together with consular
and trade reports allow for a glimpse into life and conditions as they existed and developed locally, while the correspondence of the Tehran Legation is indispensible to the understanding of the negotiations with the Persian Government about the force and its impact on foreign policy in general.

The minutae of the South Persian Rifles and policy concerning it, discussed at departmental, inter-departmental, committee, cabinet committee, and private level, are voluminous. One of the pitfalls of a step-by-step study of this type of material is the time, space and thought devoted to following up certain strands of policy, which ultimately lead nowhere and do not come to anything, either because of their insignificance or because of delays in the face of rapidly changing local circumstances, or the misunderstandings of incoming correspondence from Tehran or Simla. In this context, Marling's own advice to Sir Percy Loraine, who was appointed minister in Tehran at the end of 1921 is interesting, if not revealing:

"... avoid detail in reporting by telegram. Outline is quite enough, and the propensity of the F.O. to fasten on a point of detail of little or no importance is apt to be embarrassing."

The chief weaknesses of relying too heavily on British sources is the obvious partiality and limitation of the British point of view. Ministerial, consular, and military official reports coming from Tehran, Shiraz, or Kirman, often temper tact with truth and hinder attempts at reaching definitive conclusions about the controversies and

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1 Sir Charles Marling to Sir Percy Loraine, Copenhagen, extracts from a letter dated 22 July 1921 (typescript copy of original from the private papers of Sir P. Loraine), contained in the Gordon Waterfield Papers, M.E.C.L., St. Antony's College, Oxford, Box F, F2, DS 43.1.L6.
issues of the time. The reports and correspondence of Sykes and Gough, on the situation in Fars, during 1918 especially, may be cited as examples of this tendency. The fact that the military and political authorities in Shiraz did not get on at all well with each other, accentuated this proclivity. Likewise, Marling's reports, though in some measure perceptive in their understanding of certain areas of the local political situation, are examples of a preference for brevity as well as the desire to balance internal exigencies against what he believed his superiors in London ought to know. This may be judged by the content and tone of his despatches to the Foreign Office, especially between 1916 and 1918, while he was negotiating the question of the formal recognition of the South Persian Rifles with the Persian Government. The value of the Persian sources (discussed below), is that they shed further light on the quality of British diplomatic correspondence and provide a measure by which to judge and assess their accuracy.

Thus on the basis of the above reports alone, the motives and behaviour of, for example, some Persian politicians in Tehran and more locally, of Saulat al-Dauleh and the Qashqā'i, Nāsir al-Dīvān and the Kāzirūnī, even Farmān Farmā and Qavām al-Mulk, would be largely misunderstood and certainly appear too confusing.

To some extent, the lacunae of the official sources are filled by the recollections or memoirs, published or in manuscript, of British personnel in Persia during these years. Sykes's own private papers, both those available at the M.E.C.L. (St. Antony's College, Oxford) and those in the possession of Mr. Frank Sykes, do not, unfortunately, contain
any private letters of relevance or diaries on the subject of the South Persian Rifles and the war period. The official printed reports on the operations of the South Persian Rifles, which are among them, are merely duplicates of those found in the War Office and India Office files. His papers do, however, contain some unpublished material on his earlier experiences in Persia and elsewhere. As a result, one is compelled to fall back on his official reports to India and Tehran as well as his "official" history and a number of articles he published after the war in various journals. Nothing much need be said about the articles, since they are either watered-down versions of some aspects of the South Persian Rifles' activities which appear in his book, or generalised repetitions of his unaltered, overall attitudes on Persia during and after the war, and to Persian and British policy.

The faults in his section in this book, on the South Persian Rifles and the world war in Persia, generally, are both those of omission and commission. In the first place he pointedly simplifies the reasons for the creation of the South Persian Rifles as well as the controversies surrounding the Sipahdār agreement of 1916. But more significantly, he entirely fails to see the Persian point of view and as a result tends to exaggerate the influence of the German intrigue (and he was not alone in this), in so far as he

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1 P.M. Sykes, *A History of Persia*, 2 vols. This book was first published in 1915. The second edition came out in 1921 incorporating the section on the world war and its aftermath and the S.P.R., and went to press just after the coup of 1921 and before the disbandment of the force. Sykes's assessment of the S.P.R. and his "appeal" to the Persians, are contained in this edition. To the third edition of his book which appeared in 1930, was added his "final essay" (pp. 541-562, vol. II). This edition was reprinted by MacMillan and Co., London, in 1951.
regards Persian reaction to the force, on a national and local level, from the standpoint of German inspired intrigue and oriental Machiavellism and treachery. Perhaps this can only be expected of a serving officer, personally involved in these events in a time of war, and whose background and milieu would hardly have given him an opportunity to appreciate readily the interests, viewpoints, and aspirations of the "lesser breeds". In this respect, of his very few critics in print, Malcom E. Yapp, has pointed to the deficiencies of this historical approach and the inadequacies of Sykes' History of Persia in his interesting and stimulating article, "Two British Historians of Persia".¹

From a different angle, a Soviet historian of Persia during the world war, Lev I. Miroshnikov, has drawn attention to some of the factual errors and biases of Sykes's account of Anglo-Russian military operations in his Iran in World War I (Moscow, 1963). Similarly, the British consul in Isfahan at the time, T.W. Haig, in his recollections of this period, demonstrates Sykes's inaccurate interpretation of the situation in Isfahan in 1918, in connection with military operations at Abādeh.² Apart from other factual errors of minor importance, the book still gives the fullest account of the South Persian Rifles and some useful information on communications, topography, and statistics on the tribes. Yet it barely provides a reliable work of reference or gives a more than superficial understanding and analysis of the rôle of the South Persian Rifles and deeper implications of southern affairs.

¹ In B. Lewis and P.M. Holt (eds.), Historians of the Middle East (London, 1962).
² Wolseley Haig, "Reminiscences", MS, Haig Papers, M.E.C.L. DS. 315.5.
The diaries of Lt. Col. W.K. Fraser, who joined the force in 1917 from India as one of Sykes's senior staff officers, and who commanded the garrison at Ābādeh and assumed the duties of Inspector-General of the force from 1919 to 1921, give information mostly on the logistic and military problems facing the force and sometimes an appreciation of the politics of socio-military life in Kirman or Fars. Haig's "Reminiscences" tell more about the situation in Isfahan and its districts at the time, especially about German activity both here and at Mashhad prior to 1916, where he was consul (1913-1915). His work intermixes general war events with socio-political life in both places and contains some interesting information on the family of Zill al-Sultān and on some leading brigands such as Nāyib Husain and his sons. This is done without losing sight of what was happening in Fars. The personal letters of Captain D.N. Carr, written while serving in Kirman and Sīrjān, shed some light on some of the problems facing the force and its British officers.

The work of collecting the private papers or letters of other officers in the South Persian Rifles, very few of whom appear to have ever published their recollections at a later date, both Persian and English, is still proceeding and in time ought to give a fuller answer to some of the more probing questions that still remain largely unanswered, namely, the force's relations with local power factions; the relationship of the British and Indian personnel with the Persian officers and the rank and file; statistics and more information on the composition of the Persian ranks --their social and ethnic origins (it appears, for instance, that there was a fair number of Armenians among the officer
ranks and the medical and engineering services of the force); on the families or dependents of the men, especially their womenfolk, in cases of incapacitation, injury, or death during service; and finally, on the force's impact on local conditions generally and its effects on Persian nationalist sentiment.

The major collections of British statesmen of the period have been used chiefly to supplement information about the Imperial and Indian Governments' reaction to the Persian question. Many of the collections contained, for the most part, official correspondence relating to the South Persian Rifles and Persia which could be found elsewhere in the archives, and consequently, not all the papers consulted have been listed in the bibliography of this thesis. However, a few private letters found in the Oliphant, Chamberlain, Lloyd George, and Wilson private collections, often helped to clarify certain controversies and to articulate differences of opinion concerning policy toward Persia in general.

Of the four ministers serving in Tehran during this period, i.e., Sir Walter Townley, Sir Charles Marling, Sir Percy Cox, and Mr. Herman Norman, none appear to have left behind private papers of any significance. Loraine's papers, notes from which can be found in the Gordon Waterfield papers and which were compiled by Waterfield for his biography of Loraine, are a rich source for the study of the immediate post-1921 coup era and the preliminary processes of the unification of the country during these years.

One of the marked characteristics of the period covered in this work is the control of the appointments of ministers and cabinets, exercised by the Russian and British
Legations. In this respect, an area which requires further investigation is the rôle of the oriental secretaries of the British Legation, who at times appeared as the **eminence grise** in domestic politics. His office provided the opportunity to be more closely in touch with a larger section of Persian public opinion and also influenced it at times.

Doubtless, the opinions and decisions of the British ministers were largely shaped by the information allowed them by the oriental secretaries. Even here, judging, for instance, from George Churchill's biographical works on some Persians,¹ the underlying prejudice to see issues and assess the usefulness of Persian politicians, as well as **a'vān, ashraf, tujjār, ulema**, and others, in black and white terms, chiefly on the basis of their pro- or anti-British tendencies, is clearly evident.

The use made in this study of material extracted from the archives of the Iranian Ministry for Foreign Affairs has helped to give an extra dimension to the topic under examination and, to some extent, material for an understanding of the Persian viewpoint.²

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² The material of the Iranian Foreign Office Archive (Tehran), is classified broadly, according to subject matter, on a year to year basis, divided and sub-divided under main and sub-headings and arranged into cartons (which have been referred to as volumes in this work) containing any number of dossiers (files) which in turn contain papers or "parts" relating to the sub-heading of the files. The papers are not bound but are arranged in loose sheets on the basis of their dates and carrying numbers 1, 2, 3, . . . , while each part carries a serial official and private number. The dating system is apt to be erratic and confusing. Thus, volume (carton) no. 48 for the war years, entitled *Fars va Banādir* (Fars and the [Gulf] Ports), has, for the year 1335 A.H. (1917-8), some 37 or more files (dossiers) under various sub-headings, e.g., no. 8, "The entry of General Sykes in Shiraz, and English
A full assessment of the quality and quantity of the Persian source material for this period cannot be made until the archives of the Foreign Ministry (and ideally, those of the Ministries for the Interior and War) are freely accessible and available to the public. It is regrettable that both Persians and foreigners are deprived access to material which would make a significant contribution to the understanding of Persian history, both in this and even less contentious periods. Until Persian archives are properly classified and catalogued, and opened to all those interested, Persian historiography will continue to be hampered by a eurocentric bias (or alternatively, perhaps, by an ultra-nationalist narrowness), given that it is only in foreign archives that there exists complete runs of governmental material. It is distressing, if not disgraceful, that aspects of the national heritage are hoarded for no apparent objective reason, except perhaps for inefficiency and ineptitude, and Iranians themselves are not encouraged to understand and view critically the development of their own past and compare it

interference in the South . . .", which, contains some correspondence relating to this subject. The correspondence is mixed, ranging from letters and reports to and from Shiraz and the English office or dept. of the Foreign Ministry in Tehran. At the same time, copies of other inter-departmental letters, e.g., between the Ministry of the Interior and the Foreign Office, as well as cabinet or Foreign Office correspondence to the Persian Legation, London, or correspondence between the Foreign Office and the British Legation in Tehran on this subject, may be found in the file. In this respect, the material is not catalogued as it is, for instance at the Public Records Office, on the basis of consular reports, cabinet or committee reports, minutes, etc. The material is mixed and filed under regional, departmental, topical, and thematic divisions, all to be found in separate volumes entitled, for example, Kirman and Baluchistan; Ministry for War, Newspapers, the War and Iran's Neutrality, etc. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs, vol. 29, year 1300 shamsi (1921-2) for instance, would have in it various files on topics such as the transportation of grain; the Indo-European telegraph system; newspapers; etc., whereas a whole volume may be devoted to each of these topics on their own for the year in question (see illustration of paper or "part" headings in each file, in appendices to this thesis).
fully with those of others.

In so far as this study is concerned, the selected documents which were examined proved to be useful as supplements to the British sources, but on their own would not have been adequate in unravelling the complexities of the period and those surrounding the South Persian Rifles. The reports of the kārguzārs of Shiraz, Kirman, and Isfahan, illuminate certain aspects of local life but presume much background knowledge on the part of the reader. Nevertheless, they contain many case histories of complex litigation that give much socio-economic insight into the relations of foreign personnel, both official and non-official, with local tujjār suppliers, mālikin, etc. These reports as well as the correspondence between the Persian minister in London and the Foreign Minister in Tehran reveal, for instance, different viewpoints and a sharp contrast between the outward behaviour of Persians as it appeared to the British and as reflected in their records, and their inner feelings and real motives. Midhad al-Saltaneh Nūrī, the kārguzār of Shiraz (1916-1918), for example, was believed by Sykes and Gough to be personally on good terms with themselves and also to be a genuine supporter of the British presence. In fact, however, his correspondence to the Centre reveals that he was very critical of British interference in Fars and in some ways encouraged the Centre not to give way to their demands. This was even before his brother, Murtizā Quli Khān was executed in June 1918 for his part as a South Persian Rifles officer in the Khān-e Zinyān episode.

In the same manner, Mushīr al-Mulk, the Persian foreign representative in London, was thought of as an
innocuous, friendly Anglophil by the Foreign Office officials, while his correspondence shows a constant urgency in trying to direct Tehran in their negotiations with the British by pointing to the weaknesses and strengths of the British position. The same could be said of Miftah al-Saltaneh, Persian representative in Delhi (who succeeded Mushīr al-Mulk in London in 1922/3), though he had a very good rapport with Hamilton-Grant and appeared to make his viewpoints understood and appreciated by the Foreign Department of the Government of India.

This material also demonstrates that despite their promotion to the offices of Sadr-e A'zam as candidates either of the Russian or British Legations, or both, Persian politicians generally and behind the scenes, tended to show greater unity of thought and intention in trying to evade Anglo-Russian pressure than appears to be the case as shown by the minister's reports from Tehran. The preliminary reactions of Vusūgh al-Dauleh's cabinet to the official commitments of the Sipahdār agreement in 1916, followed by those of A'la al-Saltaneh's cabinet, were indicative of this tendency.

On the basis of this material, it may be possible to obtain a clearer picture of the ideas and personal relationships of Persian officials, between themselves and between them and the foreign powers in Tehran and the provinces. This may allow us, firstly, to clarify some of the inconsistencies and obscurities inherent in the behaviour of some Persian officials, as well as shed more light on the contradictory pressures bearing upon them. Secondly, it may minimise the tendency, encouraged to no small degree by the British sources, in themselves, to categorise individuals too rigidly.
in terms of Anglophils, Russophils, or as was the case after the 1919 agreement, by the Persian-invented term Pulophils, and view or assess their rôles from these standpoints. Thirdly, following the implications of the first and second points, more research in this area may discourage the tendency, prominent among Persian writers of history, to view history from a personal rather than an objective angle, and to attach less specific importance to the rôle of individuals in the shaping of the history of this and other eras.

Nevertheless, in this context, another large category of material has, for the most part, been ignored in Persian historiography, namely, private family papers. The difficulties of location and access as well as the exigencies of time have regretfully prevented use of these in this study. The papers, for instance, of the dominant personalities of this period, both at Tehran, Fars and Kirman, especially those of the Farmān Farmā'īāns and the Qavāmī families, if available and accessible to future students, should elucidate more aspects of the history of Fars and of their own individual rôles. The recollections, memoirs, diaries, or letters, of those who took part in the muhājirat, among them those perhaps of the Nizām-Māfī, Samī'ī, and Ardalān families, would contribute to a clearer understanding of that episode and perhaps on studies of nationalism. It is encouraging to note that Sādīd al-Saltanah's private collection has been catalogued and is the subject of a brief survey by Īraj Afshār in his article "Āsār-e Sādīd al-Saltanah-ye Kabābī" (Rāhnamā-ye Kitāb, year 18, no. 1-3, Spring 1334 sh., pp. 55-57); that more concern is being shown by Persians themselves on Persian historiography.
and genuine concern for the search and exposition of unpublished material.

In general, one of the drawbacks of historical writing in Iran is the lack of material revealing the private hopes and aspirations, fears and failures of individuals caught up in the maelstrom of events. It is usually said that these deeper feelings were rarely shown in written form and if they were, have not survived. But such a proposition has not been fully tested and until a systematic attempt is made to collect, clarify, and catalogue private papers of all sorts (on a non-commercial basis), yet another potential source of material is outside the reach of those interested. Perhaps it is only through the creation of an organisation such as the National Register of Archives that this sad situation could be remedied. It is hoped that the discussions on this issue which have continued for some years will eventually bear positive results.

Despite the vagaries of many owners of private collections, it has been possible to tap a potentially rich vein of private recollections, viz., interviews. These have been made use of in this study to supplement other evidence. Their value is that they help toward a better grasp or sense of the atmosphere of the times; of the personal views and opinions of those interviewed (despite the omissions and inhibitions of caution), as well as indicating the values held at the time. For instance, across the passage of even only half a century, it is difficult to grasp the different  

values placed at that time on the dignity and sanctity of human life. Yet it is clear from these interviews that there was an acceptance of early death in all its forms, whether in battle, or fights or skirmishes, or through punishment (e.g. being blown from the muzzle of a cannon or being walled up alive), or through disease, epidemic, and starvation. The degree of deprivation, the oppression and corruption of central and local officials and other persons commanding much power and influence, and the depopulation and impoverishment of the natural resources of the countryside, make a telling comparison with conditions today and can be more vividly sensed in these personal memories. These also provide a deeper perspective toward an understanding of the harshness of the terrain, the isolation of village life, and the brutality of the extremes of climate, none of which can be so readily imagined today. These interviews are also of value in relation to the field of original dialects and folklore studies, which is currently receiving more active attention in Iran by the Iranians themselves and some western specialists. The common use of words such as manvar, denoting battleship (man of war) and bulûn (aeroplane-balloon), nimcheh-Martin (Martini pistols), mowzir (Mauser Rifles), showkhîn (sniping-shabikhûn), are indicative of foreign influence while some of the songs and poems written then and afterwards are interesting also in this respect; for example, one written to commemorate the death in action (1915) against the British of Ra'îs Ali Dilvârî, beginning with the words "Pawdîn! Pawdîn! . . ." (spelt Pāvādîn--Arise! Rebel! . . .). Nevertheless, material so subjective and personal such as interviews must be used with great caution and sensitivity.
Persian newspapers and journals, in so far as they reflected the policies or opinions of their editors, are an effective and important source for demonstrating reaction to the South Persian Rifles. Yet, in comparison to their value, reflecting public opinion and attitudes to northern events, they are of secondary importance. While the Majlis and Millî libraries possess a fair collection of the more well-known newspapers published in Tehran at the time, newspapers published locally, such as Diğân (Kirman) and Hayvat (Shiraz), are difficult to locate in their complete runs. Research is still continuing of local and other relevant newspapers and publications of the period, such as Junûb, Asr-e Āzâdî, Asr-e Jadîd, Muzaffarî, Fârs, and Sitâreh-ye Īrân. This work cites newspapers in so far as they have been found in the Iranian and British archives but does not make extensive use of them.

Of Persian published primary and secondary source material, the late Rukn-Zâdeh Ādamiyat is almost the only author who has drawn specific attention to the plight of the Tangistânî and Dashti during the pre-war and war years, the rôle of the Qashqâ'î and Kâzirûni, the Democrat faction, and Persian gendarmerie officers in the south and British activity here in general. His books, however, fall between fact and fiction, supplemented by reference to unpublished material, some of which he illustrates in Fârs va Jang-e Bain al-Milal. Those sections of his book which are documented are of value, since much of his material was drawn from his own private collection which, from his own statement, the nature of the primary material used and some of the documents from his private collection which I did see, makes the work essential
reading and where possible, a source of comparative reference, for the history of the South Persian Rifles. It is to be hoped that those interested will continue to research his private papers and produce useful results. Mukhbir al-Saltaneh left Shiraz before the advent of the South Persian Rifles and so his book, Khātirāt va Khatarāt, is more relevant to the Gendarmerie era though quite disappointing in terms of this and information on Fars as a whole. Sadīd al-Saltaneh Kabābī's interesting work, Bandar Abbās va Khalij-e Fārs, devotes one or two pages to the South Persian Rifles in passing. His private collection should prove to be a very important source for the study of the southern regions during and just after the war. In the same manner the papers of some of the khāns of the Bushīhr hinterland should be of interest.

For the rest, the recollections and histories of contemporaries, written or published just after the First World War or immediately after the Second World War, such as Daulat-Ābādī, Bahramī, Sipihr, Hallāj, Bahār, Mustaufī, Afshār, with a few between the wars, concentrate more on events in the north and the capital, carrying history into more modern times and hardly anything of significance is to be found in them on the South Persian Rifles and Fars in general. They have been used in this study to illustrate aspects of the muhājirat episode and reaction to the Sipahdār agreement, and of course, at a later stage, to the 1919 agreement and events generally between 1919 and 1921. Their quality is either too biased or circumlocquacious and their anti-Britishism should be seen in perspective.

Muvarikh al-Dauleh Sipihr's Īrān dar Jang-e Buzurg placed against the Persian and British unpublished material
shows he has made extensive use of it, along with his personal diaries for the war period. His work is a disorganised compilation of material selected at random and recounting many aspects of the war in Persia and even India and Russia. It succeeds in some degree in giving an impartial account in so far as the material is quoted verbatim, but the bias is clearly in favour of the Germans. Covering so much ground, it obviously lacks any central theme but it is not without interest in its incidental deductions which may be derived from reading it. For instance, of the impact of external war events on the situation in Tehran, of how, whenever German prestige ran high, politicians termed both Russophil and Anglophil would increase their visits to Siphihr at home or at the German Legation where he served as first secretary, for the purpose of more information and to demonstrate the willingness to shift sides in the general vicissitudes and fickleness of political allegiances.

The publications of later accounts of the First World War and its aftermath, such as those of Fātimī, Makkī, and Gurgānī, make use of Persian and European published and unpublished sources and are mainly critical accounts of the 1919 agreement and studies of the impact of imperialism and the Russian revolution on the politics of northern events. They, along with the books mentioned above and others, are important in so far as they do provide the background information of the politico-military scene after the Russian revolution, which has been related in this study to its impact on British policy and hence, indirectly or directly, on the history of the last years of the South Persian Rifles. Otherwise, apart from Ādamīyat, and from scraps of information
found on the subject in various biographical works of reference, e.g., those of Bāmdād, R. Ādamī, Safā'ī, Sāsānī, etc.; from very general military histories, e.g., Yikṛanglān, Qūzānlū, Parvīz Afsar; from the valuable geo-military history of All Razmārā and general works of reference on tribes; brief recollections sometimes found in such journals as Vahīd, Khatīrāt-e Vahīd, Yaghmā, Armaghān, Sālınāmeh-ve Dunvā, Ittilā'āt-e Māhāneh, Kāvēh, Āyandeh, the situation in Fars, much less that of the South Persian Rifles, has not been the subject of any detailed study by Persian writers.

More regional and monographic studies of Fars and Kirman by Persians themselves, such as those of Jalāl Āl-e Ahmad and Ghulām Husain Sā'īdī, pertaining to the Persian Gulf, shores, hinterland, and islands are needed to give more insight into present and past socio-anthropological conditions and advance more knowledge on this era of southern Persian history.

Works written by Persians and others on this subject in European languages are more satisfactory though, again, far from adequate. Kazemzadeh has brought to notice the rôle of the Cossack Brigade, and his book, Russia and Britain in Persia, 1864-1914, provides a good background for the diplomatic study of the world war period. The published first-hand accounts of Hassan Arfat, Under Five Shahs, interesting in itself, is also useful and while those of the various heads of military missions in northern and western Persia naturally focus attention on their respective region of operations, those of the eastern mission, e.g., Dickson and Dyer, say something about events in Sistan, Baluchistan and Makran with an eye on Fars and the South Persian Rifles. O'Connor's Beyond the Frontier is less

1 J. Āl-e Ahmad, Jazīreh-ye Khārīk (Tehran, 1339 sh.).
2 Ghulām Husain Sā'īdī, Ahl-e Ḥavā (Tehran, 1345 sh.).
informative than it promised and Skrine's book is more import-
and for the later period. These and the more interesting work
of Hale, consul in Birjand during the war, as well as the works
produced by the commanders and participants in the military
missions, e.g., Douglas Haig on the Bushihr-Kâzirûn operations,
Rothwell on the fights with the southern khâns and the topo-
ographical and other information contained in Routh's
A D.A.D.O.S. in Persia, widen one's perspective of conditions
in the provinces, and generally, on the impact of war and
British attitudes.

German activity in Persia and their relations with
Persian Democrats, has been fully covered by Gehrke, Persien
in der Deutschen Orientpolitik, using the diaries and papers
or interviews of the dominant German personalities in the
German expedition to Persia and Afghanistan, as well as German
and other unpublished material. Some of these diaries, in
their French and English translations, can be found among the
War Office and Foreign Office files. The records of the German
Foreign Ministry, except for the parts of the Unternehmungen
series, which are lodged in microfilm form at the Public Records
Office, have not been used in this study. Nor have those of
the French archives, as they do not appear to contain any
important or directly significant information on Fars and the
South Persian Rifles, though they should be included in studies
of the foreign policy of post-war years. An interesting supple-
ment to the space devoted in Gehrke's work on Wassmuss's
activities in south Persia is D. von Mikusch's, Wassmuss, der
Deutsche Lawrence and Christopher Sykes's, Wassmuss, the German
Lawrence, the latter drawing on interviews and Sykes's own
knowledge of the area, gives a deserved appreciation of this
strange, highly intelligent, sympathetic personality, whose charisma still lingers in the memory of those who knew him and who is still recalled by Tangistānī and Dashtīs with affection and admiration. Peter Avery's general history deals in some detail with the muhājirat, using Persian and British secondary sources and attempts to give a sympathetic account of the Persian point of view.

Among more modern works may be mentioned P. Oberling's *The Qashqā'i Nomads of Fars*, with its excellent bibliography, which deals competently and interestingly with the Qashqā'ī, prior to and following the First World War but relies almost entirely on Sykes for their rôle during the war. Gene Garthwaite's published studies on the Bakhtīārī (and his thesis) provide the basis for a comparison between the British dealings with the Bakhtīārī khāns and the Qashqā'ī. The publications of the Government of India on Fars and the tribes, e.g., Wilson's Report on Fars, H.G. Chick's "Past History of the Qashqais and their Khans", included in this last work, together with the observations and information contained in Demorgny's books and articles, are all informative from the political and socio-anthropological angle. These, together with the specific anthropological works of Field, Miles, Barth, Monteil, Abd Allah Qashqā'ī, and others, helped toward identifying some of the more obscure sub-factions of greater or lesser tribes of Fars, mentioned in this study. Colliver Rice's work told something about bandits and brigands in passing, though research is still proceeding on this subject as a source or channel through which to study the rôle of the South Persian Rifles from a local angle, beside the importance of banditry in the context of the larger framework of local life, to

Not much attention has been given to the rôle of the Shah in the interplay of events during this period. The symbolic significance of his position as head of state and the attention paid to it during the years when the aspirations of the Constitutionalists violently fluctuated, deserve a closer scrutiny. Makki's biography of Ahmad Shah, though sympathetic, is tendentious and shallow. A more valuable and highly stimulating study is Khwâjeh-Nûrî's, *Bâzîgarân-e Asr-e Talâ'î*, which deals for the most part with the aftermath of the coup and later years.

Ervand Abrahamian's research and his attempt to bring twentieth century Iranian history into a wider framework of socio-political analysis, though still tentative, represents an original and bold departure.¹

A Soviet viewpoint of Anglo-Russian activities in Persia during the First World War is projected in the works of Miroshnikov, who in the preface of his *Iran in World War I* outlines and describes the works of other Soviet historians on Iran and uses them and the central state archives of the Red Army in Moscow in his work. Miroshnikov analyses the rôle of Anglo-Indian troops in Persia from 1914 to 1920 and challenges most of the contemporary and later British interpretations that the chief motivation of British armed intervention in Persia was the German threat. In so far as the South Persian Rifles is concerned, Miroshnikov does not deal

with it in detail or depth but since the force falls under the general framework of his theory, it raises some fundamental comments which are dealt with in the conclusion of this thesis.

Of the theses consulted or used, Garthwaite's on the Bakhtiari is of value for this period, particularly for its details and comprehension of the process of increasing British involvement and intervention in south Persia through the channel of tribal affairs. D.W. Sweet's analysis of the origins and early workings of the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, from its Asian rather than European angle, makes good comparative reading against the works of other authorities on this subject, such as those of Rose Greaves. Cohen's study challenges in some degree the conventional interpretations of the despatch of the Indian Expeditionary Force "D" to Mesopotamia in 1914 and is therefore important to the examination of the immediate circumstances leading to the launching of the Sykes Mission. Finally, Novar's work, written before the British archives were fully opened to the public, in spite of some factual mistakes (such as mistaking one Persian head of cabinet for another) and though failing to handle the place of the South Persian Rifles in the formulation of Britain's Persian policy during the period 1916-1921, nevertheless gives a fairly coherent and complete account of Anglo-Russian involvement in northern Persia generally, and is important for its full use of the American consular archives to demonstrate and analyse the American viewpoint.

Ultimately, it may be said that despite the inadequacies of secondary sources, both Persian and European, the non-availability of Persian private papers and the inaccessibility of many of the official archives, as well as the
dangers of over-reliance on the vast amount of carefully preserved records in Britain, there is sufficient material to warrant a careful study of some aspects of this period.

This would shed more light on several areas which demand a fuller treatment, namely, the significance of the *muhājirat* episode, the rôle of the central versus provincial authority and their interaction under the impact of foreign influence and intervention; the rôle of the Democrats in the provinces; the functions and nature of provincial administration and civil institutions; and the effects of domestic upheavals on different levels and categories of Iranian society, *tujjār, a'īyān, ulama*, the urban poor, peasants, and tribes, as on virtually untouched themes such as the status and position of women and their activities during this period.

Yet the study of the South Persian Rifles, apart from its own intrinsic value as a phase in British involvement in Persia, ultimately provides a different perspective and vantage point from which to evaluate events in the south as a contribution to the internal history of these crucial years. It provides a background to and elucidates the changes that heralded the collapse of the 1919 agreement and the *coup d'état* of 1921, within the wider context of Great Power hegemony and Persia's response to it.
Chapter I

THE GENESIS OF THE SOUTH PERSIAN RIFLES

1. Anglo-Russian Relations

On 16 March 1916, Brigadier-General Sykes, heading a mission to southern Persia, disembarked at the port of Bandar Abbas accompanied by an escort of British and Indian officers and n.c.o's with two old muzzle-loaders. The object of the mission in its official capacity and according to Sykes himself was "to create a force [of local recruits] for the restoration of law and order in the interests of the Persian and the British Governments." This was by no means the first time that the British Government had found it necessary to land small contingents of men and arms on Persia's

1 Percy Molesworth (Sir) C.M.G. (1902), K.C.I.E. (1915), C.B. (1919), R.E.S. (1934); b. 1867; educated at Rugby and Sandhurst; passed into a British Cavalry Regiment then stationed in the Punjab and began the first of his exploration journeys in Persia in 1893; took part in the Perso-Baluch Boundary Commission in 1895-6; served in the South African War, 1899-1901; joined the Indian Government's Foreign and Political Department formally and assisted in the foundation of the Sistan consulate; British Consul for Kirman and Persian Baluchistan up to 1905; Consul-General and Agent to the Government of India in Khurasan 1905-13; Acting Consul-General at Kashgar in Chinese Turkistan when called to India in late 1915 to head a mission to Persia; granted rank of Brigadier-General and Inspector-General of the South Persian Rifles in spring 1916; served in this capacity in Persia from 1916-Dec. 1918; retired in Sep. 1920; d. 1945.


3 Ibid., p. 452.
southern shores to deal with local disorder. The singular feature of the Sykes Mission was that it was as much a political as a military venture, the direction and control of which came to rest more with the Imperial than the Indian Government. Furthermore, judging by the unprecedented landing reception prepared by the Persian Government representatives in Bandar Abbas, the mission, in spite of its British character, appeared to have received the official blessing of the Persian Government of the day.¹

In many ways the scene had already been set for the formation of a British controlled force in Persia. Great Britain's political and economic interests and involvements in southern Persia and the Gulf had steadily increased. There was a continuous need to uphold her prestige in these regions as much as to afford maximum protection to her interests. At about the turn of the year 1915, the combined effects of British set-backs in Mesopotamia, mounting disorder in Persia, the absence of any effective local military and political resources upon which Britain could properly rely, and lastly, Imperial Russia's enlarged presence in Persia, caused a direct

¹ Sykes to A.H. Grant (Secretary to the Foreign Department of the Government of India), copy of letter, confidential, dated 17 April 1916. Private papers of Sir P. Sykes in possession of his son, Mr. Frank Sykes. Extracts from this letter in Sykes to Grant, tel. 2045-6, 17 Apr. 1916, p. 1443, India Office Library (London), Political Department, Political and Secret Subject Files, vol. 579, file 160 of 1916 (hereafter in accordance with the India Office system, L/P & S/10/579, 160/16). Sykes gives an elaborate account of the reception ceremony which included an eleven-gun salute; the bazaar and the customs house were apparently shut "in honour of the occasion"; at the head of the crowd of Bandar Abbas onlookers stood the town's notables, including the Governor of the Southern Ports, Mirzā Ahmad Khan Daryā Begī, his deputy and representatives of the Bushāhr and Bandar Abbas consulates. Mrs. Arminūhi Mināssīān-Shāmir, who witnessed the occasion, recalls that the Armenians and generally the Christians in the crowd were very elated by the arrival of a British mission and welcomed it ashore with enthusiasm while the average spectator looked on quietly. (Interview, Isfahan, 18 Dec. 1971).
diminution, albeit temporarily, of British prestige and influence. This brought about a momentary weakening of her control over domestic affairs in Persia. The situation warranted an impressive demonstration of strength, if only to provide a backing to British arms in Mesopotamia; also to restore law and order and to counter-balance Russian prestige and influence in Persia.

These questions did not in themselves represent new features in British thoughts over Persia at this particular point in time. They were indeed inextricably bound in their origin and development to the impact of the long-standing rivalry with Russia in Persia. Over and above other considerations, it was chiefly Persia's position in relation to the North West frontier of India which had moulded and guided this policy at least up to the years leading to the outbreak of World War I, and before Persia's oil began to have important bearing on the formulation of British foreign policy. The assumption, justifiable or not, was that Imperial Russia had designs on India and the Indian Ocean through Persia's land routes and the Gulf. In theory, this called for a policy which declared that Persia should be maintained as a neutral buffer state and that she should be helped and strengthened to withstand attacks on her frontiers. The theory, however, camouflaged the practical course of British policy in Persia which never seriously pursued the question of supporting or strengthening Persia—with or without the co-operation of Russia. Instead, it opted increasingly for the acceptance, albeit reluctantly, of the monopolistic nature of Russia's position in the north of Persia. So long as the Russian presence was confined to the north, Britain strove quietly
to develop and protect her own concerns in the south and to maintain her position of dominance on the Gulf and, prior to the oil era, in the eastern provinces of the country; in short, in all those areas where her interests were deemed to be greatest. These interests, which were described by Lord Curzon in 1899 to be political, strategical, commercial, and telegraphic, were mainly Indian in inception and continued to be largely so up to the World War.

By then, however, the importance of southern Persia had greatly increased. In 1908, oil was struck in the province of Khuzistan. A year later, the Anglo-Persian Oil Company was formed and began to extend the search for oil and to provide the necessary requirements for its trade. The


3 Hurewitz, op. cit., I, 249-251.
British Government now began to take an active interest in the expansion of this enterprise. In 1909, the first flotilla of ocean-going destroyers wholly dependent on oil was created and oil began to be increasingly used in coal-burning battleships and cruisers. In 1914, the British Government, at the initiative of the Admiralty, became the largest shareholder of the A.P.O.C.¹

This addition to British interests in south Persia entailed fresh responsibilities and stricter commitments on a governmental level. Moreover, mainly as a result of changes in great power alliances in Europe and partly in order to regulate Asiatic affairs,² Russia and Britain had modified their relationship in Persia by signing a convention in August 1907, which among other things divided Persia into two spheres of influence: the Russian line began at Qasr-e Shirin and ran across through Isfahan, Yazd, Kakhk, ending at a point on the Persian frontier where the Russo-Afghanistan frontier intersected. Great Britain's line ran from the Afghanistan frontier by way of Gazik, Birjand, Kirman, and ended at Bandar Abbas. That portion of the country which was neither included in the Russian or British spheres of influence was termed "neutral".³

² Zara Steiner, The Foreign Office and British Foreign Policy 1898-1914 (London, 1968), p. 95. Much has been written on the reasons which motivated the Anglo-Russian détente. For an interesting exposition of the various interpretations which basically stress either the European or the Asian aspects of the détente, see David W. Sweet, "British Foreign Policy 1907-1909; the Elaboration of the Russian Convention" (unpublished D.Phil. dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1971). Sweet, himself, attempts to view the convention from the Asian standpoint, pp. 34-90, 126-195.
³ Hurewitz, op. cit., I, 266-267. Besides Persia, the convention also concerned Afghanistan and Tibet.
The area where oil was discovered lay outside those regions which, according to the convention, comprised the British zone of influence. But the need to protect the developing industry resulted in a steady extension of His Majesty's Government's activities into the neutral zone. Thus, from the Indian no less than the Imperial Government's standpoints, anything which upset the orderly run of affairs in the southern regions was potentially injurious to British prestige and influence and could in turn upset the balance of power vis-à-vis Russia. This balance, despite the rapprochement of 1907, proved to be a delicate one to maintain, specially during the years 1909 to 1912 when the Persian constitutionalists were struggling to maintain their ground against the forces of royalists and the pressures of Anglo-Russian interference. Neither did the détente lessen tensions and rivalry between the two powers in the interlude before the outbreak of World War I, nor during the war years, in view of the increasingly aggressive drive of Russia in her own sphere of influence and beyond it.¹

The Persian Constitutional Revolution of 1906 to 1909 and the disturbances it had unleashed throughout the greater part of the country had provided apple opportunity for Russia to interfere in the political and military affairs of the country.² Russian troops had remained in the north

¹ Both Greaves and Sweet demonstrate the extent to which Britain was committed to the logic of the convention. Grey's efforts to maintain the entente with Russia were incompatible with, indeed made nonsense of, the promise to maintain the "integrity and independence" of Persia. R. Greaves, "Some Aspects of the Anglo-Russian Convention and its Working in Persia, 1907-1914", part II, op. cit.; D. Sweet, op. cit., 89-90, passim.

² This interference was facilitated through Russia's virtual control of the Persian Cossack Brigade. This Brigade was raised and organised by the year 1879 at the request of Ḥasir
after their arrival at the time of the Tabriz revolt in 1909. At the end of 1911, their number was approximately ten thousand and in the years before the war this number was quietly on the increase.

Sir Walter Townley, who never tended to entertain any mild feelings towards the Russians, showed concern at what appeared to him to be the "virtual occupation of the province [of Azarbaijan] in a manner that is at variance with the spirit of the Anglo-Russian understanding . . ." The Russians were buying land through their agents and Russian subjects and were more or less in control of the administration. Townley thought that they aimed at the decentralization of the province through the elimination of all Persian officials who were too closely connected with or too loyal to the Central Government, e.g., the Belgian team of financial administrators who worked under trying conditions; Sharif al-Dauleh (Mirza al-Din Shahan from the Tsar. Early British objections to the employment of Russian Officers in Persia did not come to anything. The Brigade was nominally under the control of the Persian Government but it came to fall increasingly under direct Russian control. The latter were largely financing it and nominating its successive commanders who took their orders from the Russian Legation in Tehran. F. Kazemzadeh, "The Origin and Early Development of the Persian Cossack Brigade" in The American Slavic and East European Review, 15 Oct. 1956, pp. 351-363; idem, Russia and Britain in Persia 1864-1914, pp. 165-166; M. Pavlovitch, "La Brigade Russe en Perse", RMM, XV (1911), 322-338; V. Kosogovskii, Iz Tegezanskogo dnernika Polkovnika V.A. Kosogovskogo (Moscow, 1960), abridged Persian translation by A. Jilil, Khattirat-e Kulunil Kasaghvski (Tehran, 1344/1965).

1 During 1913-4, there were 2,000 Russian troops in Tabriz, 1,500 in Urmieh, 2,000 in Ardabil. Sir Walter Townley (British Minister in Persia 1912-July 1915) to Sir Edward Grey, "Annual Report for year ending March 21st, 1914, Persia", confidential (10403), printed for use of F.O., despatch no. 55, Tehran, April 1914. L/P & S/18/C144 (India Office Library, Political and Secret Memoranda).

2 Ibid.

3 For a largely sympathetic account of the members of the Belgian Financial mission to Persia, based on French documents in Belgium, see Annette Destrée, "Assistance Technique en Perse 1898-1914", Correspondence d'Orient, no. 11, 5th International Congress of Arabists and Islamists (Brussels, 1970).
'Ali Muhammad Khan Vazir Zadeh, the former Karguzar, also could not hold his position and left. There was evidence too that the Russians were repeating the same processes further south, notably in Isfahan. Furthermore, there were murmurings in the air that Russia was seriously thinking in terms of securing an increase in the strength of what Sir George Clerk (head of the new War Department of the Foreign Office from 1914) called those "costly and notoriously inefficient Persian Cossacks." The Russians had also not watched British activity with entire passivity. When His Majesty's Government invested the sum of £2,000,000 in the oil company, Russia herself appeared to attach a great price to the oil bearing districts in the neighbourhood of Kirmanshah. The British ambassador in Petrograd, Sir George Buchanan, was apparently severely reproached by Sazonov, the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, on this subject. The latter was reported to have said that "action taken by His Majesty's Government had changed the whole character of the concession." Buchanan reported further that Sazonov "did not want oil (Russia had plenty to spare) but it was a different matter with those near Kirmanshah. Russian public opinion would never tolerate an arrangement under which a company controlled by British government could operate in the Russian zone and virtually absorb the whole of the neutral zone. He did not want to make

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1 The Karguzar was an official appointed by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to act as mediator between foreign communities in the provinces and the Central Government. He reported and was responsible directly to the said Ministry.


3 Greaves, op. cit., p. 305.
difficulties, but he must ask us to state publicly that we would not avail ourselves of all the rights conferred on D'Arcy by the concession."

There was no question of breaking the détente with Russia nor of restraining Russian moves and motives unless Britain herself was prepared to limit her activities to her own sphere of influence in the south. The maintenance of the "independence and integrity" of Persia, a pledge which the two great powers had committed themselves to in the convention, was by now a mere "fiction" in the views of Clerk. The creation of a Russian and British sphere of influence was seen to have been in essence a "self-denying ordinance" by which each government pledged itself not to seek for concessions in the other's sphere. By the end of 1914 and especially during the early war years, the critical point of the whole question was that both powers had in one respect or another trespassed into the neutral zone and could not in reality expect the other to pursue or exercise this "self-denying ordinance." If Great Britain was to have a free hand in the neutral zone, Russia

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1 "Memorandum respecting the Revision of the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907", prepared by the F.O., no. 10710, Persia, confidential, L/P & S/18/C154.

2 "Memorandum respecting the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907", confidential, Printed for the use of the F.O. with notes by Mr. George Barclay, 29 Jan. 1908, L/P & S/18/C140.

3 The Indian Government and the F.O. on the whole seriously believed that Russia was the main aggressor and that Great Britain had kept to the "spirit of the Convention." This could be said to be true in as far as the British Government generally preferred to control the south through the Persian Government if possible, while Russia aimed at controlling the central government itself, and thus the whole country. See "Memorandum on the Revision of the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907", prepared by Sir Arthur Hirtzel (Political Secretary, India Office), with additional notes by General Sir Edmund Barrow (Military Secretary, India Office), secret, Aug. 1915, L/P & S/18/C142. Yet Britain's passive attitude toward Russian action in Persia was in itself a contributor to the violation and not the defence of the "independence and integrity" of Persia.
had to be compensated either by sharing the area or by being granted compensation elsewhere. The chief dilemma in these years, as far as the security and prosperity of Britain's interests were concerned, was how to bring about a change in Russia's attitude and methods and how to guard against any future Russian penetration of the central and southern regions of the country, without incurring on any vast scale the political and military expenditure and responsibility of territorial partition or occupation. The war situation provided the opportunity for solving part of this problem. In the summer of 1914, the Tsar approached Grey with proposals respecting the partition of the neutral zone and the possible revision of the 1907 agreement. The Foreign Office in general agreed in principle that negotiations on the subject ought to begin and continue until a definite line of policy could be adopted once and for all. Clearly, as far as Persia was concerned, the convention had, by the start of war, outlived its purpose; with the outbreak of hostilities it received its coup de grace.

Meanwhile, both powers facing the same enemy in the West and the East, rushed to the defence of their frontiers of interests in and beyond Persia. Persia declared herself neutral. Russia moved detachments of her frontier troops to protect her Caucasian flanks against the forward thrusts of Turkish forces towards Azarbaijan and the Government of India, even before the mobilisation of the Turkish 6th Army in Mesopotamia, sent an expeditionary force to the head of the
Persian Gulf and occupied Fao and Basrah (22 November) after a hard fought action at Küt al-Zain. The chief motives of the Mesopotamia Expeditionary Force "D" are open to debate. Recent studies tend to place less stress on the conventional interpretation that the main objective of the force was to safeguard the oilfields of western Persia and the Gulf outlets. Instead they demonstrate that, at least in 1914, political factors arising from local requirements, e.g., the need to strengthen Britain's local prestige among the Arab chiefs on both sides of the Gulf and her commercial interests in Mesopotamia, were more instrumental in the motivation of the M.E.F. "D". This appears to have been the case, at least as applied to the situation up to the end of 1914.

Once the Expedition set off, however, the affairs of Mesopotamia became inextricably bound to those of Persia and profoundly affected the attitude of the Government of India toward the "Persian" question. Initially, the M.E.F. "D" did well in its confrontation with Turkish forces. But for various reasons, not least because of the improvised nature of its organisational structure, serious difficulties began to affect it. The object of capturing Baghdad proved


2 General Sir Douglas Haig to H. Asquith, letter, personal, General Headquarters, British Army, France, 5 Oct. 1915, enclosing Hamilton Gordon's memorandum on the Army Council (India) and adding his own notes on the breakdown of the Indian Army in Mesopotamia. He points out that India was faced with a large portion of its fighting strength gone to Europe at the start of war and neither the General Staff nor
to be immature. Townshend, the Officer Commanding the Force, began to retrace his steps back to Kut al-Ammarah, after the battle of Ctesiphon in late November 1915. Here British troops remained in a state of siege for five months beginning on 3 December 1915.

In Persia itself, disorder had taken a sharp turn for the worse and British prestige appeared to be at its lowest ebb. This was partly due to the successes of Turco-German arms outside Persia and partly to the initial successes of German intrigue in the country itself, which together with a certain amount of genuine nationalism heightened tensions and hostility towards both Russia and Britain. When in the autumn and winter of 1915 the greater part of the Persian gendarmerie force under the command of Swedish and Persian officers linked arms with nationalist and pro-German elements in an attempt to break Persian neutrality in favour of the Central Powers, direct intervention on the part of the Allies became inevitable.

2. The Government Gendarmerie

The gendarmerie was in many respects the last expedient through which His Majesty's Government hoped to maintain stability in the central and southern provinces of Persia. Its creation was in itself representative of the kind of force which the Foreign Office and the Indian Government wished to have at their disposal in order to combat
lawlessness in the south. This was all the more necessary because the Persian Government itself lacked the necessary means to extend her authority and control over all the provinces of the country. Fars, Kirman, Sistan with its districts of Makran and Baluchistan, difficult to control from the Centre at the best of times, became, after a spell of close co-operation with Tehran during the constitutional struggle, even more isolated from the capital. In the above provinces lay some of the great routes linking the central trade depots of the country to India in the east and to the ports of the Persian Gulf. The most important of these routes was the one linking Shiraz to Bushihr, a distance of some 180 miles over difficult terrain which passed in several mountain stages through the valley and town of Kāzirūn. Much of the country's exports were shipped from Bushihr and this port itself fed Shiraz, capital of the province of Fars and the centre from where various commodities were distributed to different districts. The port of Bandar Abbas which in 1914 fell within the extreme south-eastern administrative boundary of Fars was also an important import-export centre on which the southern districts of Kirman and other importing and distributing centres like Bam and Sīrjān drew for their foreign supplies.

In Fars lay the winter and summer pastures of the Qashqā'i and Khamseh tribes' confederacy, while the rural population of both Fars and Kirman was made up of the settled

population of cultivators together with greater and smaller nomads or quasi-nomads whose main means of livelihood was their flocks and herds supplemented by the proceeds of robbery. Nomadic pastoralism, agriculture, commerce, and the carpet weaving industry, especially in north Kirman and areas lying to the south and south-west of Shiraz, directly or indirectly occupied almost all the population of these two provinces. The absence of strong central control had over the years enhanced inter and intra-tribal disputes over income, land, the offices of ʿIl-khān, kalāntar, and governorships among other lesser posts and titles. The Central Government was often confused and out of touch or ignorant of conditions and the state of affairs in outlying districts, if not of actual provincial centres. Her governors-general and governors, however well-intentioned and determined to perform their tasks in an impartial and efficient manner initially, soon found themselves entangled in a mesh of inter-tribal feuds and the intrigues of local politics, without much backing from the Centre. The experiences of at least three governors-general of Fars in succession, namely, Sahām al-Dauleh (1910-1911), Nizām al-Saltaneh Māfī (1911-1912), and Mukhbir al-Saltaneh (1912-1915), were a witness to this. The political situation, indeed, appeared to be dominated at all times by friction and war between the Khamseh tribe, headed by Qavām al-Mulk and the Qashqāʾī, led by Saulat al-Dauleh. ¹ One of the difficulties of the governors-general appears to have been the lack of any clear definition of the limits of their political and administrative

jurisdiction; especially when it came to tribal districts and localities. Tribal chiefs, it appeared, preferred to ignore the authority of the governors-general and settle their own disputes with direct reference to the centre if necessary.

In the autumn of 1912, for instance, there were complaints against Saulat al-Dauleh's high-handedness by the İl-Begi of the tribe, Saulat al-Saltaneh, and several Qashqâ'i kalântar including Ali Panâh Kikhâ, kalântar of the Darrihshûrî (Darashûlî). They had asked the governor-general to intervene on their behalf. Despite repeated letters and directives from the latter to Saulat al-Dauleh, there was a deadlock. The İl-khân held fast to his opinion that lesser members of his tribe should not need a go-between to settle their disputes, should not carry their case elsewhere, and should accept the rulings of the İl-khân himself.¹

In the process of these turbulent years, violence and brigandry had flourished and with them the extortion of illegal or excessive tolls, taxes, and protection money on both major and minor trade routes which fell into the hands of heads of tribes. Tracts of land were auctioned off; transport costs rose steeply; tribes imposed levies on caravans and travellers in return for the provision of road guards (tufangchî). Business invariably suffered due to the frequent closing of the great trade routes and the dangers surrounding merchants and travellers even when the roads were passable.²

¹ Ghulâm Alî to Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 15 Sep. 1913 (14 Zu al-qâ'deh 1331), Shiraz Karguzârî, no. 330, Iran archives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Vol. 47, file no. 3 (serial no. 2107/15621), 1331/1913 (hereafter referred to as IFOA, 47/3); see also A.J. Christian, "Report on the Tribes of Fars" (Simla, 1919), India Office Library, Political Dept., L/P & S/20/C185, p. 41, Arnold T. Wilson, "Military Report on Fars" (Simla, 1916), India Office Library, Military Dept., L/MIL/17/15/17, pp. 74 f.
² "Memorandum on the Situation in Southern Persia", prepared
The development of an illicit arms trade between Oman and Afghanistan through Persian territory had prompted the Indian Government to keep a small garrison at a post near the Persian frontier some miles south of Küh-e-Malik Siäh but this was not effective enough to prevent the flow of arms into Persia. In 1907, when Wilson was sent to Persia with a squadron of the Central India Horse to protect the drillers of the oil company in the south-west, he was alarmed to find that the tribes of the coast districts of the Gulf and the Qashqā'ī were better armed than either the Central Government or the Bakhtīāri. ¹ Most of the khāns of the southern districts of Fars down to the inhabitants of Makran and Baluchistan were deeply implicated in the contraband arms trade and other goods. They even maintained their own customs houses: "... in Tangistan smuggling was so rife that tea sold 40% cheaper than in the neighbouring town of Bushehr."² In Makran, enormous revenues were made from the illicit importation of rifles alone. Droughts and frequent scarcity brought further hardships and disturbances. To some British observers, the most disquieting symptoms of the state of anarchy in Fars were that villages which were formerly peaceful but had in time fallen into ruin due to tribal depredations, had taken to brigandage "as the only means of earning a living."³

² Lorimer, op. cit., p. 2610.
³ Mr Moir (Consul, Sultānābād), extracts from a report; enclosed in W.A. Smart (Consul, Shiraz) to Sir George Barclay (Minister Tehran, 1909-12), 3 Feb. 1911, no.6., L/P & S/10/163, 948/1909.
One instance of this was the case of the Kurdshulī (a sub-tribe of the Qashqāʾī) of Kurdsul village, near the Tang-e Bulāqī. The latter were plundered and robbed by the Arabs of Rizā Qulī Khān, a brigand in the vicinity of Shiraz, in September 1910, and proceeded to begin robbing for themselves. 1 On the Bushihr-Kāzirūn road, at one point, it was reported that no less than 2,000 men had sunk their capital in the purchase of just one rifle for the purpose of petty theft on the roads. 2

A kind of semi-mounted road police existed in the form of the Amnīeh in the provinces. This force was administered by local governors. The latter had also been entrusted with the upkeep of an older network of road guards or road-patrol, called the Qarāsurān. Information on the latter is scarce. They were organised in the latter part of the previous century and were supposed to receive their pay from the Centre through local chiefs and governors. In some areas, for example Khurasan, they did better than others, depending on the interest shown by the governors themselves. In this sense they more or less became part of the local khāns’ or governors’ private retinues. In Fars, they appear to have been absorbed by the prevailing anarchical conditions; many of the men adopting the professions of tufangchī or brigands. The Amnīeh did no better than the Qarāsurān in the provinces. It had its headquarters in Tehran, where, from 1909 onwards, Yiphrīm Khān was entrusted with the task of placing it on a more organised and permanent footing in the form of the

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1 Ibid.
Nazmieh, i.e., a central police organisation which would gradually extend into the provinces. The Nazmieh in Tehran worked fairly well and at one point even imposed and collected a new tax on sellers of alcohol in order to keep the organisation's finances running: a function which properly belonged to the Ministry for the Interior.

The Nizām in the provinces or the army proper of the land, which Morgan Shuster (Persia's American Treasurer-General) referred to as a "mythical corps" in 1911, appeared to have lost its functional structure. Thus, apart from the fighting forces of the tribes and those irregular troops made up of an admixture of Azarbaijanis, Armenians, Assyrians, Kurds, Persians, which the Constitutional Government managed to mobilise in times of crisis, the only efficient mobile force which the country possessed was the Cossack Brigade. But this force often hindered rather than helped the work of the Government. The only force which to any extent came to challenge the Cossacks and began to perform the government function of collecting taxes at the capital and its vicinity, was the small force of Treasury Gendarmes, created by Shuster in 1911. The Russians put an end to this force and removed Shuster from his post too.¹

It was hardly surprising therefore, that those who reaped the benefits of the breakdown of law and order, could afford to resent and then resist any attempt made by the centre or indeed any other external authority to change the situation.

At the close of the nineteenth century, perhaps partly as a reaction to the organisation of the Cossack Brigade and partly in an effort to secure the southern roads in the interest of British trade and enterprise, some thoughts had been cast by the Indian and Home authorities on the possibilities of organising southern tribes into detachments under British supervision.1 Discussions on this subject continued intermittently into the twentieth century. The détente with Russia made it less pressing to create a local force as a counterpoise to the Cossacks but the emergence of a more complex situation in south Persia and deteriorating conditions called for urgent attention. The problem posed to the British authorities was in what manner emergency situations should be met, so as to afford maximum protection to British residents in the south and maintain security on the roads in general.

1 Greaves, Persia and the Defence of India, 1884-1892, p. 11; Percy Sykes himself showed an early interest on this subject. In 1905, when he was consul in Kirman, he wrote to Hardinge (F.O.) recommending "... the formation of a mounted force in South Persia under British Officers" as a solution to the chronic state of insecurity. Sykes to Hardinge, despatch no. 20, 27 Feb. 1905, F.O. 60/698.
In 1907, it was agreed that the Government of India should always have a force ready to despatch to Persia for effective military action in times of need. The viceroy agreed. He continued to reserve the opinion, however, that the risk of sending small parties of troops into the interior of Persia was too great, and that alternative solutions should be found.¹

Disturbances being on the increase, chiefly in Bushihr and Shiraz between 1908 and 1910, the Foreign Office began to give some serious thoughts to proposals for the provision of road-guards for the southern routes. A preliminary scheme was drawn up by J.H. Bill (Acting Consul in Ahvaz) during 1909 which provided for the policing of the Bushihr-Shiraz-Isfahan road by means of several hundred *ghulāms* (drawn from the Indo-European Telegraph Dept.), well armed and mounted, under three European inspectors. Sir George Barclay added his own recommendations to the scheme and suggested that the road patrol should be carried out in sections by a force of 600 guards. They would be raised locally and organised by six officers seconded by the I.E.T.D. and that certain *khāns* should be subsidised for the purpose.² This scheme came to nothing since at about this time negotiations were being conducted in Tehran on the advance of a joint Anglo-Russian loan to the Persian Government. One of the conditions for the loan was to be the formation throughout the whole of Persia of an efficient gendarmerie force under foreign instructors. The Foreign Office, at this juncture,

² Quoted in Sir L. Mallet (Assistant Secretary, F.O.), to Secretary, Board of Trade, letter (copy) no. 47086, 3 Jan. 1910, L/P & S/10/163, 948/1909.
envisaged "the formation of a force of 1000 or 1,200 men, analogous to the Cossack Brigade" which would be commanded by a number of British officers of the Indian Army.¹ The India Office had approved while the Russians had said they had no objection "if it did not extend to points in the Russian sphere."² They proposed further, that since disorder had to be met with fast reaction, the Cossack Brigade had better increase to a division. Furthermore, if a gendarmerie was to be formed throughout the whole country, they wanted Russian military instructors in the north. In the last resort, however, both Powers agreed that it would be possible to "permit the Persian Government to employ only subaltern officers of a foreign nationality other than Russian or British."³

By August 1910, however, attacks on foreign residents and robberies on the roads became more frequent. Mr. Bill himself was attacked by robbers on 15 April, near Abadeh, and two of his Indian sowars killed.⁴ Despite the representation of the Foreign Office to the Persian Government, respecting the insecurity of the southern roads, and their adverse effects on British trade, the Persian Government could not, or did not, seriously take any measures to improve the situation. So, after full consultation with the Russians and in accordance with them, His Majesty's Government decided to

² Sir Arthur Nicolson (Ambassador, St. Petersburg 1906-10; Permanent Under-Secretary, F.O. 1910-16) to Grey, tel. no. 611, 16 Nov. 1909, L/P & S/10/163, 948/1910.
inform the Persian Government that unless order was restored on the Bushihr-Isfahan road within three months, they must insist "on the organisation of a local Persian force, officered by 8 or 10 British officers of the Indian Army for the protection of the road."¹ This note was presented on 14 October 1910. The Persian Government replied with a note on 21 October. They blamed much of the cause of the deplorable situation and of the difficulties of the new regime, on the presence of foreign troops in the country and declared that "jamais et dans aucune circonstance" could they approve of a proposal which they considered was contrary to the sovereignty of the country. A little later, on 26 December 1910, they let the Foreign Office know of the measures they were taking to cope with the problem. These included the appointment of Swedish officers for organising the gendarmerie. On 21 January 1911, the two Powers addressed another note to the Persians, softer in tone than the previous one, approving the intentions of the Persian Government, while "reserving the right" to interfere by sending in British Indian officers at any moment, should these measures prove to be inadequate.²

In March 1911, however, riots in Isfahan and Shiraz necessitated the use of troops in the interior.³ At

³ Two squadrons of the 39th C.I.H. from India reached Shiraz on 14 November followed by another two arriving on 27 November. Earlier, half a company of the 7th Rajputs, 56 R & F, and a detachment of Indian Cavalry, drawn from the reserve garrison of Bushihr, had already reached Shiraz. In addition to these, there were 70-80 Consular Guards.
about this time the Shuster crisis reached its climax at Tehran with the first Russian ultimatum of 11 November to the Persian Government followed by a second one on 29 November asking for the dismissal of Shuster. The Persian Government finally succumbed to Russian pressure.

Meanwhile the Shiraz troops clashed with the local population. Anti-foreign sentiment was rising everywhere. The Central India Horse lost a man near Kāzirūn and the consul, Smart, was wounded; seven sowars and two followers were killed. The Indian Government landed some 269 men of the 79th Carnatic infantry at Bushihr and there was talk of punitive expeditions for the opening up of the Bushihr-Shiraz road which had not been passable for some months. The Foreign Office and India were undecided about the kind of action to be taken. The troops in Shiraz remained there in a state of inactivity while British authorities could not make up their minds whether they should be maintained, relieved, or withdrawn. Finally, by January 1912, the joint Anglo-Russian loan of £200,000 had gone through. The main emphasis was that the Persian Government should proceed with the maintenance of the gendarmerie force in the south. This was already under way. The Swedish Government had agreed to send some instructors to Persia for this purpose and the latter began arriving there in the summer of 1911.

It was hoped that within 21 months a force would be organised at an approximate cost of £140,000 per annum.

For a first hand account of some of the events and glimpses of life in Shiraz, see W.A.K. Fraser's diaries (photostat copy of MSS), DS.255, Middle East Centre, St. Antony's College, Oxford. Fraser was 2nd in command of the Central India Horse. The diaries begin after he had been in Persia for about five months, "cooped up in Shiraz for most of the time," The notes preceding this period were lost during the War. The force left Shiraz in late 1913.
excluding arms and ammunition. It was to be financed mostly by the British Government and partly by the Persian Government. In the early months, all efforts were directed toward training and organisational work at the capital. Recruitment was on a voluntary basis and lasted for three years, after which contracts could be renewed. The first concern of the gendarmerie was seen to be the "prevention of the levy on caravans . . . by the tribes;" the Swedes were to evolve a scheme for securing or "grading" the Bushihr-Shiraz-Isfahan road. The nucleus of the force appeared to have been made up of what remained both of Shuster's ill-fated Treasury Gendarmes and some men and officers from the Annieh and Nazmieh police organisations.

In the provinces, as the force began to expand and regiments raised in Shiraz, Isfahan, Kirman, Bushihr, and elsewhere, the services of tribal tufangchi were drawn upon. It was also hoped that tribal levies would be enlisted for the future formation of the force's flying, i.e., mobile column. The recruits, according to Pravitz, came from all strata of the population and perhaps this mixed composition was one reason why eventually the force became very popular among the Persians. Fraser, who was in Shiraz when the first detachment of the gendarmerie was sent there from Tehran, observed that the Shirazi recruits subsequently enlisted in the force were composed of "looties, shopkeepers and villagers with an inborn

1 The average rate of exchange for the pre-war years was about 55 krans per £.
2 Hirtzel, "Notes on the Swedish Gendarmerie," 1912, L/P & S/18/C137A.
3 Major H.J. Pravitz, Från Persien i stiltje och Storm (Stockholm, 1918), pp. 60-63. Pravitz, one of the Swedish instructors, served mostly in the 3rd Gendarmerie Regiment (Shiraz) and stayed on after the troubles of 1915. According to Roland Nicolin, another Swedish instructor, who wrote a chapter on the organisation of the force in this same book, the Annieh in 1912 numbered 1,500 infantry and 800 cavalry, see p. 167.
junk of the tribesmen." And all of them appeared to be totally ignorant of fighting.\textsuperscript{1} The officer class, however, were in the majority from the north and educated.\textsuperscript{2}

The Swedish instructors worked in earnest for the first two years to promote security on the trade routes of the south and western provinces. Their successes, however, varied according to conditions in different districts as did British and Russian opinion on the usefulness of the force. The combined tasks of maintaining security on the greater and smaller trade routes, dealing with tribal feuds and brigands, and in some cases taking on the functions of local authorities, for example, that of collecting taxes, especially from the Lur of Pusht-e Kuh, posed tremendous difficulties and pressures on a group of men who hardly spoke the language on their arrival and whose touristic glimpses of Persian life and customs limited their ability to cope with the complexities of local conditions. Their difficulties were not made any easier by their own sometimes thoughtless and initially over-confident behaviour. The reception they received by the local authorities, the tribes, and people in general, was mixed.

There were those preliminary difficulties with handling the recruits. In Shiraz, Fraser wrote that the "strong measures exercised by the Swedish commander in charge proved to be useless." The Swedes had apparently no control over their recruits: 

\begin{quote}
[Siefvert] brought down from Tehran have deserted . . . there
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{1} Fraser, Diaries, 6 Aug. 1912.

\textsuperscript{2} Graham (Consul, Isfahan) to Townley, letter (copy), 28 Dec. 1914; Graham noticed that "the feeling of the men towards their Swedish Officers appeared to be unusually good." \textit{Englische Dokumente zur Erdrosselung Persiens} (Berlin, 1917), pp. 139-141 (hereafter referred to as EDEP).
is a certain amount of betting that before long the Swedes will be taking bast in the British Consulate and the odds are 100 to 1 against the Gendarmerie ever being anything but a great waste of money.\(^1\) At times too, the Swedes tackled their duties too ambitiously and blundered as a consequence.\(^2\)

In August 1912, for instance, Siefvert, in command of a small detachment of men, set off on an expedition against the Qashqā'īs towards Siākh, without telling anyone. The affray ended in total disaster for the gendarmes and Siefvert himself was gravely wounded.\(^3\)

Affairs in Fars were particularly complicated since the political situation appeared to be dominated at all times by conflicts between the Qashqā'ī and the Khamseh as far down to the southern regions of the province where the khāns of Tangistān and Dashti were hostile toward new sources of authority. The role of the Swedes and their men in the new pattern of alliances and allegiances which emerged in the general and perpetual struggle for power and income, was confusing to the observer, if not to the Swedes themselves.

Mukhbīx al-Dauléh, governor-general of Fars, was understandably hostile to a force which nominally represented the Central Government but actually fell under the control of the British Consul in Shiraz, O'Connor.\(^4\)

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1 Fraser, Diaries, 15 Apr. 1912.
2 Fraser recorded in March 1913 that the "whole of the Gendarmerie in Bushihr left en masse" because they were annoyed at some punishment meted out to one of them." Fraser, Diaries, 26 Mar. 1913.
3 Ibid., 6 Aug. 1912; cf. Per Nyström, Fem ar i Persien som Gendarm-Officer (Stockholm, 1925), pp. 177 ff. Nyström took part in the first stages of this operation.
4 Mukhbīr al-Saltāneh showed more interest in his own "army" project for Fars; see M.Q. Hidāyat Mukhbīr al-Dauléh, Khāṭirāt va Khatarāt (2nd cd.) (Tehran, 1344/1965), pp. 250 ff. (henceforth, Mukhbīr al-Saltāneh, Khāṭirāt). British concerns
of conflict here, in the early years, between the demands made on the Gendarmerie by the two authorities. One result of this was the serious revolt which broke out in Kázirün in the early months of 1914. Ohlson, one of the Swedish officers was killed in the process and the gendarmes who looted and terrorized the town, were generally discredited and brought general discredit to the force. The Kázirünîs maintained they were provoked by the Gendarmerie and believed that the British were behind it all. The consul, O'Connor, implied that the anti-British party in Shiraz had a hand in the matter. Evidence suggests that the Kázirünîs had every reason to fear and dislike both the gendarmes and the forces of the South Persian Rifles after them.2

In Kirman, Amir Mufakham Bakhtäri, Governor of the province, also viewed with antagonism a government-controlled force which potentially undermined his own authority and the command of his own tribal retinue, a force of some five to six hundred men. There were also complaints of a different nature against the Gendarmerie. On the southern sections of the Bushihr-Shiraz road, for instance, muleteers began to vent their grievances about the highhandedness of the gendarmes were over the Fars Regiment since it was this province which from their standpoint was in dire need of attention. Lt. Col. Sir Frederick O'Connor (Consul, Shiraz, 1912-5) was in charge of finances both for the administration of the province and the Fars regiment. O'Connor, On the Frontier and Beyond: a Record of 30 years' Service, 1st cd. (London, 1931), pp. 196 ff. (hereafter, O'Connor, On the Frontier).1

1 Ibid., pp. 207-212.
2 Ibid., pp. 207 ff.; cf. Mukhbir al-Saltanch, Khâfirât, pp. 258 ff. Mukhbir called this episode "Jang-e bacheh maneh bâ mardum-e bîlîbânî" (the war of "sissies" i.e. the Swedes and the Gendarmes) against "tough-nuts"). See also telegram from Shiraz (author not established) to Tehran, Ministry of the Interior, via Hâji Muhammad Mu'în al-Tujjâr Bûshihri (30th Rabi' al-Sâni) 27 March 1914, registered no. 420, IFQA, 29/33, 1332/1914. The details of the Kázirün uprising are set out in this with a very strong defence of the people of Kázirün described as "patriotic" and "obedient" and who have never failed to pay their taxes.
and the delays on the road. This was because in an effort to put an end to the extortions of tufangchi, tribes, and brigands, the Swedes prevented travel by night and had put up numerous small posts along the road which resulted in checks and delays at short intervals for muleteers and merchants.¹

Despite these preliminary difficulties, matters began to improve for the force.² One of the earliest successes of the Gendarmerie during the course of 1913 and which greatly lifted their good reputation was the successful manner in which they rid Tehran of some Bakhtīārī mounted tribesmen. The latter were the retinues of some of the provincial and urban khāns who had remained in the city after the combined Bakhtīārī/Constitutionalist forces entered Tehran in the summer of 1909. In the provinces, there were disasters such as the Kazirun episode, but also some successes. Nāyib Husain, a notorious robber who operated in the vicinity of Kāshān was made to lie low for a while. The Lurs of Pusht-e Kūh were also punished for not having paid any tax for uncountable years. Gradually, too, some of the tribal heads of Fars began to co-operate with the force, on condition that a number of their own men were engaged as tufangchi to work with the force.³

Another factor which greatly boosted the reputation of the Gendarmerie was that they were being paid regularly. In Shiraz, money was handed over every month by O’Connor to the commander of the regiment; "... they are rather

¹ Annual Commercial and Trade Reports, 1914, vol. XCII, Bushihr, no. 5430.
² By the end of the year 1913, the force numbered 36 Swedish instructors, 5,400-6000 Persian officers and men. It had 6 regiments: 1st and 2nd, Tehran, 3rd Shiraz, 4th Kirman, 5th Qazvin, 6th Isfahan. Townley to Grey, Annual Report for year ending March 1914, confidential, 1040, L/P & S/18/C144 (hereafter, Townley, Annual Report 1913-1914).
³ Nyström, op. cit., pp. 215-230; he himself participated in the Luristan operations.
well-off, 3½ tumans a month and everything found."¹ Part of the attraction of the force for the recruits was indeed a question of cash and provisions. Pravitz observed that "it is probably the food and the state of the market which has made them enroll," though he also states that some districts had sent their youth out of pure patriotism.² Whatever other reasons there were, the questions of income and patriotism were to play a significant role in the subsequent fate of the so-called "Swedish Gendarmerie" as were Anglo-Russian relations and policies during the course of the early years of the War.

In many respects, the Gendarmerie force as it functioned under the Swedes had little chance of survival. A combination of related causes accounted for this. Among them may be numbered financial difficulties; the increasing involvement of the affairs of the Gendarmerie with the cause of Persian nationalists and Germans in Persia; Russian hostility from the start; and lastly, the loss of British interest in prolonging the life of the force in its existing shape.

The first signs of financial strain began to show themselves during the course of 1914. This was partly due to the irregular receipt of monthly subsidies from the British Treasury and partly to the disorganised state of Persian finances. Furthermore, the years 1913 and 1914 were on the whole bad years for harvests. Scarcity, a sharp rise in the price of grain and foodstuff, and financial insecurity, had plunged the country into a financial crisis towards the end of 1914. Government expenditure had risen in proportion to the expansion

¹ Fraser, Diaries, 28 Oct. 1913.
² Pravitz, Från Persien i stiltje och Storm, p. 168.
of the Gendarmerie force. The pay of the Swedes and the gendarmes began to fall into arrears. While the British Government was almost totally financing the administration of Fars and the 3rd Regiment there, she had hoped that the Central Government would keep up with the expenses of the remainder of the force. Yet, as matters became more complex with the progress of the war in Persia and British anxieties over the potential dangers of the force increased, even the Fars gendarmes began to feel the pinch of financial strains. Hjalmarson, the commander of the whole force since 1911, showed his despondency about the general situation and warned the representatives of the two Great Powers in Persia that he could not be responsible for the discipline of his men if regular pay could not be ensured by the British authorities. This was followed by further threats that those Swedes who were on the Active List (i.e., detailed by the Swedish Government, as against those privately engaged by Hjalmarson himself) and whose contracts mostly ended in 1915 and 1916, would leave the country before then.

Lack of pay was certainly affecting the performance of the gendarmes. Pravitz recorded the "death from hunger" of

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1 U. Gehrke, Persien in der deutschen Orientpolitik während des Ersten Weltkrieges, 2 vols. (Stuttgart, 1961), I, 57-58, II, 48 (hereafter, Gehrke, Persien); Sir Percy Loraine to Curzon, despatch no. 314, confidential, 12221, 16 July 1923, Persia: Annual Report, 1922, containing a survey of events from 1914 to 1921 inclusive, pp. 2-3, case 585, FO 371/9051; Oppenheim to Bethman-Hollweg, letter enclosing report by an agent in Tehran to Johann von Pallavicini (Austrian Minister, Constantinople), no. A21194, 9 Sep, 1914. The Government was reported to be very weak; finances low; the gendarmes had not been paid for months and the Swedes wished to give up their contracts. GFOA, Bd. 2, 139/535-612; Pravitz, op. cit., p. 202: "... subsidies were not enough to pay wages and no other money was forthcoming."

one gendarme at least at Miyan-Kutal and that hunger again had driven two others on the northern road to force a caravan to pay tribute: "... they said they were starving to death and needed money and bread ... We, who are to stop robberies now begin to rob ourselves, nothing worse could happen."¹

3. The German Menace

In the interlude before the war, Germany had tentatively directed her attention eastwards. The Berlin-Baghdad railway project was a symptom of this move. Yet she had no serious economic or political footing in Persia at the start of the World War. There were a few German trading firms and other small scale commercial concerns scattered around the country. One of the most important was the German pearl fishery firm of Woenckhaus which had installed its agents at various points along the Gulf. In 1906, the representatives of the firm at Bahrain were appointed Middle East agents to the Hamburg-Amerika Line with branch offices in all the main towns. The German Government largely subsidized the Woenckhaus firm whose representatives were, apparently, trained intelligence agents.

When war broke out, the importance of Persia to Germany centred around the military and strategic. Persia, as a potential ally of the Central Powers, could act effectively as a small but nonetheless constant irritant to the Allies and frustrate the latter's position there, in India, and elsewhere. Immediately after the Turks declared war on the Allies, a scheme was evolved by the German Foreign Office and the General Staff in co-operation with the Turkish General Staff to despatch a mission to Afghanistan. The objective

was to induce the Amir of Afghanistan to create trouble for the British in India. Persia was to be used as a base for this operation while it was hoped that ultimately, Persia and the Muslim population of her neighbouring countries would unite under the banner of Pan-Islam, backed by German arms and money and wage war against Russia and Britain.¹

The plans were grandiose in theory and revealed on the whole a remarkable degree of naive optimism on the part of some lesser-informed enthusiasts of the German diplomatic staff. The ultimate success, for instance, of the Afghan

¹ Gehrke, Persien, I, 21; Ducroq, "Les Allemands en Perse" (RMM, 54, 1923), pp. 98-103, 122-123; O. V. Niedernayer, Unter der Glutsonne Irans, Kriegerlebnisse der deutschen Expedition Nach Persien und Afghanistan (Dachau, 1925), English translation pp. 5-26. A group of Persian intellectuals in exile in Germany lent their support and participated fully in drawing up the plans of action for the Persian aspects of the German scheme. These Persians mostly belonged to the Democrat faction or Hizb, known as Dimukrāt-e Amīyyūn (Popular Democrats), which had emerged in the course of the 2nd National Consultative Assembly (Majlis) Nov. 1909-Dec. 1911, and which claimed to uphold the interests of the Constitutional Government in Persia. The other largest faction in the Assembly was known as the Ijtībā'yūn-e Ittīdālīyyūn (Social Moderates). The Democrats tended to be drawn mostly from western-educated bourgeois elements...[while] the Moderates were made up of the aristocracy and influential ulama...and supported by the Regent." There were other, smaller factions of minor importance. A. Banānī, "Hizb" (Encyclopaedia Islam, 2nd ed. 1968, vol. III, fasc. 49-50); Zahra Shajī'ī, Namāyandīgān-e Mājlis-e Shaurā-ye Millī dar bīst u vak daurreh-ye qānūnguzārī (Tehran, 1965), 141; Kāveh, "Khulāséh-ye Tārikhī-ye Advār-e Mushrūtīat dar Irān" (Berlin, 25 Apr. 1918, 3 Rajab 1336, series of articles published in book form), pp. 15-23. Following the Shuster crisis and the closing of the 2nd National Consultative Assembly, some of the Democrats and Patriots like Taqī-Zādeh and Vahīd al-Mulk settled in Berlin, Geneva, and Constantinople, whence they conducted a propaganda campaign against the Allies during the War, through their organ Kāveh and other publications. They grouped themselves into the "League of Persians in Europe" and formed a "Persian" committee in Berlin, concentrating their attention on the strategical and tactical aspects of the expedition and tried to spread their pro-German sympathies among the deputies of the 3rd National Consultative Assembly, during the war. Memorandum by the League of Persians in Europe, "Les lignes Principales du Programme de la Ligue des Patriotes Persans en Europe", 1 March 1915, Berlin (A 8322), GFOA, Bd. 8, 9, 140/341-433; also letter on aims and tactics from Lieut. Waldman (member of the expedition), General Army Headquarters, Baghdad, to the Foreign Office, Berlin, secret, 4 Feb. 1915, Dept. 111. b. 343., GFOA, Bd. 7, 140/155-274.
mission was taken for granted with or without winning Persia over to the cause of the Central Powers. If Persia were to enter the war against the Allies, then all the better. If not, the means of succeeding there were seen to be very simple: "The settled population in the towns are cowardly; the government is forcibly and completely under the influence of Russia and the British and has been hoping for Germany to liberate her." To push the English out of southern Persia was seen to be a "trivial" matter if Persia sided with the Central Powers and even if she did not, "it will be easy to make the southern tribes rise against the British in the south . . . [For this] the tribes would need a few boxes of rifles and ammunition."¹

So the Germans were to offer gold, promises of victory and liberation, with the aim of creating a large force in Persia to co-operate with Turkish forces. Use was to be made of all existing channels of communication in the country. As a preliminary to the success of the German schemes and with the co-operation of the Democrats and their associates both inside and outside Persia, committees were to be set up in important centres such as Tehran, Shiraz, Baghdad, and Constantinople, apart from Berlin, to advance propaganda and engage in subversive activities.

The leading members of the expedition to Persia and Afghanistan were mostly German or claimed German nationality. A good number of them had either worked or travelled in Persia as merchants, geologists, zoologists, consuls, among other things, before the outbreak of war. In the course of the move eastward, the expedition also drew on the support of the

¹ Hans von Wangenheim (German Ambassador, Constantinople), Report, 4 Feb. 1915, Berlin, AA, 111, Pol. 343, GFOA, Bd. 13, 140/569-609.
representatives of German trading firms such as the Woenkhaus company and the Swiss-German employees of the Persische Teppische Gesellshaft.¹

The chief source of German strength in the provinces and later in the capital, comprised people from all walks of life and nationalities. They included the tribes, notably the Lur, Tangistaná and Dashtiá contingents of Bakhtírí headed by some of the younger kháns such as Amír Mufakham (Governor of Kirmanshah, 1915-16), and Amír Mujáhid; armed gangs of brigands such as Náyíb Husain-e Kásháni; Turkish soldiers; escaped Austrian prisoners of war from the Caucasus and even deserters from the two fronts.² Haig describes the additions to the above as "... a couple of unfrocked priests, and the flotsam and jetsam of nondescripts of indeterminate nationality living by their wits."³ He does not mention, however, that some of the more vigorous supporters of the Germans in Persia were men in important responsible positions if not of some social standing in their own right.

The German emissaries and their associates entered


³ Sir Wolseley Haig, "Reminiscences of Persia during the War", MS, MECL, Ds 315.5, ch. III, p. 8 (henceforth, Haig, papers). The German prisoners of war were generally sent to Siberia while Austrian prisoners were placed where possible. A large number of the latter were in Russian Turkistan and escaped into Persia with the help of Persian local authorities in Mashhad. Haig claims to have found evidence which proved that almost all the members of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Tehran were implicated in this between spring and summer 1915. (Sir Thomas W. Haig first came to Persia in 1912, was Consul-General Mashhad, 1914-5; Isfahan 1916-9; left Persia 1921.)
Persia through Kirmanshāhān in the west. They had split themselves into five or six parties with two main ones destined directly for Afghanistan, headed by Oscar von Niedermayer, von Hentig, and others. They travelled protected by safe conduct, as secretaries, consuls, and other officials of German consulates in a neutral country. The Swedish and Persian men of the Gendarmerie and German partisans, in general, escorted and helped the members of the mission along.

Yet, despite the fact that some of the Germans did reach Afghanistan and others carried off some startling successes in Persia with Persian co-operation, their plans ultimately misfired. This was not merely due to consul Haig interfering with the flow of Austrian prisoners into Persia, nor so much the security measures which the British and Russians took, in the form of a military cordon, to guard the Afghan-Baluchistan frontier. There were more fundamental reasons related to the weaknesses of both the scheme itself and the mission.

In the first instance, the scheme underestimated the entrenched position of the two Great Powers in Persia. For, while the latters' physical presence and strength in Persia were taken into consideration, their existing and potential political influence was largely ignored. So, too, the depth of their involvement in the national life of the country

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1 This came to be called the East Persia Cordon (EPC). It began to be formed in the early months of 1915 and continued to function until its disbandment in 1920. It was made up of British troops and locally raised Baluch and Makran tribal levies controlled by the British, guarding the line from Rubat-Neh-Birjand; while Russian Cossacks guarded the line from Mashhad-Turbat-e Jām-Birjand. W.R. Dickson, East Persia: A Backwater of the Great War (London, 1924), pp. 43 f.; Sykes, History, II, 448-455; Miroshnikov, Iran in World War I, p. 46. In 1916, the EPC numbered some 800 Cossacks, 2 squadrons of Indian cavalry, supported by about 1,200 levies.
as a whole. Niedermayer apparently became convinced at an early stage that "there was no question of any danger to British rule," and was doubtful "whether any serious revolt would occur, even were a hostile force to appear on the frontier of India." In effect, during the critical months at the close of the year 1915, when German influence in Persia was at its peak, it was the pressure of political persuasion exercised by the British and Russian ministers in Tehran, backed by the threats of a Russian military putsch, which deflated the hopes of Persian nationalists and turned the scales in favour of the Allies. Military action followed later. In Afghanistan, the Germans failed to persuade the Amir, Habib Allah Khan, to join them. The latter's relation with the British was obviously too precious to be abandoned in favour of a commitment of which the outcome was not clear.

Secondly, those divisive tendencies which characterised Persian society and which had enhanced the incessant interference of Russia and Britain in the domestic affairs of the country, were not taken sufficiently into account. Zugmayer, for instance, was obtaining support from some Bakhtīāri khāns in Isfahan, notably from Amir Majāhid and Sālār Muzaffar while Sardār Nusrat, military commander at Kirman, put up a strong resistance to the Germans and Sardār Zafar, the Governor, was only very slowly won over. Zugmayer reported from Baluchistan that there was no unity to be found there but "only a few scattered provinces which are all vassals of the English." Seiler admitted that, at least in Isfahan, 

1 Niedermayer, Under the Burning Sun in Persia, p. 6.
2 Dr. Erich Zugmayer, Diary (English translation), W.O. 106/53; extracts from the diary in Ducrocq, "Les Allemands en Persî", pp. 150-179.
3 Zugmayer, Report of the Baluchistan Group of the Afghan Expedition, GFOA, Bd. 31-32, 143/33-161.
the initial enthusiasm in favour of the Germans was ephemeral compared to the "solid foundations on which our enemies were working."¹

The Bakhtäri, Shahsavan, Kurd and Lur, were not united among themselves. Saulat al-Dauleh's behaviour was cautious and on the whole he steered fairly clear of the troubles. Nor was there complete unity among the southern tribes. As a rule, the khän of Ahmadī, Dashtī, Burāzjān, Chāhkūtāh, Zīreh, and more often than not, Dālakī, were anti-British. Those of Lairavī, Hayāt-Dāvūd, Shabānkāreh, Rūdishleh and sometimes the Angalī, had, according to the locals, been "bought off".²

Here, as everywhere else, motives varied. Apart from those arising out of personal interests, the khän were also moved by the spirit of nationalism and heroism. One observer at the time recalled that the main ringleaders of the movement always reminded Wassmuss that they were against the domination of any power be it Russia, Britain, or Germany. The latter, however, had never harmed Persia and was her friend against a mutual enemy. It may be expected that the tribal heads were better informed about international news, were mostly literate, and had a stronger case for articulating their revolts in terms of nationalist sentiments. Their followers, however, specially those in remote, outlying districts, away from the bustle of life in Bushihr for instance, were less familiar with the complexities of the situation. They knew

¹ Seiler, quoted in Niedermayer, Under the Burning Sun in Persia, pp. 274-277.
² Interview: Mr. Ali Zakāvat (formerly chauffeur to the British Residency, Bushihr), Bushihr, 18 April 1972; Mr. Lasūrī (formerly tufangchī), 2 May 1972; see also Cox to Grant, letter, 11 May 1915, no. 1083, FO 371/2432.
that there was a war in progress and that when they followed their *khāns* to fight, it was against English troops and not against the followers of another unfriendly *khān*. Their involvements, however, were with their *khāns* alone. On being asked their feelings and reasons they invariably replied:

"We had neither any personal objectives nor benefits at stake ... it did not reach those levels with us ... we did what our *khāns* wanted us to do ... like drunken men we fought when required to fight ... if we had any deaths that was good, if we had none that was also good ... they said this was a *jihad* to liberate the country from the *ānabī* (foreigners) ... yes, the *khāns* did used to tell us that the enemy intends to come and plunder our homes and belongings and injure our good name and these words did have some effect on us ..."¹

Moreover, the scheme probably overestimated the unifying power of the call for *jihad*, under the banner of Pan-Islamism, led by the Ottoman Turks. Just as allegiance and commitments of different social groupings throughout the country were divided, so too was religious leadership. On the whole, the ulama appeared to have been led by Democrats both in the provinces and at the centre. The mujtahids and mullahs of the southern and south central provinces tended as a rule to be more active and outspoken than their brethren in the northern provinces. Niedermayer expressed some doubt on the *jihad* question barely two months after he had been in Persia. For, though in some important centres such as Bushihr, Kirman, Isfahan, and Hamadan, the ulama played a prominent role in advancing German influence, in some parts they remained passive. In Qum, for instance, Niedermayer observed that the mullahs who were a wealthy body generally, apparently feared

¹ Interviews: Mr. Häji Khizair Ja'fari, Dilvār, April 1972; Mullah Sālim, resident Dilvār (formerly tufangchi of Ra'Is Ali Dilvārī), Dilvār, April 1972; Mr. Ibrahim Ghazānfar (son of Ghazānfar al-Saltaneh, khān of Burāzjān), Kangān, May 1972; Saif Allāh Abbāsī (formerly tufangchī of Shaikh Husain Khān Chāh-Kūthāhī), Chāh Kūthāh, 1 March 1971.
the risk to their property and "would have nothing to do with the Holy War or any similar movement." ¹

Above all, the Central Government could not openly declare herself for or against the issue. It was the pressure of pro-German sympathy in the provinces which gradually changed the Centre's outlook and finally forced it into action against the Allies. During the first nine months of the war, the third National Consultative Assembly was trying extremely hard to maintain the principle of neutrality so as not to provide Russia with any further pretext for keeping her troops in the north. Needless to say, her protestations and repeated requests for the withdrawal of the troops were in vain. But while negotiations on the subject were in progress, the cabinet was urging local authorities to maintain impartiality in their respective districts. Even the Atabat mujtahids who had issued a fitva in November 1914, urging the Persians to join the war against the Allies, were asked to restrain themselves. ²

Furthermore, there were some indications that the Democrat faction in the Assembly, who otherwise favoured militant action with German support, were undecided on a likely alliance with the ulama. They apparently regarded themselves as being too progressive to toy with the idea of a jihad. By mid-summer 1915, they did finally agree to present a united front. ³ Even so, there were other complexities at work which prevented success on these lines.

The Persians, it appears, preferred to work directly

² Empire de Perse, Ministere des Affaires Etrangères, Neutralité Persane (Documents Diplomatiques, 30 Sept. 1914 to 22 March 1915), Paris, 1918, pp. 58 f.
³ Gehrke, Persien, I, 95-124.
with the Germans in their efforts to deliver Persia from Anglo-Russian hegemony. It followed that with the passage of time, Turkish troops posing as liberators became increasingly unwelcome inside the country. "The feeling in all Persia is against the Turks," reported the German ambassador in Baghdad, when in July 1915 the tribes between Qasr-e Shirin and Karand were in open rebellion against Ra'üf Bey's troops who had burnt two villages.\(^1\) Admittedly, the Allies' Legations in Tehran had a hand in turning public feeling against the Turks but the Persians themselves appeared to mistrust Turkish motives. On this occasion, ironically, the Bakhtíāri chiefs, Amīr Mufakham and Samsâm al-Mamalek, while furiously quarrelling with Ra'üf over the affray and preparing to confront his troops, were at the same time assuring the Germans of their allegiance and sympathies.\(^2\) The representatives of the bigger tribes in Azarbaijan, too, had let the German Shunneman know that they were willing to fight for the Germans but on condition that the Turks be kept out of Persia.

As to the Christian communities in the northern and western provinces, notably the Armenians, Assyrians, and Chaldeans, never at any point did they welcome the Turks and were indeed armed by the Russians and the British to fight them. The Russian Newspaper Noviyi Vriemya reported that merchants and peasants in the north were, on the whole, anti-Turk.\(^3\)

The mission itself suffered from weaknesses which

\(^1\) From Hesse, telegram, Baghdad, 7 Aug. 1915, based on report by von Kanitz (Military Attaché, German Legation, Tehran); GFOA, Bd. 19, 141/103-194.
\(^2\) Ibid.
\(^3\) Noviyi Vriemya, no. 14060, 16 May 1915, GFOA, Bd. 14, 140/666-737.
made it ill-equipped to fulfil its objectives. The Turks and Germans were suspicious of each other's moves and motives; there was much friction over leadership and command. Some of the members found themselves isolated from their colleagues and developed a pronounced contempt toward the people surrounding them.¹

Pro-German sympathy, whether bought or not, was fairly widespread. In direct relation to this, or independently of it, Persian hopes for national liberation intensified during this period. Nationalist feeling or patriotic enthusiasm was manifesting itself under the impact both of German gold and genuine grievances. Pro-German sympathy and nationalism as two phenomena, existed in an intermingled fashion or side by side; at times gaining strength from each other, at other times cancelling each other out. In the last analysis, they both failed to achieve their respective goals at this particular point in time.

It was as much due to the efforts of politically motivated leading local figures, as to German agents, that provincial revolutionary committees began to be formed in some major centres such as Isfahan, Yazd, Shiraz, and later Qum, Kirmanshah, and Hamadan. These bodies, invariably calling themselves National Committees for the Protection of Persian Independence (Kumīteh-ye Hāfizin-e Istiqlāl-e Mamlakat-e Iran) and referred to generally as National Defence Committees (Kumīteh-ye Difā'-e Millī), worked energetically to undermine the influence and prestige of the two Great Powers in Persia.

Very little has been written on the organisation and

¹ See especially the diary of Griesinger (Kirman-Baluchistan Mission), German Intrigues in Persia . . . Diary of a German Agent (translated by Hodder and Stoughton), W.O. 106/52; GFOA, Bd. 28, 141/579-652.
composition of these committees. They took shape and functioned initially on a secret basis until they came out into the open from October 1915 onwards. Being dominated by German partisans and men of Democrat and patriotic leanings, they appear to have grown out of the Provincial Democrat Committees (Kumîteh-ye Iyâlatî-ye Firghe-ye Dimûrkât).¹ They were urban phenomena, composed of men from among leading or lesser known local government officials, the ulama, the tujîr, gendarmerie officers and men, and intellectuals. The central body, formed in Qum in November 1915, consisted mainly of government deputies.²

¹ These came into being in the course of 1909-11, as part of the provincial party structure of the Democrats. They lost much of their influence after 1911 but functioned side by side with those formal, elected, Provincial Societies or Councils (Anjuman-e Iyâlatî) which had been set up in the provinces from the time of the Constitutional Revolution. For an account of the latter and those secret popular anjumans which were organised throughout the country during the Revolution see Ann K. Lambton, "Persian Political Societies, 1906-1911", St. Antony's Papers, parts 1 & 2, vol. II, 1963; for the organisation of the Democrat Committees see A. Gharavi-Nârî, Hizb-e Dimûrkât-e Iran dar Daûre-ye Duvvum-e Majlîs-e Shaurâ-ye Millî (Tehran, 1352 AH), pp. 61-75.

² Among the members and supporters of both the Democrat and Defence committees in Isfahan were Shaikh Nûr Allâh the Saqqât al-İslâm, Hajjî Shaikh Muhammad Bâqir, Amin al-Tujîr Bûshîrî, Humâyûn Mîrzâ (son of the Zill-al-Sultan), and I'timâd al-Tujîrî. In Yazd, they included Bahâ al-Wâ'izîn, Saiyid Husain Mîhdî Fath Allâh, Saiyid All Naqî Masâvî; in Shiraz, Hajji Âmin al-İslâm, Saiyid Jâvâd Shîrâzi Muhâqiq al-Ulâmâ, Hajjî Mîrzâ Âli âqâ Zû al-Riâsaitûn and sons, Mîrzâ Ibrâhîm Mahallî, Abd al-Rasûl Kuppânî, Hidayât Allâh Falsafî, All Quli Khân Pişsân and Mu'âzîd al-Sultan; in Kirman, Mîhdî Muhammad Shari'î'at Madâr, Mîhdî Muhammad âqâ Ibrâhîm, Mahâm al-Mulk (Karguzâr), Muhammad Khân Sultân (head of the Gendarmery). Two very determined agitators in the south, among others, were Saiyid Husain Hisâm al-Vuzârâ (Bushîrî) and Abd al-Husain Saiyid Lârî Mujtahîd. In Kanadan apparently, some Persian members of the Cossack Regiment there joined the rebels in general. R. Q. Divân Bâiqî, Safar-e Nâmeh-ye Muhâjîrat dar Nakhshûn Jang-e Jahânî (Tehran, 1351/1972), pp. 54-79; Haig, Papers, ch. V, pp. 2-6, 19; Muvarîkh al-Dauleh Sipîhr, Iran dar Jang-e Buzûrj, 1914-1918 (Tehran, 1336/1957) pp. 240, 244 ff.; Kamât al-Sultan, Report of the Recent Rebellion in Kirman, Kirman Karguzârî, 19 May 1916 (16 Rajab 1334), no. 129, IFOA, 47/9, 1916/1334; letters from the ulâmâ of Kirman to Sardâr Zafar, Governor, 11 and 12 Dec. 1915 (3 and 4 Safar 1334), enclosed in Kirman Karguzârî's report, op. cit.; Bahâ
O'Connor describes how, from the spring of 1915 onwards, he began to notice a change in the attitude of the provincial administration toward the British community and describes the situation thus:

"Mukhbir was busy with the organisation of a 'secret society', a central committee of which he himself was the leading spirit, controlled a society of several hundred members through the medium of various sub-committees, each in charge of a separate lodge or group. The majority of the members were totally ignorant of the purpose for which they were enrolled, and were indoctrinated with a gradually increasing hostility toward England and Russia: and at first little was said about Germany."

It may be that the mass of people in general were ignorant of what was going on. O'Connor, however, indulges in some exaggeration if not misrepresentation of the issue. There was hardly any need to "indoctrinate" the Shirazis or the Persians in general with "hostility" toward the two Great Powers. This already existed and was fairly widespread. Russia had been feared and disliked ever since her support for the Royalist cause during the Constitutional Revolution and especially after the brutal actions with which she had quelled nationalist uprisings in Tabriz, Rasht, and elsewhere. Britain too, after her détente with Russia in 1907 and as her ally in the world war, came in for a good deal of criticism. Britain's own efforts at curbing anarchy in the south involved her in military action and increased her unpopularity in central and southern Fars especially. British presence in whatever guise was representative of a certain order of life and discipline which set limits to the authority and freedom of khāns and brigands alike. Besides which, it limited some of the main sources of...
their livelihood, particularly arms and opium smuggling. The grounds for dissention on the part of the Persians had already been laid. Wolseley Haig, who was in Kirman when the Russians bombarded the Shrine at Mashhad in 1912, recalled:

"... people formed corps of 'national volunteers', were drilled in the city square some with their own assortment of arms and those without any carried sticks to represent rifles. At various points were posted young mullahs who, as the head of the file of volunteers reached them, led the cry... 'ya marg ya istiqlāl' [death or freedom]."\(^1\)

The Kāzirūnīs too had demonstrated their anti-British feelings in February 1914. They insisted that their uprising was not against the authority of the Central Government but to this authority as represented by the British controlled gendarmerie regiment in Shiraz.\(^2\) In the provincial troubles of the pre-war years, there was probably an element of reaction against both the authority of the Centre and that of the Great Powers. The point, however, is that public opinion was prepared to count the Germans as sympathetic allies when war broke out.

It cannot be denied, however, that the Defence Committees also largely reflected the impact of German influence in the provinces. The fact that the appearance of these committees coincided with the climax of German influence in Persia, during the summer and winter of 1915, and quietly disappeared from the scene with the decline of this influence, may appear to support this argument. That they took shape and were active mainly along the axis of the German moves eastward toward Afghanistan, i.e., south of the line Qasr-e Shirin-Qum-Isfahan-Yazd, would suggest the same conclusion. Yet a third

\(^1\) Haig, Papers, ch. I, p. 13.

\(^2\) Shiraz telegram, via Haji Muhammad Mu'īn al-Tujjar, 22 March 1914, IFOA, 29/33.
point is that they seemed to function most fruitfully when German money had not yet run out.

Perhaps one important aspect of the committees, whatever their size and shape in different areas, was that they provided a link in co-ordinating information and the movements of agitators. The League of the South, headed by leading khâns of southern Fars, worked in close co-operation with the Shiraz committee. The latter, in turn, with that of Isfahan and Kirmanshah. More important was their role in centralising all kinds of grievances arising from the harshness and hardships of daily life for the mass of the urban and rural population; attributing most things to the presence of the Allies in Persia, thus chanelling national sentiment against the latter more vigorously.

As to the Swedish officers, one of the judgements passed on them was that:

"Many of them were unable, like the Russians, to resist the temptation to which the opportunities of their employment and the example of Persian officials exposed them. They detested Russians ... [were] convinced that Germany would defeat all her enemies ... [and] moved partly by sentiment partly by cupidity ... abused their position as servants of a neutral state by selling to Germany their own services and those of troops under their command ... ."

It was true that the majority of the Swedes were Russophobes, that some "sold" their services to the Germans and abused the nature of their employment but their position was hardly comparable to that of Russian or Persian officials. "Sentiment" and "cupidity" aside, the Swedes were caught in an unenviable situation, in which the various interests they had to serve were incompatible. In general they tried to serve the interests of the Persian Government which had employed them, but for a

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time found their loyalties split; their real masters appeared to be the British minister in Tehran and through him the consuls in the provinces. The situation in Fars between 1913 and 1915 was indicative of this type of confusion. When the Germans began to lure the Swedes onto their own side, with promises of the prolongation of the life of the Gendarmerie and actual or impending offers of cash, some took up the offers while others still wondered where their priorities lay. For the majority, however, this dilemma was resolved when both the Central Government and the Germans combined their strength in their struggles to defy Russia and Britain.

Suspicion against the Swedish instructors first arose during 1913, when O'Connor noticed how they were on good terms with Wassmuss and Kanitz. Further instances of their behaviour and apparent pro-German leanings increased British suspicion against them. In late December 1914, Townley pointed out to A'la al-Saltaneh (the Foreign Minister) that, "His Majesty's Government was displeased at the increasing sympathy of the Gendarmerie for the nationalist-German cause." He believed that "public opinion in Tehran is sympathetic to the Axis... the Swedish officers in Persian service cannot hide their sympathy for Germany... [and] will join the people at the slightest move."  

4. Events and Negotiations leading to the Introduction of a Military Mission to the South

In the face of mounting instability in the provinces, the Persian Government, ever since the opening of the third

1 Mukhbir al-Saltanch, Khātirāt, pp. 257-278.
3 Empire de Perse, Ministere des Affaires Etrangères: Neutralité Persane, Documents Diplomatiques, 30 Sept. 1914 to 22 March 1915, Paris, p. 78.
National Consultative Assembly, could only display her inability to provide leadership in any direction. The Democrat faction was at first weak but increased its strength in proportion to the spread of pro-German sympathy in the country. The Assembly was inaugurated on 3 December 1914. Its life stopped short of a year with no less than four cabinet changes.¹ Between each change, there were lapses of days and weeks, characterised by fierce competition between those ministerial candidates backed by the British and Russian legations and those supported by the progressive element in the Assembly. The work of the executive body was limited and sometimes crippled by shortages of funds. It suffered particularly from the ambiguities of the times. On the one hand the Russian and British Legations had to be kept moderately happy so that Persia could extract another loan from the Powers, and on the other hand, the clamourings of the Democrats which became louder from late spring 1915 onwards, had to be taken into account.

To complicate matters, there was competition at another, more concealed, level between the two Legations themselves, headed by the Russophobe Townley and the uncompromising Sazonov. The two had never really got on well together. As the German threat increased and the Persians were found to be less co-operative, this kind of unfriendliness between the two Legations could not be allowed to continue. The two ministers were recalled in April. The new appointees to Tehran were Sir Charles Marling² and M. de Etter. The result was that the Legations in Tehran drew closer together more sincerely.

² Sir Charles Marling, b. 1862, entered diplomatic service 1888, held a series of important consular posts in eastern Europe, Spain and Greece, became Councillor of Embassy, Tehran 1906; Constantinople 1908-1913; Minister Tehran 1915-2; Copenhagen 1919-20; died 1933.
than ever before. The effect in Tehran was that Persian politicians were left with but little room to continue the old tradition of playing the "two neighbours" against one another, at least for the time being.\(^1\) "The old game could be played without any declaration but the new one usually involved definite partisanship; some managed to hedge, some received money from both sides,"\(^2\) and others fought against all this. At all events, relationships between the two Legations themselves and between them and Persian politicians became more subtle and complex.

This instability, at the top of the country's ruling institution, aggravated disorder elsewhere. The conflicts of contradictory pressures bearing down on society generally, were increasing. The Central Government at times displayed confusion, and ignorance of the intricate trends at play in far off districts. In Bushihr for instance, the Governor set out to arrest one Hájji Ali Tangistānī, resident of Rīshahr, and wanted the assistance of the Gendarmerie for the task. The commander of the Bushihr detachment, under the influence of the now anti-British third regiment of Fars, refused to help. He argued that he had no authority to do so from his Headquarters. The Governor sent off his own men and two days fighting took place between the latter and the men of Hájji Ali. It was found afterwards that British troops stationed at Bushihr were also involved, since two of them died in the process. Three men belonging to the Governor were killed and

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\(^1\) Marling recounted that the interests of the two Powers demanded a complete accord in Persian questions. The Persians still appeared to believe that this did not really work in practice and so continued the tradition of playing to one or other Power. Marling to Grey, letter, no. 153, "Relations between the Legations at Tehran: a Survey of the months April-Nov. 1915", confidential, 28 Nov. 1916, p. 261611, FO 371/2738, 1916.

so were the same number of Hájjí's men. Muhtashim al-Saltaneh, Minister for the Interior, minuted the telegram bearing this news with the rather naive queries: "Why are the gendarmes not responding and why are British troops interfering?"¹

The only consistent line of policy which had emerged from the Persian Government throughout the years 1914 and 1915, was the demand for the withdrawal of Russian troops from the north. The British Government had in the beginning showed sympathy over this question but their support waned from the start of the war onward. The incursion of Turkish troops into Persian territory and co-operation with Russia were chiefly responsible for this change of attitude. Mushîr al-Mulk, the Persian minister in London, informed Tehran that the British Foreign Office argued, "... l'expérience a démontré au gouvernement de sa Majesté Britannique que la façon d'agir des Ottomans est encore pire que celle des Russes ..."² The Russian and British ministers in Tehran proceeded to maintain a steady pressure on the Persian Government to tone down pro-German public opinion at the Centre and in the provinces. The cabinet in turn sounded local authorities. The latter either denied having anything to do with Germans or complied with the Centre's supplications to maintain the principle of neutrality.³

¹ Pravitz, Shiraz, to Edvall, Central Gendarmerie Bureau, Tehran, telegr., no. 1515, urgent, 8 May 1915 (9 Sha'ban 1333), IFOA, 66/33, 1915/1333.
² Mushîr al-Mulk to A'îlā al-Saltaneh, telegram, no. 319, 12 Oct. 1914 (French text), IFOA, 66/18, 1914/1333.
³ Shaikh Nûr Allâh, the Saqqat al-Islâm, while being deeply involved with German intrigues in Isfahan, wrote to Tehran assuring the Centre that he was doing his utmost to keep Isfahan impartial. See letter from Shaikh Nûr Allâh to the Minister for Foreign Affairs enclosed in despatch no. 2092, 11 Sep. 1915 (2 Zu al-Qa'deh, 1333) from I'timâd Humâyûn (Isfahan Kârguzârî) to the F.O., Tehran, serial number 13985/29130, IFOA, 66/7, 1333/1915.
British doubts over the future of the gendarmerie force were partly affected by the above considerations. Partly, too, by the resumption of talks with the Russians over revised boundaries and spheres of influence in Persia. This entailed some further thoughts over methods of securing the south. The proper expansion and prosperity of the force had never received the goodwill of the Russians. The latter entertained their own schemes for policing the north through an enlarged force of Cossacks. The Persian Government, having taken some pains to make a success of the only national force under its control for maintaining order, now wished to extend the area of its operations to the northern provinces. Russia opposed any such proposition.¹

Opinions now began to be exchanged in British diplomatic circles as to the reliability of the Swedes, the feasibility for a change in command, and whether the moment was opportune for such a move. Townley thought not. He believed, in the first instance, that the pro-German leanings of the Swedes had been exaggerated by interested parties, that is, Russophiles. He argued that it may be true that most Swedes were anti-Russian but that this did not mean that they were all equally anti-British. Furthermore, the time was not right for a change in the officers of the force: "British officers are probably not available and imposition of them on Persia at present moment would make a bad impression."² O'Connor basically agreed. He did, however, wish to ensure that the Swedes be made to maintain an attitude of "strictest neutrality whatever their own individual sympathies may be."³

¹ Gehrke, Persien, II, 47, I, 57-59.
² Townley to O'Connor, 3 Mar. 1915, EDEP, pp. 144 f.
³ O'Connor to Townley, 5 Mar. 1915, EDEP, p. 145.
Townley was in effect echoing what the Government of India had expressed earlier on this point. It was, indeed, as regards this question that Sykes was first mentioned for service in Persia. The India Office put the case to the viceroy thus:

"... in case Swedes are quietly got rid of and F.O. should favour employment of British officers for Southern Gendarmerie, have you considered whether one or two senior officers like Sykes and Kenion... could not be lent for organisation and administration?"

The viceroy's reply was discouraging. Sykes and Kenion were apparently not easily available at the time; the Indian Government could not spare any junior officers, "without whom these experiments would certainly fail."

It was perhaps as a consequence of India's negative attitude that the Foreign Office resolved to settle the matter for the time being by providing more funds for the Fars and Kirman Gendarmerie. The chief offenders among the Swedes, such as Hjalmarson, Killander, and Oertenberg, either left of their own account or were recalled by the Swedish Government. Others, who had remained impartial or had changed their attitude in time such as Nyström and Pravitz respectively, were allowed to remain. These and those Swedes on the Reserve list now took over command of the force. Yet it was not long before most of the remaining Swedes also became deeply involved in political activity.

Between January and the summer months of the year 1915, the feverish activities of German agents, especially Shunneman in Kirmānshahān, Pugin and Seiler in Isfahan, Zügmayer and Greisinger in Kirman, and the extraordinary Wassmuss
in Fars, began to show very definite results. In April the German and Austrian ministers, who had left Tehran on leave of absence in 1914, returned to the capital with arms and money. Both at the Centre and in the provinces, levies and so-called National Guards (Mujāhids), were being raised, armed, and drilled.

In the south, after the capture of Wassmuss's belongings in February 1915 and the arrest of his two companions, British authorities began to arrest some of the Germans connected with the Woenckhaus company. The German consul of Bushihr, Herr Listerman and his wife were also arrested. The men were deported to Basrah and India. As a result, there were instant protest meetings and rallies, organised with the help of Wassmuss. The rauzeh khān were effectively mobilised in most major provincial centres and played a very important role in exciting public sentiment against the Allies.

The troubles in the south compelled the despatch of more troops from India and the occupation of Bushihr for three months. Wassmuss had travelled up and down the Bushihr-Kazirun-Shiraz road and generally in the district of Tangistān and Dashtī, renewing former relations with khāns, kalāntars, and kadkhudās of standing reputation. These included Nasir al-Dīvān Kāzirūnī, Ali Khān Kashkulī, Zāyīr Khizair Ahramī, and Ghāzānfar al-Saltaneh Burāzjānī, who helped to organise pressure groups for the release of the German prisoners. When nothing appeared to come of this, Wassmuss helped to evolve plans with the tribes for a mass attack on the British Residency buildings at Rishahr and Bushihr.

1 Gehrke, Persien, I, 76 ff.; II, 63.
2 For a dramatised version of Wilhelm Wassmuss's activities in Persia during the war, see C. Sykes, Wassmuss, the German Lawrence (London, 1936); Rukn-Zādeh Adamiat, Dalīrān-e
On 12 July, the insurgent tribesmen ambushed a party of Indian cavalry and infantry outside the Residency grounds. The two British officers in charge, Captains Ranking and Oliphant were killed together with one sepoy. Several others were wounded.

This incident could not go by unnoticed by the British authorities. Some anxiety was now being felt about the safety of the oilfields. Up to the end of 1914 the oil company's pipeline had not been interfered with but in mid-February 1915, considerable damage was done to the section of the pipe lying between the border of the Bakhtiārī country and Ahvaz by the Bawi Arabs then in revolt against the Shaikh of Muhammarah. The damage was repaired and the Bawis submitted to the Shaikh, with formal acceptance of responsibility for the security of the pipe line, the telephone line, and the companies' employees who now numbered some 1,000 (among them 40 Europeans). The Gulf authorities were quite worried by this event, indeed, Sir Percy Cox and Trevor (vice-consul, Lingeh, Assistant to Cox), had suggested earlier that a "demonstration of military and naval strength may prove an effective deterrent" to any future trouble in this area and both from the local standpoint and from that of the Turks in Mesopotamia. For though the British could rely on Shaikh Khaz'al's support to impose a certain degree of control over the Arab tribes of Khuzistan in his capacity as paramount chief of the Arabs of this region, he could not at all times bear the burden of protection.

Tangīstān, 2nd ed. (Tehran, 1334/1955) and idem, Fārs va Jang-e Bain al-Milal, 3rd ed. (Tehran 1349/1970); Gehrke, Persien, uses Wassmüss's diaries and also quotes from D. von Mikusch, Wassmüss, der deutsche Lawrence. 1 Correspondence between Sir Percy Cox (Lt. Col. Sir Percy Z. Cox., Chief Political Resident, Persian Gulf), Basrah, to Grant, India, "The Safety of Oilfields", Jan-Feb. 1915 (printed), B.M-I.S. 209/2. Some 200 men had been landed at Abadan at the start of the war.
prevent the active sympathy of quite a large section of them for the Turks and Germans. These included the Banī Sālīh, Banī Tamīm, and Banī Sukhāin to the west of the Karun river, the Ka'ab of Fallahiyyah, the populace of Rām Hurmuż, and the Mīrs of Hindīān, 40 and 60 miles respectively east of Muhammarah. Dizful and Shūshtar held aloof on the whole and the Muhaisin, the Shaikh's own tribe, of course remained quiet.¹

The Foreign Office advocated an active policy right from the start of the troubles, supported by some members of the India Office such as Hirtzel and Barrow and senior members of the Tehran Legation. India, however, still preferred to steer clear of either punitive expeditions inland or along the Gulf coast, or to get involved in what the viceroy called "a mesh of inter-tribal intrigue,"² especially in the Bushihr hinterland. The Persian Gulf Residency was but a little more militant than the Indian Government. When the troubles at Bushihr assumed dangerous proportions, Marling proposed that "only a demonstration of military force would be effective" and recommended that the customs of the principal ports such as Muhammarah, Bandar Abbas, Lingeh, and Hurmuż should be seized by British troops, and that Bushihr should be occupied. He urged, furthermore, that Russian troops should be despatched to Persia as soon as possible. The viceroy, significantly, while entirely supporting the proposal for the increase of Russian garrisons in the north, disapproved of any action on the lines suggested by Marling, chiefly because he believed that a provocative policy would not eliminate the belligerent attitude of the southern khāns.³ The war in

¹ Military Report, Present campaign., p. 10.
² Cox to Grant, telegram, no. 1083, 11 May 1915, FO 371/2432.
³ Hardinge to Austen Chamberlain (Secretary of State for India,
Mesopotamia, too, militated at all times against India's involvement in Persian affairs. "India," as Hirtzel was to comment rather grudgingly at a similar reaction of the viceroy later on, "was too bogged down with her Mesopotamian operations to notice any trouble at [her] door."1 Yet, on this occasion at least, the viceroy was right.

Bushihr was in fact occupied at dawn on 8 August. Its occupation provoked more anti-British feeling. The British flag was hoisted on the customs house; four ships and their cargo, including the Persepolice and the Mazaffari, were confiscated; martial law was imposed inside the town; the gendarmerie detachment was ordered to evacuate its posts at the Burj-e Jalīl and their arms were confiscated;2 everyone had to produce their passes on entering and leaving the town. Stringent measures were taken against trouble makers and recalcitrant tribes. Among those arrested were Muhammad Rizā Darrīs (editor of the newspaper Islāh), Sālār All, son of Ghazānfar al-Saltanān (khan of Burāzjān), Muqavqar al-Dauleh was placed under house arrest. The names of many merchants were placed on the famous British "Black List".3 An embargo

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1 Hirtzel, I.O., minute, register no. 3294, 21 Jan. 1916, L/P & S/10/580, 16/1916.
2 Oertenberg, Shiraz, to Edvall, 8 Aug. 1915; enclosed in letter from latter to Ministry of the Interior, no. 95, 9 Aug. 1915 (French text); IFOA, 66/31, 1915. Bushihr Trade Report for year 21 March 1915-21 March 1916, compiled by H.G. Chick (Commercial Secretary) and assisted by N. Worrall (Vice-Consul, Isfahan), no. 545, annual series (printed). Bound volume of the Trade Reports for Bushihr, Lingeh, and Muhammarah, 1914-23, MECL, HC 471.
3 Among them: Häjjī Muhammad Ibrāhīm Malik al-Tujjār, Isfāhānī; Häjjī Abbās Arab, Isfāhānī; Häjjī Amīr al-Tujjār Būshīhri (resident, Isfāhān); Häjjī Abd al-Rahmān Shirāzī; Häjjī Lutf Allī Tabrīzī, Safā & Co., Ltd (Bushihr); Mīr Abd al-Bāghī & Sons (Kirmānshāh); Mashadī Ismā'īl Salmāsī (Kirman); and a host of both Persian firms and trading companies and those of other
was imposed on goods, especially grain, wheat, and rice, going from Bushihr to the tribes of Tangistān and Burāżjan. But this did not prove to be very effective since what happened was that the Hayāt Dāvūdī or Angalī, friendly to the British normally, who were provided with licences to come into town and buy their rations of rice, sugar, tea, cotton materials, etc., in bulk, would in turn sell some of these goods to the Burāżjānī who would then distribute them in Tangistān. The British authorities soon got wind of this practice, however, and reduced the rations of those tribes which held licences.¹

The tribes continued their hostilities. On 13 August, British Blue Jackets from H.M.S. Juno and some Indian Infantry rushed the fort of Dilvār (Dilbar), burning the village. In the confusion of the fight with the Dilvārī, H.M.S. Juno accidentally opened fire on the British troops. The navy lost nine men including the commander of the ship and seventeen wounded. The Indian troops had fifty men killed and wounded.² The Dilvārīs, led by the charismatic Ra'īs All (Kadkhudā of Dilvār) felt victorious and with Wassmuss's encouragement, the next big attack on Bushihr was planned. This took place in September. Early on the morning of 9 September, the leading khāns of Tangistān and their men occupied the ravines at the edge of the māshilleh (a mud stretch track lying between Bushihr island and the mainland). British guns began firing and maintained action for an hour and a half

¹ Interview: Mr. All Zakāvat, Bushihr, 18 Apr. 1972.
² Marling to Grey, telegr. no. 287 (K), Military, P. 103404, 18 Aug., FO 371/2433. The Tangistānīs claimed many more British and Indian troops were killed on this occasion.
until the infantry charged with bayonets. The tribes retreated northwards across the māshilleh and at this point a squadron of the 16th Cavalry charged into their scattered lines inflicting heavy casualties. Suddenly, however, the cavalrymen found themselves enveloped in the thick of the rising morning mist and were rushed upon by the tribes. The casualties were very heavy on both sides\(^1\) but the Tangistānīs claimed yet another victory and morale shot up. There was pressure from all quarters, India, the India Office, and even Marling at Tehran who had changed his mind about his own original proposal, to pull out of Bushihr since the situation appeared to have deteriorated rather than improved. Finally, on 18 October, Bushihr was formally handed back to the Persians on the arrival of the new governor, Daryā Begī. Assurances were extracted from the latter and the Central Government that order would be maintained in future. The British left after they had made quite sure that they were, through their local agents, well in control of the city.

The occupation of Bushihr was significant if only by way of demonstrating that the British Government was now interfering more vigorously and openly in the administration of the southern regions, still to a large extent through former methods, that is, reliance on the Gendarmerie force having now been set aside, arrangements with Bakhtīārī khāns were renewed or extended in May and August, pro-British local magnates such as Qavām al-Mālk in Shiraz, Sardār Zafar and

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\(^1\) Major R.S. Rothwell, "With a Side Show in Persia", in Artillery Commemoration Book (Simla, 1918), pp. 320-324. Major Rothwell was formerly with the Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force, took part in the battle of Shaiba, April 1915. He was commissioned to join Brigadier General H.T. Brooking (commanding the Bushihr Force) in July 1915 and took part in this battle. The Bushihr Force was nicknamed the Royal Bushire Artillery by the men.
Sardār Nusrat in Kirman were strengthened, and even Saulat al-Dauleh was temporarily bought off to maintain security on the southern roads. There was also talk at the time of sending the Zill al-Sultan with about 2,300 British troops to pacify the south. The relevance and importance of the neutral zone to Britain was brought into light largely in the discussions which followed the new arrangements arrived at with the Russians in the spring of 1915.

The Foreign Office, before the start of hostilities had accepted in principle that the Convention of 1907 had become a dead letter and had shown herself ready to reopen negotiations with the Russians on the subject. This was done in March 1915 when, before the intended attack of British troops on Gallipoli, it became necessary to review the position of the Allies, in short, to spell out the spoils of war in the event of an Allied victory. So, between January and April 1915, Britain embarked on a series of four secret partition treaties which came to be called the Constantinople Agreement. Italy was bribed into the war after some haggling she had with Austria over some territories and declared war on Austria in mid-May 1915; a vague agreement was also made with the French on the partition of Turkey. Among these arrangements, an understanding was reached with Russia through an exchange of notes on 12 and 20 March which agreed basically

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1 For information on various proposals concerning the pacification of the south see FO 371/2438, files 159364, 158229, 161734, 18188. For arrangements with the Bakhtīārī and generally for a study of British policy toward the Bakhtīārī and its effects in Persia, see G.R. Garthwaite, "The Bakhtiyari Khans: tribal Disunity in Iran" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1969), pp. 30-38, 89, 201, 206-209, 267; idem, "The Bakhtiar Khans, the Government of Iran, and the British, 1846-1915", IJMES, vol. 3, pp. 22-44.

that in return for the post-war annexation by Russia of Constantinople and the Straits, Britain would be allowed to have a free hand in the neutral zone in Persia. Grey was unable to make any definite proposals on any point of the British desiderata, save that concerning the neutral zone. Russia agreed but demanded further that Isfahan, Yazd and their districts should form the boundaries of the Russian zone and that she too should be granted "liberty of action in her sphere [including] the right preferentially to develop her financial and economic policy." Discussions over the revised boundaries continued intermittently over the next two years between British diplomats themselves and between them and the Russians, revealing basically the high price which both Powers attached to Isfahan and its immediate districts, in the general auction of Persian territory between themselves.

The Government of India, under the impression that Russia had now invited Britain to partition Persia, expressed her profound disapproval of such a policy, pointed to the difference between "Partition" and "Spheres of Influence" and hoped that the former could be avoided. Between March and June in fact, the core of the viceroy's argument was that only in the last resort, i.e., if Persia were to go to war against the Allies, would the Indian Government consider "Partition" as an "unwelcome necessity". They regarded the "additional responsibilities entailed, vague and undefined as they are, with utmost diffidence ..." However, if this was going to

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1 Hurewitz, op. cit., pp. 249-251.
2 Viceroy to S.S. India, telegr. no. 3, 19 Apr. 1915, Appendix A to secret memorandum by the Political Dept, India Office, "Revision of the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907" prepared by Hirtzel, August 1915. L/P & S/18/C142.
3 Ibid.
take place, they wished to include in the British zone the province of Qâ'în, Yazd, Isfahan, the Bakhtîârî and Luristan regions. Apart from the strategical importance of these areas, the viceroy argued, "without Yazd and Isfahan our commercial position in southern Persia will not be materially improved, while politically it is obviously undesirable that we should have on the borders of our zone two large and important centres of Russian influence, which might become foci of intrigue."1 Moreover, Bakhtîârî interests were seen to be intimately bound up with Isfahan because the latter place:

"... controls the Bakhtiarî country, tribes, and interests, has the shorter and better line of communication with our base on the sea, is the terminus of the Lynch Road, is better placed for securing our Mesopotamian and oil interests against pressure from the coast, would enable us to operate with better effect against any advance southward from the Caspian."2

So India basically had the security of oil and Mesopotamia in mind as well as the security of the borders of India, the commerce of India. The threats were seen to be from enemies from the direction of the south-west and Russia from the north. As to Russia's demands for liberty of action in her own sphere, the Government of India preferred to see both powers "limiting the introduction of troops and amount of administrative interference" in their respective spheres.3

The India Office next set about preparing a memorandum on the subject which reflected much of the realistic and positive approach of Sir Arthur Hirtzel who prepared it. He began by pointing to the weaknesses of the 1907 Convention, then outlined Russian interests and position in Persia, and lastly,

1 From the viceroy, 12 June 1915, telegr. no. 5, Appendix A, India Office Memo, Aug. 1915, L/P & S/18/C142.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.
analysed the pros and cons of Russian demands in relation to British interests. He responded to India's practical demands in a positive way: the viceroy had expressed concern at the omission of Mesopotamia in the discussions "which apart from its own special importance certainly cannot be divorced strategically from the Persian question." ¹ Hirtzel agreed on the latter point but criticised the benevolent approach of the Indian Government. He thought it best to accept that a policy of restraint on the part of both Powers was not workable since Russia was already practising almost unlimited freedom of action in her own sphere and he emphasised the great importance to British interests of recovering her position and freedom of action in Isfahan, both as regards the Bakhtiari, the approaches to the oil wells, the Persian Gulf, and the regions of Baghdad to Basrah and with them the Karun Valley. ²

The Foreign Office, on the whole, while agreeing with the importance of Isfahan and its adjacent districts, was not particularly concerned at this stage with the dangers of Russian influence in Persia. Marling pointed out that Russian influence, though it had become serious competition, "was never in danger of eclipsing our own, and at present British influence was comparatively the greater of the two." ³ Isfahan was important to the Russians. Marling recalled that when he had last seen Sazonov, the latter had insisted that Russians should certainly demand to retain it "to protect Russian trade in the Russian sphere from competition of British merchants"

² Barrow, memo, ibid., echoed the traditional attitudes of military school of thought in continuing to visualise the question still in terms of a possible future war with Russia.
³ Marling, note annexed to F.O. Memo Respecting the Revision of the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 (Persia), confidential, 10710, 31 Aug. 1918; L/P & S/18/C154.
and had hinted that Britain may have Yazd. Russia also wanted an extension from Isfahan and Yazd districts to the Zulfaqār salient in the east, for reasons which Sazonov "could not explain, as he did not understand them."\(^1\) In conclusion, the Foreign Office thought that perhaps as a concession to Isfahan, the Russians could be given the oil bearing districts in the neighbourhood of Kirmanshah which appeared to be important to them and also another thing which they had asked for, viz., the limitation of the activities and rights of the Imperial British Bank in the north. This in effect was where matters more or less stood though negotiations over revised boundaries continued with the Russians during 1916 and into 1917 when the Russians came up with the suggestion that the delimitation of the zones should take place on ethnological and geographical lines and at Curzon's "alarm" over this suggestion, matters were postponed and remained inconclusive with the interruption caused by the October Revolution.\(^2\)

In all these exchanges of opinion, Persia, "having behaved so badly"\(^3\) up to then received but scant consideration. The Indian Government was still hoping to set the country on its feet but Hirtzel passed the last judgement on the likely course of future policy there with the gloomy pronouncement that:

"Surely we know enough now to realize that it is idle to talk of 'making revival of Persia possible'. The happiness and prosperity of the people of that unfortunate country depend, so far as can be foreseen,\

\(^1\) Ibid.

\(^2\) For comments on the above F.O. memo and further discussions on the secret arrangements see L/P & S/10/455, 2696/1914, p. 4762; also L/P & S/18/C149; FO 371/2978, file 4594 and FO 371/2980. It was more or less understood that the Russians could have Isfahan.

\(^3\) Hirtzel, I.O. Memo., Aug. 1915, op. cit.
upon administration which only outside control—whether directly or indirectly exercised—can secure. A scheme for such control ought to be part of our settlement, not only in the interest of the people, but as a means of obviating friction between ourselves and Russia. Probably it would take the form of Inspectors-General, Russian and British, in our respective spheres."

What speeded up the realization of the above scheme by the two Great Powers was the last efforts of the "unfortunate" Persians to side with the Central Powers in the autumn of 1915.

Marling had failed to get any form of guarantee on the question of Persian neutrality from 'Ain al-Dauleh. The latter had been selected in May by the ministers of the two legations as a leading statesman, "on account of his long experience and of the weight his name carries as the most suitable man to steer the ship of the Persian state through a storm;" as such he had no real party behind him but was supported by a mixture of moderate, independent, and conservative groups while he was under the constant strain of extreme and moderate Democrat pressure. According to Marling, he had at first been willing to work on the basis of "payment by results", i.e., that when he achieved something toward the objective of keeping Persia neutral and free of German and pro-German agents, the British and the Russians would in turn try to "strengthen his position". But apparently, neither money nor promises had moved him. He had refused or delayed accepting everything offered to him and had consistently demanded one thing, namely, the withdrawal of Russian troops from Tabriz and Rasht—something which neither Marling nor

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1 Memorandum, I.O., August 1915, L/P & S/18/C142.
2 Marling to Grey, telegram, no. 97, 7 July 1915, FC, part V, p. 15, FO 416/63.
3 Ibid.
de Etter, nor apparently the conservative factions in the National Consultative Assembly were prepared to accord. So, 'Ain al-Dauleh had disappointed the hopes of the two ministers, perhaps not so much because he had proved himself to be a false friend of the two Legations but more so on account of the fact that the pull of the anti-Allied Power factions in government proved to be the stronger. His cabinet indeed fell on the impeachment of Farman Farmā, Minister of the Interior. The latter was believed to have instigated a contingent of Sandjabī tribesmen, in his pay, to give a party of Turks a rough time when the latter made a weak incursion into Persian territory in the vicinity of Kirmanshah. His resignation was asked for not so much due to the episode itself but because it was believed that he had received money from, and acted at the instigation of, the ministers of the British and Russian legations. 'Ain al-Dauleh supported Farman Farmā declaring that if the latter were to be dismissed the whole cabinet would resign. This indeed is what happened. Despite the fact that the two Legations were spending money freely to buy votes and voices and to install a cabinet friendly to the Allies in office, they failed yet again.

Mustaufi al-Mamālik's cabinet formed over a month after the resignation of 'Ain al-Dauleh, showed itself even less co-operative than the last. Marling wished to see the matter settled once and for all. The only course open to the British Government, he believed, was to bring pressure on the cabinet of Mustaufi. Persia ought to be given a choice of:

1 Marling to Grey, telegr. no. 276, 10 Aug. 1915, FC, part V, FO 416/63.
"... declaring herself for or against us ... it would be akin to asking her to break off relation with enemy Powers; distinction is too subtle for average Persian and steps would be so signal as to leave no room for half-measures or doubts. If Persia wished to join us, she must declare war on those Powers, and in that case we would agree to moratorium from now until, say three years after end of war. In the contrary case the two Legations would at once leave the country . . ."

Marling was becoming more and more agitated; he had exhausted all the means by which he hoped to control the government without the actual use of force.  

Internal conditions had fast deteriorated since the end of spring. In May, the chief of the Russian Bank D’Escompte, was assassinated. On 1 September, the British consul at Isfahan, Graham, was fired at and wounded and one of his Indian orderlies killed. On the 7th, the British vice-consul in Shiraz was shot and wounded and died the next day, and on 23 October the munshi and a ghulâm (mounted servant) of the Shiraz consulate were also shot at; the ghulâm died. By now, too, British and Russian colonies were one by one being driven out of main centres. In April, when the Turks had entered Kermanshah, the British consul, William McDouall, and the Russian consul were made to leave the town and settled in Hamadan. On 25 August, McDouall and the newly appointed Russian consul to Kermanshah, Baron Chirkassov, tried to return to their posts in Kermanshah but were held up by the

1 Marling to Grey, telegram no. 316, 4 Sep. 1915, p. 33, FC, part V, FO 416/63.
2 In November, Qavām and Saulat al-Du‘lah were made responsible for keeping order in Fars. Mukbhir al-Saltaneh was recalled as Governor-General (he did not leave Shiraz immediately), Qavām was appointed as acting Governor-General, and Saulat made governor of Dashti and Dashtistān. They were to receive a subsidy of £50,000 from the British, £10,000 of this was given to them by Marling on 1 Nov. 1915. Marling to Grey, correspondence between 20 Oct. and 5 Nov. 1915 on the question of negotiations with the tribes to secure their allegiance in the event of war with Persia. See p. 159364, 158229, 161734, FO 371/2437.
German Shunneman and about 200 of his levies at Kangävar and fell back on Hamadan. Captain Sonesson, the Swedish officer in charge of the Gendarmerie regiment of Kirmanshah, refused to send an escort to meet them on a trifling excuse and attempts to get gendarmes from another post failed. Isfahan was evacuated by the Allied communities on 1 September. The incidents of violence and murder of foreign subjects were blamed on the provincial committees.¹

In Shiraz, Qavām al-Mulk appeared to be quite incapable of controlling the city. The morning of 10 November was a dramatic day for O'Connor. The consulate was surrounded by armed gendarmes (Swedish officers having left the city on some pretext the day before), and a letter signed by the National Committee for the protection of Persian Independence was handed over to the consulate asking the staff to prepare themselves to leave as prisoners in three hours. O'Connor states that he burned all his correspondence, deposited the sum of £2,000, which he had saved from the Fars budget, with the consulate's neighbour and delivered himself to his captors.² Altogether eleven members of the British community were arrested (four women and seven men) and taken via Kāzirūn to the fort of Ahram. The women were escorted to Bushihr. Wassmuss travelled for part of the way with the prisoners and

² O'Connor, On the Frontier, pp. 134-140, 144. Townley states that O'Connor seems not to have been in the habit of destroying his confidential papers. "The correspondence published by Germans [viz., Dokumente zur Erdrosselung Persiens] shows that he had a most pernicious and reprehensible habit, quite at variance with the situation, of writing on his ciphers the figures of any group which he could not make out...by so doing he must have given away to the Germans the cyphers he used," Townley to Hardinge, private letter, 12 April 1917, p. 78870, FO 371/2978 (copy).
chatted with the consul about the political climate in Persia and elsewhere. This was indeed a victory for the Tangistânîs who did not return the prisoners until August of the next year when the latter were exchanged for some fourteen Persian prisoners interned at Tahna whom the British had captured in the south between February and August 1915.

Yet even throughout October, though the German threat was directed more at the British in Persia, the authorities in London and India felt fairly confident about the security of the oilfields and Mesopotamia. In the latter place, Townshend defeated Turkish forces at Küt al-Amara and marched on in the direction of Ctesiphon where the Turks were again routed but at great cost of life to British troops. At the beginning of November, the retreat to Kut al-Amara began to cause some anxiety and from then onwards British prestige in Persia began to decline rapidly. The Turks were able to deploy some troops and began their march into Persia. The Russian and British colonies left Hamadan for Tehran on 23 November and the Turks pushed forward beyond Hamadan.

So long as good relations with the Shaikh of Muhammarah could be maintained, the Ka'ab and the Bawîs were not likely to cause further trouble and the Bakhtîārî too, apart from some dissenters, were not very well armed, besides which they had their interests in oil. It was important to hold the portable water supply at the oil fields in order to hold off a sustained attack on British positions in the south. These were some of the points raised at the inter-departmental committee meeting representing the Admiralty, War Office, F.O. and I.O., which met on 3 Oct. to consider the question of the defence, invasion, and evacuation of the A.P.O.C. oilfields and pipeline in south-west Persia. In conclusion it was decided that a couple of battalions and some guns could ward off any future trouble from the khâns and recommended that a force be despatched without delay to the oilfields. "So long as certain measures are taken, we can always rely on being able to detach a sufficient force for oil duty so long as we maintain in the Basra-Ahvaz region a force of not less than two brigades of infantry, 2 regiments of cavalry, and 2 batteries of horse and mountain artillery." (Enclosure no. 6 in F.O. ti I.O., no. 152947, immediate and confidential, 23 Oct. 1915, L/P & S/10/C143 and p. 26162, FO 371/2734.) One brigade was sent to Ahvaz in November.
Meanwhile in the capital and elsewhere, pro-German parties appeared to be gaining ground. The Foreign Office, seeing that the British Government was unable to spare any troops for Persia, urged the Russians to despatch some troops as soon as they possibly could. This was duly done. General Barratov was ordered to Persia on 20 October as commander of an expeditionary force made up of troops at the Caucasian front. The advance party of the corps under General Zolotazyov marched to about 15 miles north of Tehran, on 14 November. The city was thrown into a state of panic. Mustaufi al-Mamālik's cabinet was pulled in all directions. A moratorium on the already contracted debts had been granted by the Allies to the Government in October but the Germans apparently came up with a higher offer. Issues, motives, and objectives became thoroughly confused. It was not entirely clear to the Persians whether the Turks and the Swedes, inspired by the Germans, were preparing to deliver an attack against the British or the Persians. There were considerable comings and goings between the various foreign legations and the Persian Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The unfortunate Ahmad Shah was made dizzy by conflicting advice from all quarters. Young, weak-willed, insecure and useless as he otherwise was, he became instantly important in his symbolic capacity as head of state. The hour of action finally arrived. The majority of the Majlis deputies and the cabinet, encouraged by the Germans, decided to remove themselves from the capital and set up government in Isfahan where the Shah was advised to join them.

Apparently, the plan to change the seat of government to Isfahan had emerged with German collaboration and the knowledge of Ahmad Shah in April 1915. The exodus from Tehran

began on 15 November. Among the muhājirīn, as they came to be called, were numerous eminent members of Persian society including a few ministers, some of the cabinet secretariat staff and deputies, mujtahids, intellectuals, Swedish and Persian officers and men of the Central Brigade, and finally a motley crowd who probably had even less idea of what was happening than the rest.¹ Horse-drawn carriages and carts, horses and mules, and every other obtainable form of transport packed the road from Shah Abd al-Azīm (south of Tehran) to Qum during the night and early morning of the 15th. The migration continued on the following day and the court announced the decision of the Shah to leave the capital; Ahmad Shah stood ready in his riding clothes, in a state of

¹ Among the deputies were Sulaimān Mīrzā, Muhammad Sādiq Tabātabā’ī, Shaikh Muhammad Husain Astārābādī, Saiyid Fāzīl /Kāshānī, Saiyid Muhammad Rizā Musāvāt; others included Hājji Nūr-Allāh Mujtahid Arāghī, Qavām al-Ulāmā Kirmānshāhī, Yahyā Daulāt Abādī, Sardār Muqtadir, 'Ārif, 'Ishqī, Bahā al-Vā'izāin, Hājīj, Sālār Muhtashīm Zarqānī, Yāvar Mahmūd Khān Pūlādīn. On the muhājirat see Sipihr's own account in Sipihr, Iran, pp. 237-277. He accompanied Prince Reuss in a carriage to Qum and himself went as far as Sultānābād and then returned to the capital. Sipihr also quotes from the memoirs of Litten (German consul), pp. 239 f.; Rudolf Nadolny (German Chargé d'Affaires in Kirmanshah), pp. 278-285; Vahīd al-Mulk Shaibānī, pp. 277-278; Mīhrān Khān Ārāmpūr (eldest son of the brigand Māshāl Khān Kāshānī), pp. 300-302; another muhājir, pp. 302-305; Mu'āzīd al-Mulk (the karguzār of Kirmanshah), pp. 305-313. See further, Rizā Allāh Divān Baigī, Safar-e Muhājirat dar Nakhṣūtīn Jang-e Jahānī, pp. 4 f., 27-39, 54-79 ff.; Mūtasim al-Saltānī (Saiyid Mīhrān Farrukhī), Khātirāt-e Sīāsī-ye Farrukh (Tehran, 1973), pp. 10-14. Hassan Hālāj (editor of Hālāj newspaper), Kitāb-e Tārīkh-e Niẓāmat-e Irān yā Tārīkh-e Māshātāt (Tehran, n.d.), pp. 89-115 and idem, Tārīkh-e Tahavulāt-e Sīāsī-ye Irān dar qurūn-e muṭāṣir (Tehran, n.d.), pp. 52-67. Hālāj, on the whole, believed that the Government should have maintained its neutrality; Husain Samī'ī Adīb al-Saltānī, "Khātirāt!", and Hājī Azz al-Mamālik Ardalān, "Yād-dāsht-hā", in Avvālīn Qiyām-e muggadas-e Millī-ye Iran, pp. 1-106; Abd Allāh Mustauffī, Sharh-e Zindīgānī-ye Man, vol. 2, p. 465; Mustauffī was not involved in the muhājirat and was against the Democrats in general. He admits, however, that some of them were motivated by patriotic feelings; Yahyā Daulāt Abādī, Hāyat-e Yahyā: Tārīkh-e Muṭāṣir (Tehran, 1331 AH), pp. 311-369.
extreme agitation and anxiety. He had finally agreed to receive the ministers of the British and Russian legations after repeated requests from the latter for a last-minute audience of him.

The atmosphere at the capital was tense with speculation and apprehension. No one was really certain what the outcome and eventualities of this move might be. Those who have left records of their experiences during the migration understandably tend to dwell on the heroic nature of their own decisions to part with families and friends and face the hazards of open commitment to the enemies of the Great Powers. Yet little has been said about the greater anxiety which the majority of the citizens must have suffered in these turbulent times. The prospects of a possible Turco-German military victory over Allied forces in Persia were, if not all that remote, at least somewhat vague, whilst the threat of a military occupation of Tehran by Russian forces (notwithstanding the Turkish threat from the west) was a very real one. But suddenly all became anti-climax when it was announced that Ahmad Shah had after all decided to remain in the capital. Marling and de Etter having called on him on the night of the 16th had, with the assistance of the pro-Allied party, courtiers, and ministers,1 dissuaded him from departing on the promise that Russian troops would withdraw from Karaj if order was restored.

The promise was kept; the troops withdrew from Karaj on 25 November and joined the main body of the Russian expeditionary force which split into two corps: one operating

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1 Notably Farmān Farmā, Sipahdār (Muhammad Valī Khān Tunakābūnī), and Samsām al-Saltanah Bakhtīārī, Siphir, Irān, p. 239; Gehrke, Persien, quotes Edvall, II, 322-323.
on the Tehran-Hamadan road and the other heading towards Sāveh and Qum. Here the muhājirīn had set up a Committee of National Defence (Kumitih-ye Häfizān-e Istiqālāl) and despatched representatives to various districts, especially in the West. Before the arrival of Russian troops in Qum, the "rebels" retreated and dispersed, some going to Isfahan and then Kirmanshah, the main body working their way from Kashan to Kirmanshah via Sultanabad and Burūjird. In Kirmanshah, a provisional government was elected, headed by Nizām al-Saltaneh Māfī,1 a formal pact was signed with the Germans and efforts were made to consolidate some 8,000 gendarmes, tribal levies (mainly Lurs and Kurds, some Arabs and Turkic Azarbaijānīs, some Bakhtīārī, and Qashqā'ī), and mujāhīds in general, into a fighting force to confront the Russians. Rizā Ālī Divān Begi who participated in the muhājirat and finally ended up in Turkey, recounts the confusing state of military and political affairs in these areas where the provisional government maintained contact with German agents, Turks, and the Central Government at Tehran, and where there was quarrelling between tribes, between Germans and Turks, and between the latter and the Persians, over military operations and other issues. The main area of conflict between the opposing Russian and Turko-Persian forces appears to have been Hamadan-Kangāvar-Malāyir and the Garrūss passes where each district rapidly changed hands until well into the month of March 1916 by which time Russian troops had finally routed the last bodies of Turks and gendarmes and muhājir from the Persian frontier. The latter drifted eventually into Istanbul, some remaining

1 Other members included Adīb al-Saltaneh (Internal Affairs); Mīrza Qāsim Khān (Posts and Telegraphs); Muddarris (Justice); and Ardalān (Commerce).
in Baghdad, others returning to the capital or other provinces of the country.¹

Those, like Sulaimān Mīrzā and Vahīd al-Mulk, who had worked very hard toward making a success of the Perso-German alliance were very disillusioned. The venture failed partly, on a practical level, because its leadership was brittle, its armed forces badly organised and lacking in funds and equipment, while morale waned with the passage of time. More seriously, the conditions for its success rested predominantly on Turko-German practical aid, whereas it should properly have rested on the active participation and support of the mass of Persians and the court at the Centre. Short of military threats and measures, the Allies could and did rely on their own friends and lackeys among the leaders of the nation to turn the situation in their own favour. Perhaps to the average Persian it was easier to put up with old enemies than acquire new friends whose motives in Persia were not entirely clear. Perhaps too, for those members of the government who either stayed or returned to the capital, there was no choice but to co-operate with the Allies.

Throughout the month of December, however, the situation was still grave for the Allies. With the advance of Turkish troops and the agitation of rebel elements in other parts of the country, British and Russian colonies were forced

¹ Divān Baigī, op. cit., pp. 70-74; Gehrke, Persien, I, 172-181 ff., 230-232; Gehrke points to the technical errors of the German expedition, namely, that they made the mistake of mobilising tribes from various parts of the country to fight in another part and that this contributed greatly to the ultimate disaster. This is an important point as far as the practical difficulties of the muḥājirīn is concerned but it is not an adequate explanation. Gehrke does, however, rightly point out that though the Germans failed to bring about a widespread revolution against the Allies, they did succeed in giving the latter much trouble and anxiety over Persia, ibid., I, 317.
out of Hamadan (23 November), Sultanabad (9 December), Kirman (14 December), Yazd (17 December). Ahvaz, Isfahan, and Shiraz had already been evacuated.

The Shah and Mustaufi were giving some tentative thought to the question of an alliance with the Allies. The Shah had apparently suggested that an alliance should be drawn up between Persia and all Allied Powers while Marling was advising him against this and insisting instead on an alliance between Persia, Russia, and Great Britain only. Mustaufi boldly drew up the terms of an alliance. Confidence had risen in the capital once again since the prestige of the Allies appeared to be in decline in the East generally. By mid-December in Persia, as Marling put it, "the Germans are master of all Persia" south of the line Yazd-Qum-Sultanabad-Kirmanshah. More serious was the unsatisfactory state of affairs in Mesopotamia where the Turks began to lay siege to Townshend's force at Kut shortly after this place was reached on 3 December along the British line of retreat. Elsewhere too, the position of the Allies did not look too promising.

1 Marling to Grey, tel. no. 504, 1 Dec. 1915, p. 162503, FO 371/2438.

2 Approximately 150,000 Allied troops (90,000 British), were locked up in Salonica; another large force was in Gallipoli and other forces were concentrated in Egypt and Mesopotamia for defensive purposes. Until Nixon and Townshend were out of danger, there were no troops for Persia or anywhere else unless taken from France. One of the potential dangers was that the Central Powers' forces could contain Salonica and Gallipoli, which would give them time to organise an attack on Egypt, send reinforcements to Baghdad and Persia, and perhaps win over the Arab population to the east and south of their line of attack. One of the solutions to this problem was to solidify Russian presence in eastern Anatolia and north-eastern Persia. G. Clerk, minute, register no. 189732, 16 Dec. 1915, FO 371/2438. For increasing anxiety about oilfields in November and December, see telegraphic correspondence of Mr. Greenway of the A.F.O.C. (Gresham House) to Agents in Iran demanding the need for a force: Sardārs Jang, Muhtashim, and Amīr Mujāhid, three of the Bakhtīārī khāns, were proved to be definitely pro-German. Enclosures in Greenway to Oliphant, no. 187/16, 26 Nov. 1915,
The conditions set out in the terms of the alliance for guaranteeing Persia's so-called "benevolent neutrality" were anything but timid. They included certain territorial acquisitions, financial compensation, the organisation of an army of 50,000 men and instructing officers from foreign powers, the revision of the treaty of Turkwmanchai, the revision of tariffs, the diminution of Russian privileges acquired in consequence of the ultimatum of 1911, and the cancellation of the obligation of Persia to recognise the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907.

It is not clear whether Mustaufi al-Mamālik was trying to strike a good bargain while conditions were favourable to Persia or deliberately aiming at the outright rejection of the alliance by the Powers. What is clear is that public opinion was strongly against any guarantee of neutrality. Mustaufi kept delaying the presentation of the actual text of the alliance to the two Legations—possibly playing for time in the hope that Turco-Persian forces would eventually win the struggle. Perhaps at this point, more than any other in the history of the war in Persia, Persian statesmen blundered through lack of foresight and a failure to move with speed. For, ultimately, Persia ended up by not only being forced to keep her neutrality and submit to a higher degree of intervention on the part of the two Powers, but she failed to get anything in return for it either. Admittedly, the military situation everywhere kept changing continuously and sometimes everything was totally


1 Marling to Grey, tel., urgent and most confidential, no. 505, 2 Dec. p. 182503, FO 371/2438 and Marling to Grey, tel., urgent and most confidential, no. 508 (K), 4 Dec. p. 182503, FO 371/2438.
obscure; moreover, the Allies on their part delayed committing themselves to any compromise in return for Persian neutrality. Delays worked to their advantage since the Russians had all the more time to consolidate their forces in northern Persia.

The differences of opinion between the British authorities reflected the degree of anxiety felt by each department over the situation in general. The Foreign Office officials on the whole, including Grey, thought that further consultations were needed; Nicolson did not see what good an alliance would do if "Persian public opinion continued to be against it." The War Office and the India Office showed themselves more favourably disposed toward the problem. Robertson thought that from a military point of view, "it is worth paying a very high price to ensure having Persia or part of it on our side under existing conditions." Chamberlain believed that even if an alliance "would not do anything, a rupture would be worse," though he shared Grey's and Nicolson's misgivings. The Russians argued that these demands were excessive, Sazonov also pointing out that Russia was not in a position to furnish any arms and ammunition for the army in question. At the most they would try to deploy more troops from the Caucasian front to back the ones already heading for Kirmanshah. He did think, however, that perhaps Russia could supply some officers for Persia's envisaged army.

1 Mushir al-Mulk was urging the Persian Government, from London, to press on with the conditions laid out in the agreement and claimed that he was doing his best to convince the authorities in London to accept them. Mīḥdī Khān to Mustauffī al-Mamālik, telegr. 143, 29 Nov. 1915 (21 Muḥarram, 1334), IFOA 66/34, 1334/1915.


4 Chamberlain, quoted in minute, 10 Dec. 1915, FO 371/2438.

anxious as always to pin the Persians down to a guarantee of neutrality as soon as possible, showed his irritation at Sazonov's reaction. The latter seemed "not to realize fully or not at all the delicacy of the situation in Tehran" and elsewhere. Marling and de Etter were finding it very difficult to select a suitable cabinet; the Shah and the "Prime Minister", according to Marling, were "sincerely" in favour of an alliance but the professional politicians for reasons related to "public opinion" were covertly hostile to the Allies. To have turned towards the more compromising politicians such as A'ālā al-Saltaneh, Farmān Farmā or Sipahdār-i A'zam was not, in Marling's opinion very helpful at the time since the Sipahdār and A'ālā were only valuable as "passive" voters in the cabinet and the times were not yet ripe for the total Anglophile Farmān Farmā.

Meanwhile, Chamberlain wrote to Hardinge that since the question of the loan of Russian and British officers would be discussed in connection with the alliance negotiations, was India in a position to provide any officers? The Russians had apparently settled for lending about 20. The viceroy replied on 15 December expressing his profound disapproval of the whole scheme. He assumed that the Persian terms for an alliance would be regarded by His Majesty's Government as "prohibitive and preposterous" and continued:

"... even if negotiated we should have considerable difficulty in providing suitable officers at present and should certainly hesitate to recommend employment.

1 Marling to Grey, telegr. no. 512 (K), 5 Dec. 1915, p. 185866, FO 371/2438.
2 Marling to Grey, telegr. no. 519 (K), 9 Dec. 1915, p. 182503, FO 371/2438.
of British officers until situation has considerably cleared."

He thought it advantageous instead if Russian troops were to move on to Qum and Tehran to steady the situation.1

By now, Mustaufi, owing to the pressure of public opinion, was talking of resigning. He confessed to Marling that the Persian Government was powerless in the face of the rebellion in the central and southern provinces and that the situation was now in the hands of the Russian, General Barratov. Since it appeared that the alliance negotiations had not come to anything, he was now proposing, to substitute a new proposal to the Allies, the most important points of which were that:

"Persia is to adopt a policy of benevolent neutrality and in order to have a force capable of putting down German agitation, Cossack Brigade is to be increased to 10,000 men with Russian officers. The two Powers to give or to assist Persia to obtain arms, equipments... and agree to a small increase of import duties on sugar and cotton goods..."2

Nicolson minuted Marling's telegram with the comment, "this is best we can hope for in present circumstances."3 The Shah was now proposing Sipahdār-i A'zām for the post of Sadr-e A'zām. Marling and the Foreign Office favoured Farmān Farmā and Buchanan reported from Petrograd that the Russians also shared the view that Farmān Farmā should be appointed. Once this was done, however, the Russian Legation lost no time in consolidating its relations with the "Russian" party in the cabinet and parliament, and helped to transform the idea of an alliance into that of a simple agreement which provided in the main, and at first, for the increase of the Cossack

1 Viceroy to Sec. State, tel. (copy) no. 157 D.S., p. 190041, FO 371/2438.
Brigade in the north. On 9 January, Marling wrote to Grey that the Persian Government was indeed in the process of preparing this scheme which among other points was to be included in a general agreement with the two Powers. On hearing this, Marling had pointed out to Farmān Farmā and Sipahdār (Minister for Foreign Affairs) that His Majesty's Government:

"... may object to a situation which would, after the war, leave Persia with only one force, commanded by Russian trained officers ... and would certainly demand that any force that be required to maintain order in the south where British interests are so great, should similarly be under British influence."

A few days later he explained in another telegram that with the augmentation of the Cossack Brigade in the Russian sphere of influence, the Gendarmerie would have no raison d'être, even if there were to be enough money forthcoming to maintain it. He did not think, furthermore, that the southern problem would be solved if the remainder of the Gendarmerie force at the capital were to be sent to the south for the purpose. Out of the nine regiments, only three had more or less remained intact; the rest were engaged in desultory fighting or had dispersed. Marling therefore proposed that instead of tampering with any further schemes with the Swedes and the Gendarmerie, the Persian Government should be told of the "formation of [a] corps under British officers or instructors as soon as we find it convenient to do so." The Foreign Office and the India Office agreed unanimously. The task of winning India's favourable opinion rested with Chamberlain. He wrote

2 Marling to Grey, telegram, very confidential, no. 31(K), 13 Jan. 1916, reg. no. 160, L/P & S/10/579, 160/1916.
to Hardinge explaining the plans and added, "I realize difficulties, but both for restoration of order and to prevent disappearance of British influence outside Tehran similar arrangements under British officers, if practicable, would be highly desirable."¹ The viceroy at last consented to the arrangements. The Indian Government, he wrote, agreed with maintaining "visible sign of British influence outside Russian sphere" and added further, "we have always advocated raising of a force under British officers for that purpose."² Hirtzel was quick to point out the inconsistencies of the Indian Government since India had twice rejected in the last year, proposals for the project under discussion "which they now tell us they have 'always advocated' . . . this is a striking example that the government of India was overweighed with the conduct of the Mesopotamian operation."³

¹ Draft of telegram, I.O. to Viceroy, 14 Jan. 1916, FO 371/2732; Hardinge had written to London the day before, informing the authorities that India was not very worried about German moves eastward but in case of further raids in the eastern districts the Govt. of India had arranged "further distribution or arms and ammunition to reliable tribesmen; general rewards for services; generous outlay for obtaining intelligence, and increase of 200 men to Makran levies." Colonel Dew was sent to Makran to secure the co-operation of friendly chiefs. Hardinge to Chamberlain, tel. 13 Jan. 1916, FO 371/2732.

² Hardinge to Chamberlain, tel. (copy) no. 251 D.S., 19 Jan. 1916, reg. no. 227-8, L/P & S/10/579, 160/1916. Both the Viceroy and Commander-in-Chief (Sir Beauchamp Duff) argued throughout the summer and autumn of 1915 that India had no reserve of strength. She had only 8 British battalions left in the country—'all at the N.W. Frontier. Hardinge complained, "nothing comes to India, while India is paying out all the time" and he agreed with Sir Beauchamp Duff that "improvisation has practically reached its limit . . . we have nothing in hand in which to meet fresh possibilities either in Persia or Mesopotamia," Hardinge to Chamberlain, letter, private (extracts), 10 Sep. 1915, enclosed in Chamberlain to Asquith, private letter, 4 Oct. 1915; Asquith Papers, vol. 28, fol. 210-211 (Bodleian Library, Oxford)—see also fol. 214, 215-228, 235-237 for discussions and debates on troop movements and the Dardanelles operations.

Sykes was selected for the mission. Chamberlain was aware of the fact that the Persians would object to the formation of a force under the British since "this would involve recognition of sphere laid down in the Anglo-Russian Convention," but, he wrote, "the proposal should be pressed upon them." Sykes' duties were described as being "ostensibly" those of counteracting German moves eastwards and tied with arrangements already begun in this connection at Sistan. "When this is completed, then the actual existence of force ready to be placed at disposal of Persian government may help to overcome any objections which that government may feel to the scheme in principle." Oliphant believed that the sooner the matter was settled, the better and Nicolson was of the same opinion: "if the matter is initiated immediately and if the real purpose of the mission is disguised, I submit that we can dispense with the consent of the Persian government." The Russians had already approved the British proposals.

It can be seen, therefore, how the Foreign Office at Marling's initiative and dragging a somewhat reluctant India behind them, leapt at the opportunity of including their project for the south into an agreement which initially only made allowances for the increase of the Cossack Brigade in the

2 Holderness to Nicolson, ibid. Holderness wrote that Chamberlain was "strongly of the opinion that increase of the Cossack brigade should be counter-balanced by the formation of similar force under British officers in the south."
north. The employment of British officers to organise a Persian force "known in the long run to be inevitable" seemed now to have become unavoidable. Though it is as well to point out that evidence does not suggest that the organisation of the South Persian Rifles in its final capacity as a politico-military force was the result of a carefully calculated plan on the part of British statesmen. What is clear is that certain projects for controlling anarchy and protecting British interests in the southern provinces had been considered by all Departments concerned since 1905 and even before then. The organisation of the Gendarmerie force temporarily ruled out the idea of a local force under British officers but this, too, proved to be an unsatisfactory venture. The secret arrangements reached with the Russians in the spring of 1915 paved the way for a freer and more decisive control of the neutral zone. In the face of mounting disorder and the German expedition to Afghanistan, those measures taken to safeguard the frontiers of India and the oil bearing districts of Khuzistan and the Gulf outlets, e.g., punitive expeditions on coastal and inland centres, the occupation of Bushihr, the fortification of the Persian Makran and Baluchistan districts, the formation of the East Persia Cordon, renewed pacts with the Bakhtiārī and the Shaikh of Muhammarah, and efforts to secure the allegiances of the Qashqā'ī and the Khamsch, proved to be inadequate, difficult, and risky to depend upon indefinitely. Above all, British prestige at the capital and elsewhere was very low. Marling thought, in retrospect, that British influence in relation to that of Russia, "waned

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rapidly" from the moment that 'Ain al-Dauleh threatened resignation:

"... how low it sank may be judged by the terms with which Mustaufi al-Mamalek wished to bargain with us for the 'benevolent neutrality' of Persia ... the Russian expeditionary force transformed the scene. Russian influence was soon paramount ... tone of conciliation changed to one of hectoring specially in the negotiations that led to famous Agreement of August 1916."¹

In the last analysis everything pointed to a power vacuum in the south. With British encouragement during the emergency, a Russian curtain was slowly being dropped across the passage from Turkey into Persia. In Persia itself, Russian troops had disseminated into various columns and were intent on occupying strategic points as an army does when placing a country under permanent military occupation. As Nicolson pointed out, Russian successes could potentially drive the "enemy" elsewhere, i.e., to the oilfields or at any rate to the British spheres, "if another disaster were to befall us in Mesopotamia, south Persia might very possibly be against us unless some steadying action is taken in the meantime."²

When the Foreign Office applied to the War Office for troops to be spared to land at Bushihr (India finding at the last minute that she could only lend very few men), the need for despatching a force to south Persia was justified not only on the basis of affording support to pro-British tribal heads but also:

"... on the danger which would inevitably be created by continued inactivity on the part of H.M.G. in the British sphere in Persia, both in regard to their prestige in the East and also the immediate military

¹ Marling to Grey, despatch no. 153, 28 Nov. 1916, p. 261611, FO 371/2738.
² Arthur Nicolson, minute, reg. no. 150, 2 Feb. 1916, p. 20472, FO 371/2725.
situation in Mesopotamia, and incidentally on the attitude of the Bakhtiari Khans and the Vali of Poshteh-Kuh. Further considerations such as the safety of the Anglo-Persian Oil fields, the situation in Baluchistan and Afghanistan, and the eventual effect in India, would also inevitably arise in an acute form if the whole of southern Persia were allowed to side with the enemy with entire impunity . . . and the contrast which this will have with Russian successes in the north.1

The details of the mission continued to be discussed from January until March when Sykes actually arrived in Persia. Nothing had yet been signed as regards the settlement with the Persian Government. The cabinet of Farmān Farmā lasted for only forty days and was succeeded on 5 March by that of Sipahdār-e A'zam.2 It was really not until then that the text of the agreement was drawn up, providing among other things for:

"... une force militaire composée d' onze mille hommes approximativement sera formée graduellment . . . dans les provinces méridionales. Le commandant de cette force sera placé par rapport au gouvernement Persan dans la même position que la commandant de la Brigade des Cossaciqes. Le Gouvernement de S.M. Britannique mettra à la disposition du Gouvernement Persan, pour l'organisation et l'instruction de cette force, un nombre suffisant d'officiers, sous-officiers, médecins etc., en prenant a sa charge son équipement et son entretien, pendant la durée au moins de la guerre Européenne . . ."

A similar provision applied to the Cossack Brigade. As regards the maintenance of these forces after the war, a mixed financial commission was to be set up to discuss sources of revenue and supervise the expenditure of a loan of £200,000 which the

1 Maurice de Bunsen to Secretary, Army Council, letter (copy), W. 20472, 4 Feb. 1916, p. 458, L/P & S/10/579, 160/1916.
2 Muhammad Valī Khān Tunakābūnī, whose title changed to Sipahsālār around this time but continued to be referred to as Sipahdār in the sources. This title has also been maintained in this work to avoid confusion. Any reference to Sardar Mansūr (Husain Khān Fath Allāh Rashti) who was conferred at this time with the title of Sipahdār and was indeed Minister of Posts and Telegraphs in this cabinet, will be indicated by referring to his name rather than his new title.
two powers agreed to give to the Persian Government. Yet it was not until August of the same year that a signature was extracted from the cabinet of Sipahdär, under somewhat obscure circumstances, to formalise the above agreement which came to be known as the Sipahdär Agreement. By then the nucleus of the South Persian Rifles was already in action and the Russians had long since increased the numerical strength of the Cossacks.

The Russians had recognised what they wanted and had steadfastly pursued their aim in the north, finally securing it in practice. The British Government delayed, and hesitated to commit itself to direct intervention in Persia on such a vast scale until it was deemed to be absolutely necessary. This kind of procedure was not out of line with either of two Great Powers' traditional approach to the Persian question.

The German menace on its own did not really constitute any real threat to Britain's position in Persia. Difficulties in Mesopotamia and a reaction to Russian influence appear to have been more instrumental in jolting Britain into positive action. Shortage of troops and the Sipahdär Agreement were instrumental in determining the nature of that intervention, i.e., it took the form of a British controlled local force rather than a large expeditionary or punitive force. In this sense the South Persian Rifles may be described

1 Typescript copy of French text, dated 19 July/1 August 1916, enclosed in de Etter's despatch to Vüsûgh al-Dauleh, no. 135, 12 Sep. 1916, IFOA, 25/16(1), 1916/1334; Marlins to Grey, secret, tel. no. 488, 3 Aug. 1916, FO 371/2736 encloses precised version of the draft of the agreement. See also printed text of the agreement in Malik al-Shu'arā Bahār, Tārikh-i Mukhtasar-e Ahzāb-e Siāsī-ye Irān: Inqirāz-i Qājārīeh (Tehran, 1942-7), p. 9. This, however, does not include the full text of separate clauses concerning the workings of the Mixed Financial Commission.
as a bluff.¹ In another sense, it may indeed be argued that the agreement, rather than giving birth to the South Persian Rifles, was itself the logical outcome of Britain's and Russia's newly revised positions in Persia. In the early summer of 1916, Richard Steel of the War Office succinctly and without any attempt at camouflage, summed up the situation between autumn 1915 and summer 1916 thus:

"After an attempt to regularize the situation by means of a treaty between Russia, Great Britain and Persia the negotiations for which have so far come to nothing, and of which the clauses providing for Russian and British-officered forces were the most important feature, the two Western Powers have obtained a semi-official, un-advertised blessing from the accommodating Persian government they have placed in Power, and sensibly enough have started to organise their respective forces without waiting for the sanction of a treaty which under the circumstances is superfluous."²

² R. Steel, memo on "British Interests in Persia and the South Persia Military Police Force", 23 June 1916, P. 120812, FO 371/2736, 1916. (Col. Steel served on NW Frontier of India 1897-8; China 1900; Military Attaché, Tehran, 1913; temporary appointment to General Staff, W.O., March 1915; General Staff Office, July 1915).
Chapter II

DIFFERENCES OF OPINION ON THE FORCE

The moral and military blows directed at the muhājirīn and pro-German activists by the Russian Expeditionary Force on the one hand, and the cabinet of Farmān Farmā followed by that of Sipahdār-e A'zam, on the other, ensured the ultimate failures of the movement. Yet, between January and November 1916, internal conditions were far from satisfactory from the standpoint of Russia, Britain, and the supporters of the Tehran Government.

The surrender of British arms at Kūt al-Amārah on 28 April, did much to prolong the impact of German propaganda in Persia, just as the failures of British arms up to then, in the Dardanelles, Aden, and Egypt, contributed to the promotion of that influence. Sir Arthur Hirtzel's analysis of the situation carried with it a sense of urgency which befitted his constant plea for decisive action in south Persia. The situation in Afghanistan was described by him as "touch and go"; on the North-West Frontier, an "air of expectancy [was] brooding over present lull"; Makrān and Baluchistan were unsettled, so too Kirmānshāhān; and the provinces of Fars and Kirman were certainly not in friendly

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1 This force, under the command of General Baratov, was expected to reach a strength of 65,000 with 35,000 men in reserve. Sir Arthur Hirtzel, "Memorandum on the Political Situation in Persia and the North West Frontier", India Office, Political Dept., 17 Feb. 1916, L/P & S/18/C145.
hands. As to Farmān Farmā's cabinet, its authority did not seem to stretch beyond Tehran, while in the capital itself, the cabinet was not strong enough "to resist the clamour of the 'democrat' pro-German party in any matter touching their hyper-trophied amour propre . . ." The "forcible-feeble" policy of His Majesty's Government during the last five years had contributed to the present chaos. Hirtzel maintained that as a practical solution, "no single dramatic coup will suffice: we must not only strike, we must make good."¹

Rapid and continuous changes in local conditions made it difficult to adopt a consistent line of action. The viewpoints of the authorities in London, Simla, and Tehran, not to mention Bushihr, fluctuated and altered with every turn of events. Delays in the receipt of despatches and telegrams, often crossing each other, added to the general misunderstanding. Above all, the situation was dominated by a lack of troops. In the process, the conflicts of opinions which arose between the Government of India and the Foreign Office, centred chiefly on the priorities accorded to the purposes of the Sykes mission. In this, Marling was strongly backed by the Foreign Office while Hardinge was rather weakly and confusedly backed by the India Office. The military authorities in London more often than not sided with the Foreign Office.

The chief difficulty, it seems, was how to maximise the usefulness of the Sykes mission, for the overall and ultimate purpose of restoring both British prestige and the authority of the Central Government. This brought into question the political versus the military nature of the force, as

¹ Ibid.
it did the temporary versus the permanent tasks before it.

On 23 January, Marling wrote that both he and Farmān Farmā agreed that the chief aim should be to support Qavām al-Mulk in Fars and restore the Government's authority in the revolt-stricken cities of both Shiraz and Kirman. In Kirman, Sardār Zafar and Sardār Nusrat were finding it increasingly difficult to maintain their stand against gendarmes, democrats, and Germans. Conditions deteriorated until mid-March when Sardār Nusrat was forced to flee the city. The situation drifted into an incredible muddle here, where Bakhtīārī and Būchāqchī horsemen were involved in fights, both in opposition to, or in support of the rebels.

In Shiraz, Habīb Allāh Khān Qavām al-Molk, who had been appointed Acting Governor-General of Fars after Mukhbir al-Dauleh's dismissal, also had to flee the city early in February, after some street-fighting with the gendarmes. His son, Ibrāhīm Khān Nasr al-Dauleh, a former member of the Shiraz Democrat Committee and normally on bad terms with his father, now decided to join the latter in Jahrum. Qavām's plans were to reach Bandar Abbas, obtain British material and monetary assistance, and embark on an expedition to win back Shiraz and rid Fars of rebels and Germans alike. However, in view of the opposition he received from Bahārū and Lārī tribal chiefs in Fasā, Dārāb, Lārī, and the eastern districts of Fars generally, he altered his plans and decided to go to Bushihr instead.

1 Marling to Grey, tel., no. 60, 23 Jan. 1916, F. 150, FO 371/2725.
2 Kamāl al-Sultān, Kārguzārī office, Kirman, Report on recent events in Kirman, no. 129, 16 Rajab 1334 (19 May 1916), IFOA, 47/1, 1334/1916, no. 96, 8 Rajab, 1334 (11 May 1916), and no. 126, 15 Rajab 1334 (18 May 1916), IFOA, 47/1, 1334/1916.
3 Ādāmiāt, Fārs va Jang-e Bain al-milal; pp. 224-241; Ādāmiāt compares the accounts of Mirzā Muhammad Rahīm Akkasbāshī and
In the process of these changes of plans, the first of a series of disagreements which arose between the Government of India and the Foreign Office was whether Sykes' initial duty of raising a military police force was of primary or secondary importance.

The Government of India had at first intended to send Sykes to Sistan where he would begin to recruit his force and then march inland to Kirman. Marling, however, urged that a comparatively small force of around 1,600 men with a few mountain and machine guns be despatched to Bandar Abbas by way of support to Qavām and that Sykes too should go to Bandar Abbas. In view of the urgent representations from Marling as well as Percy Cox and Trevor (acting political resident, Persian Gulf), the viceroy finally agreed that Sykes should start work at Bandar Abbas. However, it was categorically stated that "India was not in a position to send a force either to Bandar Abbas or Kirman," for activities other than raising a police force. On hearing that India had no troops to spare, the Foreign Office applied to the War Office for the despatch of a force, if necessary from Egypt.

Mīrzā Aqā Nāṣir al-Dīn Fursat on the events in Shiraz at this time. Both accounts show a bias toward the "rebels" and the "reactionaries", respectively. Ādamīyat's own obvious preference is for AkkāsbĀshi's recollections. Among those who barred Qavām from entering Lār were Amīr Aghā Khān Bahārlū; Muḥammad Ja'far Khān Mukhtādir al-Mulk (Deputy Governor of Lār), and Ḥabib al-Husain Khān Bahārlū.

2 Marling to Grey, tel. no. 60, 23 Jan. 1916, F. 150, FO 371/2725.
The Army Council sanctioned the despatch of troops to Bandar Abbas to support Qavām al-Dawleh. This force was to be maintained and controlled by the Government of India. It was made clear, however, that the War Office was "opposed to any operations of an extended nature," and limited the sphere of action of this force to low country. Hardinge's reaction to this was sharp and to the point. Bearing in mind local conditions, he wrote, Qavām had apparently no intention of going to Bandar Abbas and would probably go to Lingeh with a view to embarking there for Bushihr. In view of the fact that Lingeh was more than a hundred miles from Bandar Abbas,

"it seems difficult to understand how under these conditions a small force in that port (i.e. Bandar Abbas) could give him support, and it would be well to enquire from H.M. minister at Tehran whether under existing circumstances, he is of the same opinion. There is absolutely no other reason for the presence at this juncture of British troops at Bandar Abbas, which might also imperil success of scheme for raising military police. Our views are that a force limited in its operation... can have little effect... we are altogether opposed to a suggestion promising little result and involving dispersion of valuable force which, if it can be spared from Egypt, can be usefully employed in Mesopotamia or in India."  

India next proceeded to let the Gulf authorities know that "Sykes' deputation has for primary object raising of force of Military Police in South Persia;" India did not "propose to send Sykes to Qavam on political mission." The force was to start out from Bandar Abbas, expand to Kirman and cover South Persia generally, linking up with the nucleus of the force already in Sistan, to provide for the restoration

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of order.  

It was now Marling's turn to protest. It appeared to him "impractical" to debar Sykes from entering into political relations with Qavām al-Mulk. In his opinion, "formation of Military Police appeared to be a thing of secondary importance. It must necessarily take too long to be of any immediate use and it can be sufficiently provided for in our Treaty with Persia." He again urged that Sykes should get in touch with Qavām as soon as possible with arms and money.

Chamberlain who at this point was generally dissatisfied with the military situation in Persia, asked that the Imperial General Staff be consulted. The Foreign Office

1 In Sistan, an Indian force of about 1,200 men with 200-300 Hazara tribal levies, were holding the line of the Afghanistan frontier from Rubat to Birjand. Brigadier-General R.E. Dyer was in command of this force. In December 1915, the Government of India despatched one of their political agents, Col. Dew to Persian Makrān for the purposes of negotiating with local chiefs and increasing the troops stationed at Rubat, through local levies. A second British officer, Major T.H. Keyes of the Political Department, India, was sent to Persian Makrān and Baluchistan, in March 1916, on a mission to maintain general security in these regions, in co-operation with Dyer's forces. Some punitive actions were taken against the Sarhad tribesmen, notably the Mīr-sīhānd Dāmānīs and the Ismā'īlīs during spring and summer until the chiefs finally yielded and began to co-operate. To prevent coalitions between the two most powerful chiefs in the region, Bahīrām Khān of Bampūr and Islām Khān, the British encouraged and made sure that enmity between the two was always maintained. The troops reached a strength of over 2,000 (900 regulars and 1,200 levies) by October 1917. The Russian Sūnīrchaia Cossacks, numbering about 1,515, controlled the upper section of the East Persia Cordon line from Mashhad to near Birjand, until they dispersed altogether after the October Revolution in Russia. On the various missions to East Persia see correspondence between the Foreign Department, India and the Agent to the Governor-General in Baluchistan, file 160649, FO 371/2732, 1916; also, Cox to Marling, tel. no. 496 DS., 31 Mar., L/P & S/10/1717, 160/1916; Captain J.H. Kirch, branch memorandum, "The Situation in Persia," document no. 132, 15 Oct. 1917, WO 106/932; W.E.R. Dickson, East Persia, A Backwater of the Great War (London, 1914), pp. 31-55; R.E. Dyer, The Raiders of the Sarhad (London, 1921). See also F. Hale, From Persian Uplands (London, 1920) for an account of events in and around Birjand.

memorandum drawn up for the War Committee meeting which met on 29 February was prepared by Sir Lancelot Oliphant. It dismissed India's view as "narrow and erroneous" and pointed out that it would be out of place, at that juncture, to devote attention "primarily" to raising a new police force. That could be attended to later. For the moment:

"Surest way to weather the storm in South Persia is to support the Persian Governor General and not by counting on a purely problematical military force which is at present not even in embryo, and which may even give offence to the Persian Government. . . . [I]f no action be taken except in Seistan, the Governor Generalship of Fars may be lost to us."¹

Oliphant's concluding complaint was that the Government of India "will never view the possible need for allowing some small force to be placed at the disposal of the Minister in Tehran."² The conclusions of Sir William Robertson, approved by the War Committee, were then relayed to Hardinge. Chamberlain wrote that "in view of differences of opinions between the Government of India and Minister at Tehran, the War Committee have decided that Sykes should in the first place discuss situation fully with Kavam and report to HMG keeping Marling informed." They were prepared to supply arms, ammunition and money, and further, to send to Bandar Abbas a small force, "but only if Sykes considers its presence there desirable for his support." It was to be understood, however, that this force was not strong enough to undertake any operations inland. For this purpose the Imperial Government were to lend a few British officers, "to recruit locally under Kavam's

² Ibid.
authority such force as it may be possible to arm." Any proposals or suggestions by Sykes, after consultation with Qavām, were to be considered by the home Government.¹

Hardinge lost no opportunity in taking advantage of the flexible nature of London's directives. Qavām was in Bushihr and his programme was to regain Shiraz via Lār and Fasā. Percy Cox met and interviewed him on or before 5 March. Qavām could neither wait for Sykes's support nor delay his expedition, since he had to act before the start of the spring migration of his tribe. He thought it better if no British officers accompanied him; "in this respect hostile elements may then believe that he really is representative of Persian Government."² Nor did he think that the proposed British force at Bandar Abbas would make a difference to his position; "in fact he has no desire for it." He did admit, however, that it would help considerably if British troops in Bushihr were to show some simultaneous signs of activity. Cox supported this suggestion.³ Hardinge had reported earlier, that "Prima facie Sykes agrees with us that landing at Bandar Abbas of small force whose operations are so limited and whose presence might merely prove irritant is not at present

¹ SSI to Viceroy, tel. no. 103, 1 Mar 1916, p. 40285, FO 371/2725.
² Cox to Hardinge, report no. 546, 7 Mar.; extracts included in Hardinge to Chamberlain, tel. p. 885, 10 Mar. 1916, L/P & S/10/579, 160/1916. Cox supplied Qavām with 2 Turkish mountain guns, 2 field guns and shells, and six Indian N.C.O gunners who were to be "dressed as Persians." During February and April, Qavām received odd sums in cash amounting to at least £30,000 (Cox to Hardinge, no. 546, ibid.). Harold Nicolson had every reason to say pleasingly that Qavām is "worth his salt. We have never laid our money to better purpose. He should have both money and funds." Nicolson, 17 Apr. note attached to Viceroy's telegram, 1443, 14 Apr. L/P & S/10/579, 160/1916.
desirable."  

Under the circumstances, Hardinge wrote, "we think that Sykes should simply go to Bandar Abbas and begin to raise M[ilitary] P[olice] F[orcc] which as soon as sufficiently trained could either co-operate with Kavam on Fars side or advance on Kirman." 

As to the suggestion for a display of strength by the Bushihr force in the form of short distant raids on hostile villages, the Indian Government deferred giving their views until 18 March. The suggestion was put forward to them by Cox between 6 and 10 March. Perhaps this delay on the part of Hardinge was a deliberate and convenient one, since it allowed Sykes to sail on the 12th from Karachi and reach Bandar Abbas on the 16th without any more alteration of plans. When Hardinge did reply, on the 18th, he was, as expected, averse to action on these lines. His chief reasons were that a policy of "raid and scuttle", as he called it, is seldom effective; that the Bushihr hinterland was showing some signs of improvement; that Qavām may, in case of a raid, be identified with British troops and therefore jeopardise his position, and finally that if the raid was not successful, it would do more harm than good. Sir John Nixon, General Officer Commanding Force "D", was also consulted on the issue and he, too, thought it wiser to postpone an offensive policy, "until such

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1 Hardinge to Chamberlain, ibid.
3 From the Viceroy, tel. p. 53771, secret, 18 Mar. FO 371/2725. Earlier suggestions of a raid from Bushihr, put forward both by Marling and by Hirtzel, had been likewise rejected. Thomas Holderness (Permanent Under Secretary of State, India Office) had, on this occasion agreed that a raid, sometimes "instead of terrifying, it irritates." He admitted further that "strange though that may seem, there are Persians who honestly believe that we are the offenders through our violation of Persia's neutrality." Holderness to Grey, letter, M. 3115, 19 Jan. 1916, L/P & S/10/579, 160/1916.
time as we can deal with this region in a final and satisfactory manner."¹ The Foreign Office was, on the whole, disappointed; "this shows little energy or interest on the part of the Government of India."² The India Office protested mildly by reminding the Viceroy what the War Committee desired now was the earliest possible action against German parties and rebels and not a highly trained force for the eventual restoration of order.³ But India was not to be agitated into taking strong offensive action in south Persia.

Sykes had, however, asked India for a small force of regulars and additional staff, so that he might begin his journey either to Shiraz or Kirman. Though he had already recruited 300 men, he explained that he could not very well use them for any practical purposes yet.⁴ The net result was that India accepted the Imperial Government's offer of two Indian infantry battalions and one regiment of Imperial Service cavalry with some machine guns, from Egypt. On 17 April, however, this force was diverted to Mesopotamia by request of the Officer Commanding Force "D" under the orders of the General Staff. Not until 28 April did Sykes receive reinforcement so as to move inland.⁵

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⁴ Sykes to Grant, tel. no. 30C, 6 Apr. p. 70916, FO 371/2725.
⁵ This escort consisted of: 1 section mountain battery under Major R. Rothwell, a squadron of the 15th Lancers under Major S. Bruce, and a wing of the 124th Balüchis under Lt. Col. E. Twigg. Sykes, History, II, 457. It was this escort which accompanied Sykes through the march to Shiraz. The Imperial Government provided him in time with 16 Persian speaking officers and a reserve of 10 more joined the force early in 1917. Memorandum by Sir William Robertson, "Situation in South Persia", secret (printed for use of Cabinet), 25 Dec. 1916, no. 5501/16, L/P & S/18/C158.
The next controversy, not unrelated to the first, which emerged between London and India was over Sykes's moves to Shiraz.

As Sykes waited in Bandar Abbas to be reinforced, the situation in Kirman and Fars provinces began to show some signs of improvement. The presence of British troops in Bandar Abbas and above all the co-operation of the Qashqā'ī with the so-called Government forces, weakened the rebels' front. Rumours exaggerating the strength of the forces marching against the rebels had far-reaching effects in a country plagued by acute insecurity. By 5 April, Lār was won over. Most of the disaffected Bahārū and Lārī chiefs and headmen, including Mansūr al-Saltaneh, now offered their submission to the two Qāvāms.

In Shiraz, German money had run out. The gendarmes had not been paid for months; they were apparently living on promissory notes issued by themselves. An air of despondency and apathy hung over them and the nationalists. At the instigation of the Central Government and the British, a

1 According to reports from Bushihr, Saulat al-Dauleh agreed to co-operate with Qāvām from early March onward. He was apparently being financed by them and had received one mountain and one Maxim gun. He asked for more funds. Lieut. Withers Bandar Abbas to C.G.S. India, tel. no. W. 262, 27 Mar. 1916, p. 1717, L/P & S/10/579, 160/1916; Viceroy to SSI enclosing extracts of telegram from Bushihr Residency, no. 796, 4 Apr. 1916, p. 1305, L/P & S/10/579, 160/1916. Saulat's motives at this point are not clear. He had certainly not assisted the British during the troubles of the past year but had compromised his position by accepting to regain his position as Īl-khān and receiving money for assisting in the restoration of order. After the arrest of O'Connor and the flight of Qāvām al-Mulk, Saulat appeared to be observing the struggle without taking sides until, finally, he decided to support the Central Government and the British. This, as events were to show, probably had much to do with his desire to secure his title at a formal level.

2 Mansūr al-Saltaneh had been named chief of the Khamseh by the Shiraz Defence Committee and the Germans after Qāvām had fled.
conspiracy led by Major Fath al-Mulk and some Persian and Swedish members of the Gendarmerie, ensured the control of the city for the loyalists. The trouble-makers, among them Persians, Germans, Austrians, Turks, and Swedes, were imprisoned. By mid-April, Ibrâhîm Khân Nasr al-Dauleh (who took over command of his father's forces after the latter's death in a hunting accident), entered the city together with Saulat al-Dauleh. ¹ Shiraz was occupied by them "in the name of the Shah and Persian Government," and letters to this effect were sent to the Central Government. ² This success coupled with troop movements and the reversal of allegiances by some of the lesser and greater tribal chiefs, placed German parties everywhere in a very difficult position.

¹ Interview: Mr. Murshid Ali Tanâ Khân, resident Shiraz, 23 June 1972. Mr. Tanâ Khân came to settle in Shiraz in 1921-2. He bases his account on what he heard from the Shirâzis themselves. What he relates resembles closely Adamîat and Mukhtârî's version of this episode, also British sources in general, except that he adds much interesting detail to his account. One story had it that Wassmuss, in an effort to uplift spirits among his friends in the south, was seen early one morning parading the back streets of Bushir with a huge banner on which he had written in Persian: "Qvâ-ye Âlmän vârid-e shahr-e Landan shud." (German troops have entered the city of London). Wassmuss was probably not in Bushir at this time but in Burâzjân. Ibrâhîm Qavâm resorted to some unpardonable acts of cruelty in punishing rebel gendarmes and others with whom, as a former Democrat he had once associated. Some were publicly blown off a canon, others tortured to death. Two of the very able and popular officers, Major Ali Qulî Khan Pisîân and his cousin Ghulâm Rizâ Khân, committed suicide by shooting each other. Many Democrats were arrested or fled the town. Adamîat, Fârs va Jang-e Lain al-Milkî, pp. 234-243, 269-271, 288-297; H. Mukhtârî, Târikh-e Bidâri-ye Iran (Tehran, n.d.), pp. 119-123. On the Fars situation see also L/P & S/10/590, 110/1916 and L/P & S/10/579, 110/1916. The Shirâzis entertained no doubts that Fath al-Mulk (Muhammad Hassan Khân) was assisted by the British. O'Connor later testified to this. He was given about 2,000 Tunans out of secret service funds, "with object of forming a treaty of friendly gendarmes under his direction." O'Connor, however, denied having authorised him to purchase arms and ammunition which Fath al-Mulk said he did and wanted his money refunding. O'Connor to F.O., letter, p. 218007, 2 Nov. 1916, FO 371/2738.

At about this time, too, news arrived that Sardār Nusrat had made an attack on Kirman with a force collected at Sirjān, and had gained ascendency over rebel elements there. He was now posing as Acting-Governor, pending the arrival of Farnān Farmā, who had been appointed Governor-General of Kirman after the resignation of his cabinet in late February.

In view of the improvement in the situation at Shiraz, Sykes proposed, on 9 May, that he should be allowed to march his force to Kirman. He wished to strengthen the hands of Sardār Nusrat and his many friends at Kirman "whose interests lay in the restoration of law and order." The Foreign Office officials, and Marling specially, being still uneasy about conditions in Shiraz, were anxious that Sykes should set out thither. In the first instance, they believed that it was more necessary to have the Bushihr-Shiraz road open than the Bandar Abbas-Kirman track. Furthermore, neither

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1 Kamāl al-Sultān, Kārguzārī Office, Kirman, "Report on Recent Events in Kirman", no. 129, 16 Rajab, 1334 (19 May 1916), IFOA, 47/1, 1334/1916; also his reports of 17 April (13 Jannādī al-Sānā 1334), no. 37 and 11 May (8 Rajab, 1334) no. 102, IFOA 47/1. Kamāl al-Sultān succeeded Mahām al-Mulk as Kārguzār and entered Kirman early in April with Sardār Nusrat. Mahām al-Mulk was recalled by Tehran in view of his pro-German activities and, apparently, on leaving Kirman, also carried away with him most of the archival material relating to his term of office as Kārguzār. Kamāl al-Sultān's reports, therefore, are based on second-hand information. He shows a clear liking for Sardār Nusrat and the British, while he implicitly incriminates Sardār Zafar with permitting and assisting in the intensification of pro-German feelings in Kirman and its consequences. Zafar apparently helped the rebels by not enforcing his powers as Governor-General. When ordered by Farmān Farmā's cabinet to discharge Mahām al-Mulk and Mirzā Mustafā Khān (head of the local Administration's Education Department), and to punish Nāzīn al-Tujjār, for their association with the Germans, Sardār Zafar "kept passing the telegrams on to the persons concerned" without taking any action himself. Zugmayer and Griesinger's diaries for this period demonstrate that Sardār Zafar was hostile to them until the British colony was turned out in December; he then vacillated and finally came down on the side of the rebels: E. Zugmayer, "Report of the Baluchistan Group of the Afghan Expedition", GFOA, Bd. 31-32, 143/33-161; Zugmayer and Griesinger diaries, WO 106/52.

2 Sykes to Grant, tel. no. 32C, 9 Apr. 1916, p. 70916, FO 371/2725; Sykes, History, II, 457.

3 Oliphant, minute, p. 86548, 8 May 1916, F. 150, FO 371/2725.
the young Qavām al-Mulk nor Saulat al-Dauleh were altogether trustworthy as far as the Foreign Office was concerned. Grey, in fact, instructed Marling to advise the Persian Government that Farmān Farmā be diverted to Shiraz as Governor-General. The cabinet of Sipahdār-e A'zam obliged. Farmān Farmā left Tehran with a view to reaching Shiraz via Isfahan. There was also the need, therefore, to consolidate the British position in and around Shiraz. Chamberlain too, had verbally admitted to this.

The appointment of Farmān Farmā to Shiraz, however, was as much a mistake on the part of the Foreign Office as had been that of Qavām al-Mulk, senior, in the autumn of 1915. Farmān Farmā's extreme Anglophil tendencies, his rapacity and corrupt deeds of the first order, to which Marling himself admitted, were generally known. He had not been popular in Tehran and was not going to be so in Shiraz either. Moreover, his appointment was not welcomed by Ibrāhīm Qavām and Saulat al-Dauleh, for reasons arising out of personal interests. In September, they proceeded to combine forces and resist the entry of the new Governor-General into Shiraz.

Meanwhile, delays in the receipt of telegrams from Persia and India resulted in the departure of Sykes from Bandār Abbas to Kirman, instead of Shiraz. The Viceroy understood that Marling wished Sykes to move directly to Kirman and instructed Sykes accordingly, adding that "his movement thence to Shiraz must be considered later as decision will depend upon

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2 Oliphant, minute, p. 86548, 8 May 1916, F. 150, FO 371/2725. On the situation in Kirman generally, covering the arrival and departure of Sykes, see the various reports of the Kārguzār in files 19 (general, serial no. 1014/150) and 16 (general and private, nos. 6983/670) of cases 47, year 1334.
subsequent development."¹ In a telegram dated 19 May which was received too late by the India Office, Sykes informed the authorities that he was moving on to Kirman chiefly because the route leading there offered, from the point of view of supply, transport, and communications, more practical conveniences.² Marling, who had earlier urged that at least some officers should be sent as soon as possible to Shiraz from Bushihr or Bandar Abbas,³ was disappointed. So too Farmān Farmān, who had not yet reached Shiraz. The Foreign Office, too, on the whole showed annoyance. Oliphant thought it "regrettable that the India Office did not push Government of India harder on this issue."⁴ Sykes was already on his way to Kirman, however, and could not be diverted to Shiraz.

India gave her reasons for objecting to the despatch of British officers to Shiraz. Adequate escort to accompany any officer inland was not available either, from Bandar Abbas or Bushihr. Without escort, any officer would run the risk of being murdered or captured. In such events, British embarrassment would increase and necessitate more extensive punitive operations in south Persia. The Viceroy agreed, however, that Sykes should proceed from Kirman to Shiraz as soon as possible and the clearing of the situation in the Bushihr hinterland

¹ Viceroy to Chamberlain, tel. (copy) 1830, 13 May, p. 1836, L/P & S/10/579, 160/1916. Charles Hardinge had been replaced as Viceroy of India by Frederic John Napier (1st Viscount) Chelmsford, who took up his post on 4 Apr. 1916. Chelmsford was at first but a little more compromising than Hardinge, but the divergencies in attitudes between India and Tehran, over the Persian problem increased in the following years.
² Sykes to I.O., tel. no. 204C, 19 May 1916, quoted in F.O. minute, p. 97704, 23 May 1916, FO 371/2736.
³ Marling to Grey, tel. no. 338(R), 16 May 1916, p. 1863, L/P & S/10/579, 160/1916.
should be left to a force from Mesopotamia, as soon as this could be available. The authorities in London, however, continued to press the Viceroy. Neither Grey nor Chamberlain wished to see a renewal of anarchy in Fars. India finally compromised. They informed London that they had earmarked for Shiraz five of the Indian Army's Reserve officers and one regular officer. Chelmsford continued:

"We consider our policy in Persia should be quietly to re-establish our position with adequate force where possible and to avoid multiplying risk of further embarrassment." The India Office, on the whole, thought this a reasonable compromise. Sykes arrived in Kirman on 16 June. The controversy over his move to Shiraz continued during his six week stay there, the Foreign Office wanting him to take the shortest direct route to Shiraz, via Sīrjān and Nairīz, while Sykes preferred the round about route via Jīruft-Yazd-Bahrāmābād-Isfahan-Dīhībīd to Shiraz, because of the telegraph line and lesser danger from unfriendly tribes. His view prevailed and he set out for Yazd on 28 July, leaving one of his officers and some troops in Kirman for recruitment purposes. Yazd was reached on 14 August. Here there was a two week delay, again because the authorities could not make up their mind whether he should go straight to Shiraz or to Isfahan, to lend support

1 Viceroy to SSI, tel. no. 2335, 30 May 1916, p. 2219, L/P & S/10/579, 160/1916; Hirtzel thought that the G.I.'s objections "do not really amount to much," minute, register no. 2077, 1 June 1916, ibid.
3 Viceroy to SSI, tel. (copy) p. 2219, 9 June 1916, ibid.
5 Sykes to CGS, "Report on the movements of the column", letter no. 6C, Shiraz, 12 Jan. 1917, enclosed in Confidential, printed, despatch on the Operations of the South Persia Rifles in the Kirman Area, 1 Aug. to 15 Oct. 1916 (serial no. 1), Sykes, Papers, KECL (DS 315.5).
to a small force of some 600 Cossacks who were threatened from the north-west by a large body of hostile Bakhtlārī in combination with Turkish soldiers and German officers.  

Sykes himself favoured Isfahan first; he recognised that "if Isfahan were taken by the enemy," his force at Shiraz would be almost trapped. "I had no base to fall back upon in case of disaster, and no trained transport, without which a force is cruelly handicapped," he wrote. In the general muddle of the exchange of correspondence, it was finally agreed that he should go to Isfahan. The latter place was reached on 11 September, by which time the danger of Turkish attacks had ceased.

During the five week halt at Isfahan, the situation in Shiraz deteriorated. Farmān Farmā with his personal guard of 200 men and 2 Maxim guns, the British Consul-elect, Lt. Col. H. Gough and a few other British officials, had set out for

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1 This force had entered Isfahan in March as part of the programme of the Russian Expeditionary Force to clear the central and western provinces of Persia from the forces of the Provisional Government and the Germans. The Russians had taken Hamadan in December, and in the middle of February 1916 they pushed back rebel forces from Kirmanshah and Khānīqān after giving them a heavy blow at Kangāvar. Kashan and then Isfahan were occupied by 19 March. The capitulation of British arms at Kūt al-Amārah, however, altered the offensive yet again. The Turks were able to release the 13th Corps (about 15,000 in strength). The Russians were outnumbered by 6,000 men and overwhelmed by superior artillery. The Turks re-occupied Kirmanshah in July, and Hamadan in August while Barratov's troops continued to retreat before them. Only near the Sultān Bulāgh passes did the Turks appear to have reached the limit of their advance. They were in occupation of some 30,000 square miles of Persian territory. Here the military situation remained unchanged for the next six months. In northern Anatolia the Russians were more successful, Trabizond and Arzirum were seized and the Cossacks were able to maintain their foothold in Turkish territory to the north-east of Anatolia. Miroshnikov, Iran in World War I, pp. 51-62; cf. Sykes, History, II, 451-452.

2 Ibid., pp. 460-461.

Shiraz. At Dihbid, however, they encountered some opposition from Saulat al-Dauleh and Qavām al-Mulk's men and fell back on Ābādeh. After some strong directives to Saulat and Qavām from the Centre and Farmān Farmā's own efforts locally, a second forward move was made on Shiraz and the city was entered on 11 October. Sykes and his escort followed on 11 November.

It had taken Sykes, since his arrival, almost eight months and a journey of over 1,000 miles to reach Shiraz. The disparity of views between the Foreign Office and the Government of India arose from a basic difference of attitudes toward the Persian question. To the political and military authorities in India, operations in Persia were of secondary importance next to those of Mesopotamia. India showed an aversion to becoming militarily involved in Persia. She feared that punitive expeditions of an extended nature would lead to the introduction of more troops and multiply the side-shows. She also wished to avoid the embarrassment of military poverty. This led her to adopt an inactive policy. Accordingly, she emphasised the more permanent, long-term features of the Sykes mission. The Foreign Office, prompted by Marling, advocated action. They wished Sykes's force, or any other available force, to be used as a temporary expedient.

1 The thing that sparked off troubles at this point was that in early days of September, Saulat al-Dauleh had met Farmān Farmā accompanied by Lt. Col. Gough at Qumīsheh, near Dīhbid, to discuss Saulat's investiture as Īl-khān of the Qashqā'ī. Farmān Farmā had refused to diminish the fee of 50,000 Tumans for bestowing the title on Saulat. This may or may not have been the customary fee expected on such occasions. Saulat argued that he could not pay this amount and seeing that Farmān Farmā would not give way, rode back to Shiraz, arrested Sārdār Mu'tazid (Farmān Farmā's deputy), and persuaded Qavām al-Mulk and others to form an opposition to the appointment of Farmān Farmā "on grounds of his alleged excessive avarice." "Notes on Fars," 1916-8 included in Sykes to CGS, tel. no. 179-240G, 6 Sep. 1918, Army Dept. memo. no. 14161 of 19 Oct 1918, p. 30241, FO 371/3858 and WO 106/941.
for offensives against agitators and the Germans. The India Office, excepting some members such as Hirtzel, vacillated between India and the Foreign Office.

The continuous change in local conditions, the delays in the receipt of telegrams and the fact that Sykes was receiving his orders from both the Foreign Department of the Government of India and from Tehran, created some incomprehensible mistakes. It also made for some inconsistencies of policy. Marling, who found himself in the very midst, the nerve-centre of the country's political life, never ceased to become agitated by all the goings on. He continuously, if somewhat confusedly, pressed for decisive action. His opinions, as Holderness was to point out, "sway to and fro" and it was all too easy to attach too much importance to them. At one point, the Foreign Office unintentionally approved the exact opposite of what Marling was proposing, i.e., that Sykes should go to Isfahan rather than Shiraz. The Indian Government, too, displayed some inconsistencies. In March they condemned a so-called policy of "raid and scuttle" as advocated by the Foreign Office and Hirtzel at the India Office, but an instance of this was found in the attack and destruction of the village of Chughādak by the Bushihr troops. Marling angrily called this the worst moral of the "raid and scuttle" policy.

As to Sykes's march, its effects in turning the scales in favour of the British and the Central Government were indirect. The situations in Shiraz, Kirman, and Isfahan

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1 Holderness, comment attached to Hirtzel's minute no. 1739, 7 May, L/P & S/10/579, 160/1916.
2 Hirtzel, minute, no 3418, 25 Apr. 1916, ibid.
3 Marling to Grey, tel. no. 290(R), Apr. 1916, FO 371/2725.
were restored before he reached these places.\textsuperscript{1} The force was not, during this period, engaged in any major operations against the "enemy", except for a relatively serious affray in Sīrjān where SPR forces were involved against Būchāqchī tribesmen. This, however, was in no small degree, due to Sykes's own mistake. The fringe benefits of the march for the force itself were many. Lines of communication along the routes taken were re-opened with headquarters on the Gulf and with India; surveys of areas traversed were drawn up and much information obtained about the nature of the country, the local tribes, and local trouble makers. This information, together with the experience of the march itself, was invaluable to those men who were to continue to serve the force in Persia.

An interesting extension of the differences of views on the Sykes mission, was found in the arguments over its title. It was not easy to decide on a name for a force whose status and nature were couched in ambiguities. The force was actually British but was eventually to be Persian, becoming part of the Persian army. This had been agreed to in principle

\textsuperscript{1} At the beginning of 1916, the number of Germans and Austrians in Persia and Afghanistan, together with their assortment of levies actually travelling with them, amounted to just over 1,600. Of this number about 196 were Germans and Austrians, over 1,300 were Persians and the rest Turks, Afghans, and some Indians. Niedermayer, Wagner, and others, arrived in Kabul at the end of October and left the following May, not having achieved anything. Some members of the mission made their way to Chinese Turkistan from northern Afghanistan, others crossed the frontier into Persia again. Niedermayer made an adventurous and dangerous journey back to the Tehran German Legation through Mashhad, and then left for Germany. The rest of the parties in Persia were either repulsed in the west by the Russian Expeditionary Force, in the east by the East Persia Cordon, or were attacked and captured by tribes and loyalist forces in the Kirman and Fars provinces. Some managed to escape and leave Persia, others were brought and imprisoned at Shiraz and later moved to the north. By January 1917, the only German agent who was not caught at this point and continued to frustrate British work in the south, was Wassmuss. R. Homsby, Capt., G.S.O. II, General Staff, E.P.C., "Survey of information on German Parties in Persia and Afghanistan", 1918, diary no. 70387, WO 106/946.
and Marling had been told to make it clear to the Persian Government that the object of the scheme is "maintenance of their independence and authority and restoration of order in South Persia under their auspices."\(^1\) Grey added that it would be useful if Sykes could have some documents indicating the official approval of the Persian Government. This permission, however, had not yet been obtained but the scheme for the organisation of a "police" force in the south was already in embryo and it was inevitable that the programme for action drawn up for the force would be implemented with or without "official" approval. Grey thought that to refer to the Persian Government for consultation over the title of the force, "may lead to inconvenience."\(^2\)

From January 1916 until mid-summer of the same year, the force, under the command of Sykes, was invariably referred to as the South Persia Military Police, at times as the South Persia Police, or merely as the Police Force. The suitability of this reference was questioned at first by Sykes himself. He disapproved of it on the grounds that the title of Military Police was disliked by the Persians and since the object of his force was the "restoration and maintenance of law and order ... by reduction of robber tribes and prevention of rebellion," the term "Army" would be more appropriate. It would "attract the best British officers." He proposed the term "Qushun-e Junub-e Iran" for a Persian title.\(^3\) The Foreign and Political Department, shying away from anything which carried heavy military implications, objected to the term "Qushun". The Viceroy was anxious to see that the

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\(^2\) Ibid.

\(^3\) Quoted in Viceroy's tel. no. 348 to SSI, 7 Aug. 1916, p. 3124, ibid.
British character of the undertaking should be maintained as far as possible, both for the sake of prestige and discipline. It was desirable, therefore, that the force "should have a distinctly British name" as an analogy to the title "Cossack" of the Russian forces in the north. He also felt that since the main functions of the force would be of a "police" or "constabulary" nature, the name gūshūn or army would give a false impression and "give the commandant a status open to misconstruction." He preferred that the title, if changed, should be "South Persian Militia".¹

The adviser to the Military Department (India Office) was not sparing in his criticisms of the Foreign Department in India. He did not think that there was much force in the Viceroy's wish for a "distinctively British name" and that the suggested label "Militia" was a very "feeble" answer to "Cossack", adding:

"... the suggestion is eloquent of the way in which the force is regarded by the government of India, i.e. as an extension of the Frontier Militia Organisation under the Foreign Department rather than as a Military undertaking."²

Steel thought it desirable for the force to have both a Persian and an English name and himself proposed South Persian Force or South Persian National Force. The word "force" was distinctive enough and could well "rub along" with an inspector-general, while "Army" would demand a Commander-in-Chief.

Hirtzel supported all these views, adding:

"However little the Government of India may like it, the force is in fact part of the Persian army and there will apparently be no other Persia army than this force plus Cossacks and the force which the

² Major Steel to Hirtzel, inter-departmental letter, register no. 33514, 10 Aug. 1916, ibid.
Persian Government propose to maintain at Tehran. And so long as it is our force, and officered by British officers, I don't think it is essential that its name should exactly balance the Russian name.¹

Major Barrow of the Military Department, only made matters more complicated by suggesting that the force be called "Irani Fauj" or "Irani Lashkari", both terms meaning Persian Army in Hindustani.² Holerness saw no use in having two vernacular names³ and Chamberlain agreed. Chamberlain was indeed not very happy with the title South Persian National Force and scribbled in the margin of Holderness's minute: "is not 'National' in Persia almost as much a party name as in Ireland and does it not attach in Persia to everything that is anti-British?" He himself thought that the force should have a distinctly British name.⁴

Hirtzel thought not, He had a preference for the title "National Force", because:

"We would be taking a name that has acquired an anti-foreign connotation and should evacuate it of that connotation by so doing. At the same time we should make idea of 'partition' less prominent by suggesting that of unity ..."⁵

The term "Militia", he explained, was attached in India to semi-military organisations under civil authority and to apply it to a Persian force would stamp the force as "second-rate", which was not the desired aim "however second-rate it may in fact be."

It was finally agreed by all to adopt the label proposed by Major Steel of "South Persian Rifles", both in the

¹ Hirtzel, minute, no. 3124, 10 Aug. 1916, ibid.
² Barrow, minute no. 3124, 11 Aug. 1916, ibid.
³ Holderness, same minute, 11 Aug., ibid.
⁴ Chamberlain, same minute, 11 Aug., ibid.
⁵ Hirtzel, same minute, 11 Aug., ibid.
hope of settling the military-civil issue and camouflaging the idea of "partition". The suggested Persian title of "Qūshūn-e Pulīs-e Junūb-e Īrān" came to be adopted without further debate. The Persians, however, came to frequently drop the word "Iran" and use the title "Qūshūn-e Junūb" as the accepted translation for the South Persian Rifles. In this way the subtle advantages of the carefully formulated English title came to be totally neutralised. For, to the Persians, if the label "Cossack" was an everlasting reminder of the Russian position in the north, so too the "Qūshūn-e Junūb" came to acquire a similar meaning.
Many of the difficulties which plagued the South Persian Rifles throughout its five year career in Persia were political in character, and stemmed chiefly from the inconsistent attitude of the Central Government toward the force. In addition to these, the organisers of the force were faced with a variety of problems which had much to do with the very nature of conditions locally. The poverty of resources in terms of transport, supplies, communications, and equipment, were some of the chief sources of complaints and anxiety throughout. Mistakes caused by the initial unfamiliarity of most of the organisers and commanders with the land and its peoples, as well as those resulting from endeavours to apply British Indian methods of control on Persia, were also instrumental in delaying the progress of the force. These were partially corrected by a process of trial and error as the force expanded and acquired an identity for itself in the southern provinces. The march to Shiraz brought to light the nature of the difficulties which lay ahead, as did the experiences of recruitment, training and early operations against the tribes.

A month after the arrival of the mission, Sykes submitted an account of the proceedings to the Government of India. On the very first day, no less than fifty four men had been recruited for the new military-police force. The enthusiasm created by this "auspicious" start, however, was followed
by a disappointing reversal when, on the following day, all
the new recruits decided to return their advance of pay, claim-
ing that they had no desire to fight the Germans, for rumours
had spread that they were to be sent to fight in Mesopotamia.¹
Shuja' Nizām, the deputy governor of the Gulf Ports, however,
"swore on the Koran that they were engaged for Persia only--and
the crisis passed."² Further trouble broke out on the first
pay day but the ringleaders were punished by the deputy gover-
nor and dismissed. A camp was set up at Naiband (three miles
to the east of Bandar Abbas) and the task of enlisting and
training was diligently pursued by Sykes and his Anglo-Indian
officers. After a month, the number of men enlisted exceeded
300 and Sykes claimed that "the new force appears to be popular
as recruits come in as fast as we can deal with them."³

The means by which recruits were gathered and brought
in was through guarantors. The latter were in most cases men
of some standing and ranged from the governor himself, his
deputy and associates, to the ra'īs, deh-bāshīs and vakīls
(village headmen and their representatives) of the neighbourhood.
Every guarantor of a recruit was paid ten tumans a time. Most
of the early recruits were apparently brought in by notables,
presumably picked from their own village men. One or two
headmen were employed permanently and paid fifty tumans extra
per month on the expectation that they would bring in fifty
men a month.

Sykes does not specify what the actual responsibilities
of the guarantors to the force were, once the men were enlisted.

¹ Sykes to Grant, letter no. 2045-6 (copy of typescript), 17
April 1916; Sykes papers; extracts from this letter are in
L/P & S/10/579, 160/1916.
² Ibid.
³ Ibid.
It is, moreover, difficult to ascertain whether any private arrangement existed between the recruits themselves and their guarantor, or indeed, between the latter and the families of the men recruited. The conditions of service for the South Persian Rifles did not carry any pensions or gratuities on completion of service, but in the case of death or injury, the recruit or his heirs received a gratuity according to the man's rank and circumstances of the heir. The men were recruited in this way on a "voluntary" basis for a period of

1 The basis of military service in Persia was the reform made on the bunicheh system by Mirza Taqi Khan Amir Kabir. Under this, each tribe or village supplied its quota to furnish the local regiment of their own district (fauj). The method of calculating men available was to carry out a survey of the number of ploughs required to keep an area under cultivation and to take one man per plough as available for military service. As there had been no resurvey since the law had been passed, this method pressed hard on some districts while others got off lightly. The villagers, after choosing their recruits, entered into an agreement to pay him or his family a certain sum per mensem, while the man served with the column. The sums, khanihevareh and pendaraneh, i.e., local or home-pay (mavajibe mahalli), varied according to the wealth of the villages. It was a private agreement and had nothing to do with the pay received by the government. Even the travelling allowance of the recruits, from their home to the locality where they joined the army (the kumak-e kharj) was paid by their village. The bunicheh was supplemented by a law of 10 Sept. 1917 (23 Zu al-Qa'ideh 1335) which required that a Recruiting Commission be appointed by the Ministry for War to each area, to carry out when necessary, the duty of assessing the military quota of a district for the operation of recruitment under the bunicheh. This meant, in theory at least, that the Central Government took upon itself the functions of local authorities, in this case the sahib mansabbaye mahalli or territorial officers, who would normally be in command of their own local regiments. It is not clear to what extent this law came into operation from this date; it was still being recommended by the Mixed Military Commission set up in 1919 to draw up a programme for the unification of the country's armed forces. Since Riza Shah allegedly made extensive use of the recommendations of the Military Commission's report from 1921 onwards (see Fraser, Diaries, postscript to last Diary entry, MECL, Ds 255) the law of 1917 was an important step toward the central control of the armed forces. See "Report of the Anglo-Persian Military Commission", together with the confidential supplement to the official report (written by the British members only), Tehran, 4 Apr. 1920, P. 5355, L/P & S/10/859,5257/1919; also "Memorandum by Sir Robert Murdoch-Smith, Tehran, 29 March 1883 (printed), Smith papers, National Library of Scotland, no. 1455, B. 111; Firaidun Adamiat, Amir Kabir va Iran, 3rd ed. (Tehran, 1348/1969) pp. 280-300.
three years and were allowed to re-engage if suitable. The chief motivations for joining the force, in the case of the majority of the men enlisted, appears to have been the prospects of regular pay and those fringe benefits, in cash or kind, offered by the force. Sykes decided to pay the various ranks a little above the market wage to secure men rapidly. The first regiment raised at Naiband and named Ahmad Shāhī, was mainly composed of men from neighbouring villages, quite a few from the factions and sub-factions of the Khamsēh in the Lāristān district, and altogether a mixture of Persian, Baluch, and Arab elements from the inhabitants of Bandar Abbas and its environs. Some of the best recruits at this point, according to Sykes himself, hailed from the village of Jallabi, whose headman had been known to Sykes from former times.

1 The conditions of service for the various military/police forces which at this time functioned in the country, varied slightly. The Cossack Brigade enlisted men on a voluntary basis normally and only in 1917, when the force somewhat diminished under the impact of the Russian Revolution, was a certain number of faujes allotted to the Cossack division for the enlistment of recruits. There was a system of pensions after 15 years' service. The "Swedish" gendarmerie, also began by enlisting men on a voluntary basis for the duration of 3 years at a time. Here again, there was no system of pensions or gratuities, either to the men or their families. The revived gendarmerie force of the post-1916 era did resort to the bunīcheh to make up in numbers. The Central Brigade, which began to be formed toward the end of 1916 and operated in and around Tehran only, drew on the bunīcheh entirely. "Report of the Anglo-Persian Military Commission", 4 Apr. 1920, op. cit.

2 Infantry was being paid 10 tumans per mensem; Cavalry, 12 T's; Artillery, 12 T's. All units were promised a rise of 1 tuman per mensem after the completion of drills. The approximate average rate of exchange in the pre-war years and up to 1916 was 55 krans (or 5 tumans and 5 rials) to the £ sterling; during 1916-8, the average was about 30 Kr. to the £ while between 1919-20 the average dropped to about 28 Kr. to the £. Major Hay Thorburn to Sir L. Oliphant, letter (private), 26 June 1919, enclosing a report on "The History of Anglo-Persian Trade", p. 83643, FO 371/3887; Trade reports for Bushire, 1915-20, Muhammara 1916-7, Arabistan (Khuzistan) 1917-20, Birjand, 1923; printed (bound in one volume); and J. Bharier, Economic Development in Iran 1900-1970 (London, 1971).
It was at Kirman, during the summer and autumn of 1916 that the first South Persian Rifles brigade was raised. Here too, the Governor-General, Nusrat al-Saltaneh and the deputy governor, Sardār Nusrat, assisted with recruitment. The force installed itself in the headquarters and barracks of the gendarmerie. Major Farran, one of Sykes's more capable staff officers was entrusted with the task of training and organisation whiles Sykes marched toward Shiraz via Yazd and Isfahan.

Recruitment of the Kirman Brigade was still in progress when the force was called upon to fight against a small force of Büchāqchī tribesmen and a party of some 25 German and Persian runaway prisoners. These prisoners had been captured in and around Kirman and handed over to Sykes upon his arrival in Kirman. Sykes made the mistake of entrusting them to a young Kirmani notable, at the head of a small Persian escort, to accompany them to Daulatābād. At Daulatābād, an Indian escort of 42 rank and file (108th Infantry) was to take over the prisoners and conduct them to Bandar Abbas, where they were to be handed over to the British authorities. In Sirjān, however, the prisoners were allowed to escape and were given refuge by Husain Khān Büchāqchī in his fort at Balvard. Troop movements from Kirman to Sirjān and from Bandar Abbas to Daulatābād and Bāft, led to the flight of the prisoners to Dārāb in Fars. An engagement took place on 28 September in Saʿīdābād with Husain Khān and his men, who managed to escape before the collapse of the town's defences. The Büchāqchī fighters were never caught while some of the prisoners were later captured in Fars and handed to the authorities in Shiraz.¹

¹ It fell on Wagstaff's column (27 cavalry, 200 infantry, some
The inconvenience caused by the Sirjān episode from early August to the beginning of October, was compensated for by the knowledge acquired of the attitudes and habits of local inhabitants and of some of the practical problems which faced the British commanders of the force. The episode showed for instance that the neighbourhood in general was anything but friendly to the South Persian Rifles. There was no doubt that the majority of the men involved in firing at the South Persian Rifles detachment in Saʿīdābād were from the town itself, and Major Wagstaff, the officer commanding, found it impossible to find and disarm them: "... nobody will help us and we cannot recognise them... the Persians themselves have nothing to say when we accuse the town of helping Husain Khān and the thing is obvious to us."\(^1\) It was hardly surprising that this should have been the case. It seems too much to have expected the locals to help in the capture of a khān with whom they had had daily relations for years. Wagstaff himself reached this conclusion soon after he entered and occupied the town. Under the circumstances, the greatest difficulty was to get information; "without any telegram or means of rapid transit, and with most people concerned in sending us astray or hiding information until it is too late," it was difficult

\(^1\) Wagstaff to Farran, Saidabad, report no. 18, 30 Sep. 1916, Appendix 11, confidential despatch of Sykes to CGS, no. 2-C., 12 Jan. 1917, ibid.
to score points against the enemy.¹

It was also realized that some changes in the methods of raising the force were necessary. Major Farran believed that the permanent disciplined force which he and his fellow officers were working to raise, would be of no military value for at least a year. He proposed therefore immediately to cease enlisting and training the South Persian Rifles for the time being and instead to devote money and energy to subsidising tribesmen. The latter would at least have some immediate fighting value and might later be trained along British lines to participate in the activities of the force. So, to forestall and counter any future trouble in Sirjān and before Sa'īdābād became the main focus of attention, Farran began by subsidising about 300 tribesmen. He was offering the levies fifteen tumans, including rations and forage but thought it likely that the sum would have to be increased in order to outbid the Germans, who were doing the same thing.² Substantial sums were also to be given to the heads of any tribe who were sending in their men. The practice of subsidising tribesmen on a short-term basis to fight for the South Persian Rifles was resorted to periodically during the first two years of the force's career. Simultaneously, the force was drawing on tribal levies with the ultimate object of training them as regulars. This became a more permanent feature of the force. Both steps, however, proved to be unsatisfactory at first.

Wagstaff, who had stopped in Malikābād before moving on to Sa'īdābād and was charged with the task of training levies

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¹ Wagstaff to Farran, report no. 18, op. cit.
² Farran to Wagstaff, telegram, 18 Aug., Kerman, appendix 1, Sykes despatch, no. 2-C., 12 Jan. 1917, op. cit.
for as mobile a force as possible, was of the opinion that it was quite useless to rely on tribal levies: ". . . the khans move most reluctantly and their sowars will not go forward where there is any danger." Major Merill, who was also endeavouring to raise a South Persian Rifles detachment in Sirjan, also reported that the 200-300 levies he had raised at Bäft were really useless: ". . . they cannot be even turned out for parade at any given time . . . have no discipline and cannot be taught any because they are not kept in one camp or barrack." This last point was a practical difficulty which could be overcome in time but there were complications of a more serious nature in that the Persian recruits would not fight against people of their own locality.

During the Sa'idabad engagement, Wagstaff noted that the Persian levies in general took very little part in the fight; indeed, as a contrast to the "gallant" performance of the Indian troops, the irregular Persian levies were conspicuous only by their absence or distance from the "enemy". This again was something which the British ought to have expected. The majority of the new recruits were, after all, men with local affiliations and local interests at stake. Many of these and others, like ex-members of the gendarmerie and police forces who had up to then been recruited into the new force at Kirman, had until recently been much impressed and influenced by German propaganda and money, if not by the ideals of Persian

1 Wagstaff to Farran, telegram, Malikabad, 12 Sep. 1916, appendix 9 to confidential despatch of Sykes, no.2-C, ibid.
2 Merrill to Farran, telegram, enclosed in memorandum from Farran to A.D. Fraser (Officer Commanding column, Bäft), 27 Aug 1916, appendix 5, to Sykes despatch, no.2-C, ibid.
nationalists. These men were now being asked to take up arms against those whom British officials described as the "enemy"; a term which invariably seemed to cover not only Germans and their Persian, Austrian, Indian, Turkish and Swedish associates, but which equally applied to roaming robber tribes, bandits, political agitators on the run, and at times even Russophils. The men's behaviour for quite some time showed that they had joined the force more because of a desire for a better means of livelihood than the desire to support the British-sponsored campaign for the restoration of order.

Judging from local experience, the possibilities that this situation might improve if men enlisted in the South Persian Rifles were to be employed away from their own country or district of origin, was not overlooked by some of the organisers. According to Wagstaff, the men enlisted at Sa'īdābād "though their number may impress the surrounding peasants, are more in the hands of the local Persian authorities than their officers . . . it would be different with regular SPR, out of their own district."

He proposed that the best only, if willing, should be enlisted as regulars and the rest disbanded. But this presented its own difficulties. The experience of the gendarmerie force had earlier shown that the Persians of one province did not take to soldiering in another and they simply hated serving far from their homes for too long. Even if this was not the case, it was difficult at that time to get men from other districts; the northern provinces, being under the Russian sphere, could not be tapped and in Fars and western districts, volunteers were not likely to leave their homes to join a British officered force. Neither was it wise to dismiss

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1 Wagstaff to Farran, ibid.
all the undesirable men at once: "... every man in our
service however half-hearted is a man lost to the other side
and if we cast them all [out] they may become active against
us."1

The same dilemma faced Sykes and his staff officers
when it came to recruitment in Shiraz. Some 3,000 men, many
of them being the disaffected remnants of the former "Swedish"
gendarmerie brigade of Fars, were stationed along 300 miles of
road running from Ābādeh to Kāzirūn through Shiraz. The
Persian Government had not yet formally authorised Sykes to
take over the Gendarmerie force and not even Farmān Farmā
could pretend that instructions touching on this issue had
been conferred on him from the Centre. But Sykes, acting on
the principle that "the boldest course is frequently the
wisest,"2 decided to incorporate the men into his force. His
calculations were based on two broad considerations. Firstly,
the men had guns and ammunition and could potentially become
a dangerous if not formidable menace to the force. Secondly,
the road needed to be guarded until the new South Persian Rifles
force in Shiraz could be raised and trained. Sykes had been
starved of men, equipment, and staff, up to then and could not
afford to spread his force; the time factor was important as
well as the need for experienced Persian officers of all ranks.3

The decision to enlist them was taken fairly soon
after Sykes's arrival in Shiraz, in November. The consul,
Gough, and Sykes approached Farmān Farmā asking him to announce
publicly that henceforth the Gendarmerie Force would be named

1 Farranto Wagstaff, memo. no. 237, Kerman, 17 Sep. 1916,
Appendix 10 to confidential despatch of Sykes, no. , op. cit.
2 Sykes, History, II, 472.
3 Ibid.
Qūshūn-e Jūnūb-e Irān, but Farnān Farnā refused. On the other hand, he did not intervene to stop them. The kārguẓār related that:

"... the general and his officers paid a formal visit to the Iyālat after which they went to the gendarmerie barracks where the general made a long speech saying that he had come there on behalf of the Persian Government and with the latter's money he was there to train and organise them. They would, from that very day, be called Qūshūn-e Jūnūb-e Iran." ²

Sykes had said further that "England never entertained the idea of occupying Iran but wished to see an independent and strong Iran standing between India and Europe. Everyone was bound by duty to maintain security in the South." ³ The men were offered promises of capitation grants, exclusive of their wages. It appears that altogether 28 officers and 2,100 other ranks enlisted. The men were made to take an oath in front of a mullah. ⁴ Sykes hoped that they would soon submit to British command. Sykes's optimism on this and a few other

¹ Abd-Allāh (Midhat al-Saltanah), Shiraz Kārguẓārī office, telegram no. 86, 20 Nov. 1916 (24 Muḥarram 1335), IFQA, 48/8, 1335. The former Kārguẓār of Shiraz, Sa'ād al-Sulṭān was arrested in view of his pro-nationalist or German tendencies, by Fath al-Mulk under the orders of Qavām al-Mulk and Saulat al-Dauleh (when the latter entered Shiraz in April 1916). The Kārguẓār protested to the Minister for Foreign Affairs who in turn wrote to Qavām, reminding him and Saulat very sharply, that they had no right to interfere in matters concerning the Centre's decisions. Sa'ād al-Sulṭān was nonetheless recalled and Midhat al-Saltanah, one of the elder brothers of Fath al-Mulk and a member of the Nurī family replaced him. Midhat had a fairly good relationship with the British in Shiraz until 1918 but on the whole he disapproved of them.

² Shiraz Kārguẓārī office, tel. no. 86, 20 Nov. 1916, op. cit.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid. The oath embodied the following statement: "I hereby swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to His Imperial Majesty [i.e., the Shāh] and will render full obedience to the officers and regulations and orders of the SPR during my service therein and that I will serve in the SPR anywhere in Persia for 3 years from ... ." Marling to Balfour, despatch no. 105, 16 Sep. 1917, enclosing Sykes's despatch no. V 9 Aug. 1917 containing "Scheme of Organisation for the South Persian Rifles", P. 194328, FO 371/2981.
issues were to be harshly criticised in some quarters, specially by the Indian authorities, when it became evident over the next year that these ex-gendarmes were the weakest part in the force.

Haig pronounced his own and Marling's guarded criticisms on this issue. The minister's view had apparently been that:

"... carefully selected individual gendarmes might be enlisted, but that the enlistment of the whole body would amount to a condonation of the very grave outrages of which they had been guilty and create an impression that British officials and British subjects might be robbed and maltreated with impunity."¹

Haig himself was of the opinion that the Swedish officers and Germans had:

"... instilled into the force a hatred of us and of our cause, the men were not to be trusted and might, even after taking the oath required of all enlisted with the SPR, revolt against us."²

This is indeed what happened some time later, proving among other things that Sykes's critics were right. Either way, however, the risks ran high. It may be that Sykes's confidence led him to minimise the dangers of intrigue and treachery and that the senior members of his newly arrived staff were not familiar with the recent influences affecting local feelings and that therefore they "underestimated the binding of an oath by the Persians and overestimated their own ability to control men under them."³

Yet, it must also be pointed out that Sykes and his staff were not totally insensitive to some of the problems, especially those regarding the officer corps of the force. As early as April 1916, Sykes had expressed the opinion that it might at first be better to engage junior Persian officers who

¹ Haig, Papers, ch. IX, p. 4.  
² Ibid.  
³ Ibid.
had had no European training, in the hope that they would be more easily assimilated. The officers of the Fars gendarmerie regiment were mostly Tehranis, "distinctly better educated than Indian officers with a knowledge of French or English in some cases."\(^1\) The services of this category of men, he argued, might prove valuable only later, when the force had been "moulded on British lines."\(^2\) Lieutenant-Colonel F. Orton, later to take charge of the Fars Brigade as Commanding Officer, doubted the fighting quality of the "well born" Persian, whom he believed were "too full of vices, too lazy to learn [and] ... inordinately conceited," always quick to think that they knew everything there was to learn.\(^3\) Major Frazer-Hunter, the first officer commanding of the Fars Brigade, as well as Sykes, adopted a more tolerant attitude. Frazer-Hunter pointed out that "Persians cannot be treated as Indians" and that it was a mistake if all the command was placed in the hands of British officers, since the latter were looked upon at best and with respect as instructors of the Persian soldier and not as his commander.\(^4\)

Evidently the Persian officers were in a unique position within the force; their political consciousness having risen after a taste of active struggle during the revolts of 1915 and early 1916, they could exert much influence

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2 Ibid.
3 Lt. Col. F. Orton (Officer Commanding, Fars; Acting Inspector General, SFR, from 27 Nov. 1917 to 19 Jan. 1918), Report on the Progress of the SFR, 31 Mar. 1918, enclosed in Despatch no. VIII, in Sykes to CGS, no. 643-1-A, Shiraz, 14 April 1918, Confidential (Printed), Serial no. 78, WO 106/934.
on the rank and file. In effect, they could contribute a lot to make a success of the South Persian Rifles, or, circumstances being what they were, to break it. Their sympathies and ambitions had to be taken into consideration and their initiative stimulated. One of the policies adopted toward this objective was to keep them, so far as possible, in command of units. The British N.C.Os, without whom the organisation lacked backbone, acted as staff and instructors. To stimulate their ambitions, a variety of rewards were granted for gallantry and good conduct and the men were promoted to rank and position. Among the steps taken to prevent the spread of intrigue, one was to isolate barracks as much as possible from the towns. Another was to send out detachments on outside duty without telling the Persian commanders where they were heading until the last minute.

The rank and file were in a delicate position. Apart from their sensitivity to the influences of their Persian superiors, they tended to be swayed, to no small degree, by adverse propaganda from without. Those stationed in the towns were more exposed than their brethren in far-off posts, to criticisms directed at the South Persian Rifles. This was specially true of Shiraz, where the inhabitants appeared to resent the British presence. The systematic press campaigns of editors such as Ziā' al-Vā' izain and pamphleteers could not fail but to affect them, especially since the formal recognition of the South Persian Rifles as a Persian force, except for a brief period during the second half of 1917, was permanently in question.

Thus, the opposition press came forth steadily with some bitter criticisms of Britain's Persian policy in general, and of the South Persian Rifles, as the practical realisation
of that policy, in particular. Editorials expressed regret and annoyance at the state of affairs in Fars:

"... all its public offices are under British supervision and direction; the Gendarmerie, specially, which was Iran's only hope, is now in their hands and its name has been changed to Qūshūn-e Junūb-e Iran (SPR). Training and command are generally given in the English language and according to English methods. They are explicitly telling the Persian rank and file officers that the British Government considers you and the Indian troops as equals; salaries and other expenses and equipments are being provided by the British and have nothing to do with the Persian Government. They are giving gendarmes their arrears of pay and openly telling them, 'when you become the servants of the Persian Government, then that government will be responsible for your arrears in pay and other expenses'."

It was perhaps not totally fair to accuse the British officers of the South Persian Rifles of exercising this kind of humiliation in their dealings with the Persians, especially since the organisers of the force were aware of this problem and indeed wished to emphasise the Persian character of the force as much as possible. But there was truth in the general feeling, that to all intents and purposes, the British were aiming at the total control of the province.

Throughout 1917 and the following years, the tone of hostility was sustained with continuous emphasis and elaboration on the theme of the strangulation and suffocation of Persia, by means of the British controlled South Persian Rifles. Farman Farmān and other accommodating Persians were not spared from attack either.²

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¹ Sitāreh-ye Irān (Tehran) no. 66, 1 Oct. 1917 (14 Zū al-Hijjah 1335) signed by Zīā' al-Vā'īzain known as Saiyid Zīā' Yazdī, who was arrested in Nov. 1916 and released in Apr. 1917. In September 1917 he left for Tehran where he contributed to Anglophobe newspapers and became editor of Irān-e Azād in 1921. The editor of Sitāreh-ye Irān was Hasan Sabā.

² The 57th issue of Sitāreh-ye Irān began its editorial with the heading "The cry of the South" and continued: "... through the hand which they have brought out of Farmān Farmān's sleeve and the claws which they call Qūshūn-e Junūb, the English have grasped this artery of life and want to strangle Iran." (15 Sep. 1917/28 Zū al-qa'deh 1335)
The conditions of men in small posts on the roads were perhaps even more difficult. Their numbers were for a long time small, and their duties at all times more hazardous and lonely, leading them to develop relations with local or neighbouring tribes. This made it all the more difficult for them to defend their posts effectively or to take up arms against the tribes if necessary. More often than not, they either joined intriguers or failed to retaliate when attacked, allowing the posts to be sacked. This happened in the case of the Kāzirūn episode in 1916 and in the case of Khān-e Zīnyān in 1918.

The tufangchīs, working either independently for the South Persian Rifles or contracted from the retinues of governors and khāns, led even more monotonous lives than the men in the posts. Fraser recounted how the tufangchīs posted along the route from Sarzeh to Bīring (fourteen and a half miles on the road from Bandar Abbas to Daulatābād) though only 100 yards away from each other, "felt very lonely as they shouted to their pals below all night."¹ This was probably their way of signalling that all was well, but doubtless they risked danger most of the time. The tufangchīs were generally recruited from the tribes of the locality in which they served. Many, like those stationed between Qavām-Ābād and Amīnābād and between the latter place and Yazd-e Khāst to Ābādeh, were those already serving the government gendarmerie but taken over by Sykes. They appear to have been the last in the wage line and permanently complained about delays in pay and grumbled about the sums they received.² They worked fairly satisfactorily when

¹ W. Fraser, Diaries, 24 Oct. 1917, MECL (Ds 255).
² Lt. D.N. Carr to Nora K. Carr, letter (private), 11 May 1917, Bāft. Carr joined the SPR in August, travelling from Bandar Abbas to Bāft and eventually Kirman with Major
all was going well for the South Persian Rifles and provided that the governors or khāns of their locality were on friendly terms with the British. Otherwise, they became menacing and were well positioned to lead troops astray and relay speedy information to intriguers and trouble-makers.

Once the Shiraz gendarmes were incorporated into the force, recruitment went on apace. Men of a "good type" were offering their services to the force but owing to a lack of British officers, they could not all be handled at once. The force reached a strength of just over 5,500 by August 1917 and just over 6,000 by the spring of 1918. It was composed of three broad categories of men. Of these, about fifty per cent were drawn from local nomadic or quasi-nomadic tribes. A large proportion of the latter were trained as regulars while the rest, some 550 to 1,000, were tribal levies employed as irregular cavalry and infantry and shared between the Kirman and Fars brigades. The second category of men were those who had at some point served other government military or police forces and had then been incorporated into the South Persian Rifles. They included gendarmes, men from the Amnīḵān and those tufangchīs taken over from the gendarmerie. The men in this group, excepting the tufangchīs, were mostly non-locals and in the early stages formed the bulk of the force's commissioned ranks. For the rest, the recruits were made up, by

Mawaddān staff's reinforcement column. He participated in the fight at Sa'Idābād and became adjutant to the second all Persian SPR infantry regiment, the Muzaffarī, in Kirman. He contributed much to the training and organisation of the Kirman Brigade's punitive column. He died in late summer 1918 in Sirjān from influenza. Carr found the tufangchīs between Bāft and Daulatābād particularly discontented. Lt. Carr, Family Letters.

1 Sykes to Marling, desp. no. 100P, 9 Dec. 1916, enc. in Marling's desp. no. 1 of 1 Jan. 1917, p. 3892, FO 371/2981.
2 Military Dept. (1.8), Secret, Note of the Situation in South Persia, no. 2308, 28 May 1918, L/P & S/10/727(11); notes from War Diary, serial no. 7/2093, Sep. 1918, WO/106/940.
and large, of the unemployed or semi-unemployed population of the towns and the country, including landless agricultural labourers and those whom Gough described as "belonging to the low classes in the bazaars, baker's assistants and small shop-keepers' hammals." Gough, however, was at this point trying to impress on the authorities in London and India, his own low opinion of the South Persian Rifles rather than being seriously informative about its composition; though, doubtless, the description befitted a good percentage of the rank and file collected in the towns.

The fact that the province of Fars suffered much from the crop failures of 1916, not to mention those of the preceding two years, ensured a steady flow of recruits. Yet, difficulties created by conditions of supply affecting the price of bread and other foodstuffs, did nothing to improve the relationship of the British officers with their men and with the Shirazis generally. Sykes's arrival in Shiraz coincided with the start of severe scarcity, especially of wheat.

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1 Oliphant, quoting Col. Gough who was in London on sick leave from Shiraz; minute no. 4098, 8 Jan. 1919. FO 371/3881. Cf. recollections of Murshid Ali Aqa Tanai: "... when English and Indian troops entered Shiraz and set up their offices and barracks there were many unemployed and lay-abouts who went and registered their names with the force." Interview, Shiraz, 1972. Also the recollections of Mr Rukn-Zadeh Adamiat who said of the recruits at Bandar Abbas, "Sykes drew a bunch from local tufangchis, others were peasants, very poor and illiterate." Interview (personal), Tehran, 27 June 1972.

2 The poor harvest of 1914 was followed by a worse one in 1915 and 1916. This was due partly to periodic locust attacks but mainly to a failure of adequate rain during successive sowing seasons in the production regions of the lowland of the Gulf and the interior. The crops in several districts were left on the ground during 1916, not repaying the labour of cutting. Transport costs rose and with them the cost of living in general. The price of grain, sugar and other piece-goods rose to exorbitant levels (wheat in Bushihr sold at 44 krans (£1.10) per mashin man of 124 lbs on average during 1917, in Shiraz, 45 tumanis a Kharvar). The inhabitants of the Gulf regions and such centres as Shiraz came to rely heavily on India for food. While some tribal chiefs and owners of transport animals (mainly donkeys) profited, there was hardship and distress
Notwithstanding the fact that the South Persian Rifles were living, in the early months at least, on grain brought in by themselves, the price of bread in Shiraz rose daily. In both the short and the long run, the maintenance of a force of between three and four thousand, in the city and its vicinity, could not fail but to affect prices directly or indirectly. There is ample evidence that landowners, not to mention the Governor-General himself, practised grain hoarding on an incredibly large scale. The fact that the South Persian Rifles could pay higher prices for whatever was available at any point, upset the market in grain further. On the other hand, their practice of buying up stock above the market price, especially when anticipating trouble ahead as in the spring of 1918, and selling foodstuffs at a loss when scarcity amounted at any time to famine conditions, may at times have helped to have a steadying effect on prices. Periodic imports of flour and grain from India, efforts to make the South Persian Rifles as little dependent as possible on the country, and occasional loans or cash donations to the Central Government for the sole use of Fars, helped to relieve each crisis.


1 From the first, many of Shiraz's landowners welcomed the SFR's arrival, whereas, according to Orton, the 'religious class, 'Democrats' and a large percentage of townspeople were hostile. Nomads between Bushire and Shiraz were also hostile." Orton, Report on the SFR, 19 May 1917, enclosure in Sykes to Marling, no. 11 AQC, 26 May 1917, WO 106/934.

2 Gough to Grant, tel. reg. no. 17-F (copy), 11 Dec. 1916, M.I.2, Doc. no. 93, "O 106/926. Gough wrote: "We are threatened with serious disturbance .. ." Wheat was very scarce everywhere and he wanted 1,000 tons of it from India to carry on till the next harvest. A month later, prices went down for a short while when some grain trickled into Shiraz from Firuzābād but there were still reports that about 20 deaths
The situation in Shiraz was not helped by the fact that at times, due to personal enmity between governors-general, or for political reasons, local magnates obstructed the passage of goods from one province to another. It appears, for instance, that Isfahan was suffering less than Shiraz at this time. But Zill al-Sultan, covetous of the governorship of Fars, deliberately stopped goods from reaching Shiraz during 1916 and early 1917.\(^1\) Also in 1917, for example, Muhammad Ali Khan Qashqä'i, Häkim of Ābadeh, and latterly turned anti-British, was found to be stopping supplies from reaching Shiraz. He was promptly replaced by a more friendly governor at the request of Gough.

Soaring prices of bread, for whatever reason, sustained the high level of discontent and directed ill-feeling all the more against the British. This state of affairs, judging from the Shiraz Kārguzār's reports to the Centre, was a contributory factor in the disturbances of the ensuing months in Fars.\(^2\)

It soon became apparent to the organisers of the

\(^1\) Farmān Farmā to "Asūgh al-Daulah (Sadr-e A'لازم and Minister for Foreign Affairs), tel., no. 625, 2 Jan. 1917 (8 Rabi' al-Sānī 1335), IFOA, 48/16.

\(^2\) The Kārguzār emphasised that due to this and the "unauthorised interference" of Sykes in the affairs of the Gendarmerie, and his potential interference in all local matters: "The climate of opinion in Fars is extremely hostile and nothing can be done to ameliorate this except a policy of tact and attempts to attract the sympathy of the people. It should be proposed to the British Legation that they should advise their agents here to act in a more lenient manner . . . the British Telegraph Department's agents at Isfahan should also be told to stop censoring and delaying my letters and telegrams." Abd-Allāh, Shiraz, no. 61, 12 Nov. 1916 (16 Muharram 1335), IFOA, 48/27, 1335.
force that in order to ensure the security and control of the Gulf regions of Kirman and Fars, from a military standpoint, two major areas had to fall firmly in their grasp. These were the Sirjān district and Kāzirūn. From a strategical point of view, Sirjān formed the gateway between Fars and Kirman and its control also ensured the safety of the Garmsīr and the routes to them to Bandar Abbas. Kāzirūn was a prize for anyone holding it; it provided a vantage point from which the main route running to Bushihr and other minor routes to the shores of the Gulf could be advantageously held. It was perhaps not irrelevant that the two first and relatively serious engagements of the South Persian Rifles, took place in and around these two places. The incidents in themselves, however, were outwardly at least sparked off by provocations from anti-British elements.

The Sirjān affair of July-September 1916, though involving the embryo of the South Persian Rifles in action, belonged properly to the last of a series of extended activities directed at German agents and their supporters in Persia, which had begun before the South Persian Rifles had properly established itself in the south. The troubles initiated at Kāzirūn in December 1916, however, were of a different category and infinitely more complex in their origin and their course. On the British side, the real military and political objective from the start appears to have been the control of Kāzirūn. The fight in 1916 represented the first step toward this objective. When it failed, an attempt was made to come to terms with Saulat al-Dauleh, hoping to hold the place through him. This did not prove satisfactory either. Finally, it was not till January 1919 and only by intensive military measures on the part of the South Persian Rifles and the Bushihr troops

See above, pp. 114-115.
simultaneously, that Kāzirūn was occupied.

The episode in 1916 embodied a combination of causal factors which were to recur in later troubles in Fars and which really lay at the bottom of the difficulties which the South Persian Rifles had to surmount. These involved in the first instance, motivations arising from private quarrels of leading khāns with the Governor-General of Fars, which, falling at the lower and more general level of lesser tribes and their chiefs, came to be seen as genuine expressions of patriotism. Given the provocative and threatening nature of the British presence under the guise of the South Persian Rifles, this force became an obvious target for attack. Other factors, such as the existing widespread distress due to high prices and the residue of pro-German sympathy, among the southern tribes especially, also played their part. One of the most important differences, however, between the Kāzirūn uprising of late 1916 and the later revolts in Fars, led by the Qashqā'ī, was that in 1916, authority from the Centre endeavoured to calm the rebels while in 1918 it positively encouraged them.

The troubles in 1916 began with an attack on 17 December by the men of Nāsir al-Dīvān on the newly installed South Persian Rifles' post at Kāzirūn (200 in strength). It was at first thought that the attack was planned by Wassmuss with the help of Ghazānfar al-Saltaneh, Nūr Muhammad Khān, and other Dashtistānī khāns, whose relations with the Anglo-Indian troops stationed at Bushihr had latterly deteriorated. On closer examination, however, evidence suggests that though Wassmuss may have influenced the rebels and that the southern khāns were certainly prepared to rally behind the Kāzirūnīs,
the underlying motivation was Nāsir al-Dīvān and Saulat al-Daulah's personal enmity toward Farmān Farmā. The former had never trusted the Governor-General, who, though used by the British in many ways, was in turn using them through the medium of the South Persian Rifles to advance his own authority and deal as many blows as he could to his adversaries and rivals. Saulat's quarrels and rivalry with Farmān Farmā were deep-rooted and had been freshly aggravated by their recent dispute at Qumīsheh. Shortly after this, Farmān Farmā, intent on provoking Saulat, appointed Sālār Hīshmat to Kāzīrūn with instructions to cause trouble to Saulat, especially in the Mamasanī country where Saulat had leased large estates from Muʿīn al-Tujjār. Sālār Hīshmat refused unless strongly backed by troops and while Farmān Farmā looked around for means of carrying out his plans, Saulat and Nāsir al-Dīvān united and as a reprisal, rushed the South Persian Rifles' post in Kāzīrūn.

The incident is significant in revealing how the South Persian Rifles came to be used subsequently, both as a tool and an object of attack by opposing camps. As far as the enemies of the Governor-General were concerned, a blow directed at the South Persian Rifles meant revenge against Farmān Farmā and the British at the same time.

The position of Qavām al-Mulk was ambiguous in all this. On the whole, he was generally drawn to back the British

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1 Abd-Allāh, Kārguzārī office, to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, telgr. no. 186, 13 Dec. 1916 (17 Safar 1335), IFOA, 48/6, 1335; same to same, no. 239, 26 Dec. 1916 (30 Safar 1335), IFOA, 48/16.

2 See above, p. 103, footnote 1.

or co-operate with them. In this incident, however, it was believed that he was in secret alliance with the rebel khāns. There was no doubt about the fact that his confidential adviser, Mīrzā Mustafā Khān, a relative of his and a noted democrat activist in Shiraz, was deeply implicated. The democrats in Shiraz generally, together with at least three Persian officers of the South Persian Rifles (later dismissed) helped to arouse anti-South Persian Rifles feeling and were probably responsible for the publication and distribution of a proclamation in the name of "Kāzirūn", which began with the passionate cry:

"When will you wake up from your stupor! The English and the Governor-General have bought all the foodstuffs and are offering you dust. Show your determination and like us, take your revenge upon the unbelievers."

As a result of the vehemence of this kind of protest, the Kārguzār could not entertain any optimism for the future, given the fact that the "majority of Shirazis resent English

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1 Marling was not convinced of this while Gough and Sykes argued otherwise and proceeded to arrest Mustafā Khān with the ultimate objective of turning him out of the city. They counselled Qavām that Mustafā Khān's presence in Shiraz was neither favourable to British-Persian interests nor to Qavān's. Qavām threatened resignation at one point and complained to Midhat al-Saltaneh that Sykes and Gough "keep playing games with me and I shall not be deceived by them again." It is not clear whether in fact Mustafā Khān was made to leave or was simply kept under house arrest but Qavām uncomfortably accepted to co-operate and after receiving money, guns, and a detachment of SPR Persian troops, together with his own men, set out in January on a winter-spring expedition against the troubled districts of Sabā, Kūhistān, Dārab, Fasā (of which he was the governor), mainly to punish some Bāhārlū chiefs and extract some taxes from them. On the Qavām affair, see telegrams from the Shiraz Kārguzārī to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, no. 186, 13 Dec. 1916 (17 Safar 1335), IFOA, 48/6, 1335; same to same no. 197, 22 Dec. 1916 (26 Safar 1335), IFOA, 48/16; same to same, no. 287, 7 Jan. 1917 (13 Rabī' al-Avval 1335), IFOA, 48/8, 1335; Farmān Farmā to Vūṣūgh al-Daeleh, tel. (no number), order number of paper in file, 12, 6 Dec. 1917 (12 Rabī' al-Avval 1335), IFOA, 48/16.

interference, that bread is expensive, fuel scarce, scope for
manoeuvre is limited and the situation does not lend itself to
the slightest optimism." He had warned the Central authorities
again and again of this state of affairs and of the current
famine in the surrounding district which would inevitably lead
the Shirazis to revolt "for the sake of bread". He had also
shown how tension had been building up between the Kashkulli
khans and the Qashqai, and between the latter and Farmān
Farmā. As soon as news of the Kāzirūn insurrection reached
Shiraz, he wrote in despair to Tehran that just as he had fore-
cast, the "revolution in Fars has begun." The operation against the rebels was concentrated
in the vicinity of the Pir-e Zan pass, the top of which rises
some 3,000 feet above the plain of Dasht-e Arjhan, on the
road to Kāzirūn. The plain, surrounded by high wooded moun-
tains has a village of the same name, some 6,600 feet above sea
level, lying close up under the northern barrier, which rises
steeply to a height of 9,000 to 10,000 feet. The old road from

1 Shiraz Kārguzārī Office, tel. no. 187, 13 Dec. 1916 (17
Safar 1335), IFOA, 48/6.
2 Ibid.
3 Shiraz Kārguzārī Office tel. no. 208 19 Dec. 1916 (23 Safar
1335), IFOA, 48/16. Muhammad Ḩasan Kashkulī was generally
on very bad terms with Šaulat al-Dauleh and was always tempted
to side with the SPR against the Qashqā'ī Ḫān-Ḵān, provided
he could have the governorship of the Mamas country as
reward. The Qashqā'ī themselves were, on the whole, rarely
united against the SPR for any long spell. During the Kāzirūn
engagement, for instance, some minor Chahārlang khāns, such
as Ḥujjāb al-Saltaneh and Sardār Mukhtadir, among others, sided
with the British. See Kārguzārī's report no. 86, 2 Nov. 1916
(24 Muḥarram 1335), IFOA, 48/8. Indeed, at one point it also
looked as if Muhammad Ḩasan Kashkulī, his nephew Isfandīār
Ḵān, and also Ardīshīr Ḩān Kashkulī, were prepared to throw
in their lot with the SPR. But it was found that their secret
 correspondence was but a ruse to delay the SPR columns on the
march to Dasht-e Arjhan. Sykes to CGS, India, desp. no. 5,
letter no. 1-C, 4 Jan. 1917 (Diary no. 11795), printed,
WO 106/931.
4 Shiraz Kārguzārī Office, tel. no. 208, 19 Dec. 1916 (23
Safar 1335), IFOA, 48/16.
Shiraz debouches from the difficult Tang-e Sifid, about a mile to the east of the village, crosses the northern corner of the plain, turns south under the cliffs of Dasht-e Arjhan, then proceeds to the pass or Kutal-e Pir-e Zan and then the Kutal-e Dukhtar. The Pir-e Zan is one of the most difficult passes to attack but once held is considered to be the key to Käzirūn. The Pir-e Zan position towering to the east of the road from Dasht-e Arjhan is open on all sides and capped by cliffs forming many caves and holes. Ways of approaching it from a westerly direction were very difficult and the approach through the Mullah Nairū pass was also dangerous since it led to regions occupied by the rebel inhabitants of Kulūni and Ābdūlī.¹

A column of South Persian Rifles troops marched out of Shiraz on 21 December, passed through Chinär Rāhdār (seven miles from Shiraz), then linked forces with the South Persian Rifles detachment stationed at the Khān-e Zinyān post (about thirty miles from Shiraz) under Major Bruce. The two columns then marched to Dasht-e Arjhan. The South Persian Rifles made two attempts to capture the position. The first, on Christmas day, involved the 124th Baluchi Infantry, the 15th Lancers, and a company of South Persian Rifles infantry, who, acting as the advance guard to the main body, began climbing the pass. The main force moved into the valley with the South Persian Rifles Cavalry as its rear guard. Action was confined more or less to the advance guard who came under fire and returned to camp by noon, exhausted. The second attempt was made on the next day; the infantry supported by the 23rd Mountain

² Roughly over 300 in strength (200 SPR and 100 men from the Shiraz Amnieh), ibid.
Batteries and the South Persian Rifles Hotchkiss machine guns, pushed their way up to near the Gilü Kmäjeh height. After an all-day engagement and six hours of continuous firing, the whole force fell back on camp, just missed being totally surrounded by the "enemy" in the plain and had to make a speedy and ignominious exit from it, returning to Khān-e Zinyān and then to Shiraz, by 28 December. 1

The defeat was caused as much by miscalculations and delays in the field of command and organisation, as by the doubtful reliability of the South Persian Rifles' Persian men. On the other side, the "enemy" displayed a determination and deftness which took the South Persian Rifles by surprise. They did, admittedly, occupy the more advantageous position but their numbers apparently did not exceed 400, if that. They proved themselves to be excellent marksmen and "did not waste a shot." 2

For the South Persian Rifles, everything appeared to go wrong. There were delays from the start in releasing the transport intended for the column marching out of Shiraz, a task which had been entrusted to Qaväm al-Mulk. The supply caravan, in fact, never reached the force. A camel transport which had been sent to reload at Chinār Rāhdār and return to Dasht-e Arjhan, was delayed because the South Persian Rifles posts along the route failed to carry out orders to escort it

1 Ibid. The troops involved in this action were: 23rd Mountain Battery (one section), Major R.S.Rothwell, 150 rank and file, 124 Infantry, Capt. Chaldecott, Hinde, Wittkugell. 1 section 3rd SPR Infantry, Sultan Abd Allāh Khān Zabar. Ten Sabres, SPR. Cavalry; 5 Tufangchis. Major D.M. Bruce's detachment from Khān-e Zinyān included the 15th Bengal Lancers and a machine gun section with 2 guns.

back. Lt. Col. Twigg put it down to "treachery" though he could not prove it, but the incident appears to have greatly influenced subsequent actions. Tricks played by the opposition along the march to Khān-e Zinyān made for further delays. In the first attempt up the Pīr-e Zan pass, it was found that, apart from sheer physical difficulties, the guides had been misleading and the South Persian Rifles infantry had behaved indifferently; Captain Weldon had "tried time and again to rally men but could not." In the second thrust, the 124th Baluch Infantry lost their way, swallowed up, as Frazer put it, "by the intricacies of the ground." The ground, intersected by huge clefts and boulders, made communications between units almost impossible. This time, the guides disappeared altogether; the machine guns' cartridges finished; Captain Wittkugell broke his back on falling and two men were killed in the attempt to carry him down the mountain.

Night came and when the wounded returned to the camp at Qal'eh-ye Mushīrī, it was thought that about twenty men of the artillery had deserted to the enemy. Lower down, in the main camp, the muleteers were also found to have deserted, carrying off the loading ropes with them. Camels and mules were seen fleeing in the night toward Khān-e Zinyān. Finally, when orders were issued for the evacuation of the valley, the South Persian Rifles, to a man, took to the road without waiting for the issue of detailed orders; while villagers looted the transport convoys in the dark. The casualties, oddly enough, were not high. According to the British view, about sixty out of the 200 Persians who participated in this fight acquitted themselves well. Credit must also be given to the

1 Ibid.
3 Frazer-Hunter's report, 1 Jan. 1917, ibid.
British officers in charge, who lived and fought in constant fear of treachery in addition to anxiety over the lack of supplies and of men.

Sykes played down the weaknesses of the whole operation. His mistake had been to allow such a small force out of Shiraz without waiting to see how the situation would develop. He stepped up his demands on India for troops, from 200 to 400 then 600 infantry, in the space of five days, clearly showing that he had misjudged the fighting quality of the "enemy" and was in too much of a hurry for action. He viewed the operation afterwards, as "a reconnaissance in force", which he believed would have involved practically no losses but for Captain Wittkugell's misfortune.¹  He did admit, however, that "politically, the result of the retirement was unfavourable."²

More fighting was anticipated from the rebellious tribes and there were rumours that all leading khāns were gathering in Kāzirūn to plan an attack on Shiraz. Farmān Farmā wrote agitatedly to Tehran about the imminence of more risings, especially because bread prices had now reached insupportable levels due to "goods not reaching Shiraz from Isfahan." His forebodings of the dangers which might befall him, other government officials, and the foreign community in Shiraz, were backed by a desperate plea that two to three thousand kharvār of grain³ be sent to Shiraz immediately from Isfahan:

"... if the government is unable to carry this off, the only other alternative is to grant the governorship of Fars to his Highness the Zill

¹ Sykes to CGS, no. 1-C, 4 Jan. 1917, serial no. 5, Dy. no. 11795, WO 106/931.
² Ibid.
³ kharvār was equivalent to about 1 ton.
al-Sultan and his children."¹

The Käzirün experience, under the circumstances, went to show that the South Persian Rifles had taken too big a task upon itself, too soon. Käzirün was not to be had so easily, nor it seems was Fars to be pacified yet. In all this, the rebels gave a distinctly patriotic and religious interpretation to their motives. One of the kadkhudäs of the neighbourhood of Dasht-e Arjhan, who was made responsible for protecting the Gilā Khwājah pass against the South Persian Rifles, wrote to Fath al-Mulk in the South Persian Rifles camp at Khân-e Zinyān:

"We have been driven to revolt by an urge to preserve our country's independence. You criticise us for rising against the Iranian Government; but Iran is nowadays under Russian and British occupation. Those chiefs and khāns of Fars who have united, have done so to protect Islam and the country, and to wipe out the foreigners from the land of our ancestors. . . . If there is a need for leaders [commanders] why should they not be chosen from among our own notables and grandees. What has happened to our Islamic pride and honour, that tempted by English and Russian money, we should so place our beloved country into the hands of foreigners and make our officials serve under alien soldiers? The duty of all Iranians today is to free themselves from the claws of the foreigners and to restore the dignity of our forefathers. You had written that anyone who agitates against the Government of Iran will come to a bitter end. Which of the troops are today supporting the Government of Iran? Which of the commanders who are squandering their time away are Iranians? Under the guidance of the Imam of the Age all the khāns of the Garmār have sworn an oath of alliance, that while they have health, they will strive to take revenge upon the English and the Russians and drive them out of Iran. We shall not give up till this has been achieved."²

Matters stood at a standstill during the cold months of winter. Nāṣir al-Dīvān governed Käzirün while Saulat

¹ Farmān Farmā to Vüsâgh al-Daulēh, 2 Jan. 1917, no. 625 (8 Rabi‘ al-Avval 1335), IFOA, 48/16.
al-Dauleh kept sending insolent messages to Farmān Farmā. The grounds for reaching an understanding with Saulat were being gradually laid by the British authorities in Shiraz. Finally, on 24 May 1917, Saulat signed an agreement with Gough and Sykes, agreeing to restrain his tribe and co-operate with the South Persian Rifles to maintain security and order on the Shiraz-Kāzirūn road. The agreement was to be tested for three months and renewed if successful.¹

The thaw in relationships was brought about chiefly perhaps because of the quiet recognition which the South Persian Rifles received on 21 March from the Cabinet of Vūsūgh al-Dauleh.² This was not widely publicised but much was made of it locally. To all intents and purposes, it was a gesture to be exploited by the authorities in Shiraz for the benefit of the South Persian Rifles. Other factors which greatly strengthened the British position in Persia were firstly, the successful advance of General Maude's army on Baghdad and its occupation on 11 March 1917, and secondly, the arrival of much needed reinforcements for the South Persian Rifles in April, from India.³ Sykes's staff increased from one to eight and later to twelve, enabling him to begin taking action against robber tribes while the force was still being trained and organised.

Excluding the Sīrjān and Pīr-e Zan engagements of summer and winter 1916, the South Persian Rifles were involved in at least ten minor operations against robbers throughout the years 1916 and 1917, followed by about eight more from the

¹ See below, pp. 209, 245-246.
² See below, p. 209.
³ This consisted of 1 squadron of Burma Mounted Rifles (these men were mostly Punjabis) and 3 squadrons of the 16th Rajputs under Lt. Col. G.R. Vanrenen, Col. E.F. Orton and Lt. Col. G.P. Grant also joined the force in Shiraz, having journeyed by motor car from Quetta via Nairiz. Sykes, History, II, 476.
beginning of the year 1918 until the end of March of the same year.

In these operations, detachments of the South Persian Rifles from the Kirman Brigade co-operated with those of Fars. The brunt of the work, especially during 1917, fell on the South Persian Rifles' Indian combatants (just over a thousand in strength). The Ābādeh Persian garrison under the command of Captain A. Lilly and the Dihbīd garrison under Captain N. Williams were also very active and did some good work. The South Persian Rifles directed its blows at the professional rather than the amateur robber tribes and bandits. The two terms were applied respectively to those tribes such as the Lāshāni who were addicted to robbery and those such as the Mishmāst who robbed only occasionally. The actions were mainly confined to the areas falling to the north-north-east of Shiraz, to the east of Lake Nairīz, and the border regions of Fars and Kirman.

The tribes against whom operations were conducted included the Bāsīrī, Gallazān Qashqā'ī and Kurdshullī in the vicinity of Dihbīd (at Pūzeh Sīāh and Kifteh (or Kaftā)); the Fārsī Shaibānī (Shīvānī) a sub-tribe of the Arab Kuttī tribe, in the vicinity of Ābādeh (at Mashad-e Murghāb); the Chahārrāhī and sub-tribes of Bāsīrī encampments near Nairīz; the Māzīdī (sub-tribe of Labū Muhammadī Arab of the Khamseh) and the Sarhaddī of Bam and Narmashīr districts; the sedentary inhabitants of the villages of Dihchāh and Shahr-e Bābak; the Ḥasanī and Bulhasanī at Pādūnī (near Tārum); the villages of Bānak and Khurramī, inhabited by the Husain Allī faction of the Kuttī; the Mashadī Janī Khān (sub-tribe of Labū Muhammadī); the Lāshānī and Mishmāst in the vicinity of Arsanjān, Tang-e Kamīn and Qavāmābād to the north-east of Shiraz; the Bāhārlū near Tang-e Zāgh (near Tārum); and finally,
some Buyir Ahmadi from Sisakht and Fadana and some Farsi Madan from Kifteh involved in an engagement on the Abadeh to Yazd-e Khast road.¹

Information and statistics on the strength of the enemy, on the numbers of men killed and wounded on each side, and on the identity of the trouble-makers, were painstakingly documented by British officers in charge of their particular detachments. Placed against some Persian accounts of one or two of the engagements, interpretations and statistics differ quite markedly. Both sides tended to exaggerate the others' strength and fighting quality. The list of casualties for this period, allowing for discrepancies and differences in quotations, was between 140 and 170 killed and probably as many or twice as many wounded on the Persian side. The numbers on the South Persian Rifles side were remarkably low, standing at between ten and twenty killed and perhaps twice that number wounded.

The confidential and secret printed reports of the operations could have been edited at headquarters, Shiraz, before being passed on to the authorities in India, Tehran, and London, with the deliberate aim of lowering the numbers of killed or wounded on each side. An excessive number of casualties among the men of the South Persian Rifles would reflect badly on the reputation of the force. Similarly, severe

¹ Details on the tribes can be found in Henry Field, Contributions to the Anthropology of Iran (Chicago, 1939) who incorporates information found in the works of Christian, Curzon, and Sykes, among others. The following works have been referred to for topographical and other information: Routes in Persia: Fars, Laristan, Kirman, Yazd (vol. IV, part III) L/P & S/20/C/101, General Staff India (Simla, 1923); Military Report on Persia, Vol. IV, part II (Simla, 1924); Gazetteer of Persia, vol. III, parts 1 & 2 (Simla and Calcutta, 1918), L/MIL/17/15/411 & 412; Persia: Geographical Handbook Series, Naval Intelligence Division (London, 1945).
casualties inflicted by the force on the inhabitants, be they robbers or not, tended to arouse ill-feeling and hostility, giving anti-British elements ample opportunity to make capital out of it. Statistics available therefore, are reliable only within certain limits. For instance, in the action taken in October 1916 against Ja'far Quli Khān, a robber chief in alliance with some Bakhtīārī tribesmen, at Kāleh-ye Shāhī near Qahveh Ruh (in the vicinity of Isfahan), the strength of the robber "enemy" was estimated to be between 150 and 400 according to the reports of the South Persian Rifles, the Russian Cuban Cossack detachment who participated, the villagers of Qal'eh-ye Shāhī, and the agent of Lynch Brothers & Co. at the same village. As to the casualties inflicted on the "enemy", the Russian estimate was 45, the Governor-General's agent at Bāgh-e Vahsh (Hassan Ali Khān) claimed ten killed, while the English officer in charge, who received information from a merchant, who in turn had obtained it from one of Ja'far Quli's own men, reported five killed and two wounded.\(^1\)

In the same manner, after the affray at Dīchāh in June 1917, the villagers claimed that at least twenty four men, women, and children were killed while the South Persian Rifles reported ten men killed, and one woman accidentally wounded by a stray bullet.\(^2\)

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As a rule, the South Persian Rifles would try to retrieve stolen animals and foodstuffs from tribes or villages through the channel of local officials, for example, in the case of the engagement at the villages of Dihchāh and Shahr-e Bābak, suspected of having stolen a large number of cattle and sheep from the neighbourhood of Pāriz, the South Persian Rifles officer in charge of the affair, tried to retrieve the goods through the Hākim of Nairız but without much result. He then marched to Dihchāh and tried to contact the headman, but claimed that his men were fired at and that he retaliated by conducting a full-scale attack on the village. The Dihchāhis claimed that it was a surprise attack. Similarly, the villagers of Shahr-e Bābak said they had at first welcomed the South Persian Rifles detachment believing that they had come to protect them against bandits but when the South Persian Rifles failed to capture the bandits they turned on the village itself. On the whole, the South Persian Rifles did try to avoid unnecessary confrontations and shootings.

Other conclusions which may be drawn from these operations are that robber bands were powerful, well armed and brave; they organized themselves into bands 50 to 500 strong and carried reserve ammunition; in some cases they even provided themselves with bombs. Their motive was loot, not fighting, and swift raids in small numbers against caravans and villages formed their usual tactics. They aimed at domestic and transport animals and in the case of the South Persian Rifles, at these and arms; the South Persian Rifles Maxim guns were especially sought after. The frequency of the raids

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1 Letter from 11 members of Shahr-e Bābak village to Tehran, 25 Aug. 1917 (7 Zū al-Qa'deh 1335), serial number (general) of paper 139, IFQĀ, 48/14 (part I), 1336.
on villages and the size of the booty carried away was quite alarming.

It was hoped that the settled agricultural population, bearing the burdens of excessive or illegal taxes and protection money, and living under the constant threat of robberies, would have at least co-operated with the South Persian Rifles. This was not always the case. Despite the fact that by way of punishment, fines of somewhat considerable size were as a rule imposed on villages believed to have harboured robbers or helped the "enemy", the settled population were usually loth to give away any information or afford help to the South Persian Rifles.¹ The motto, "Gendarmes come and go but the

¹ Punishments included fines in cash or kind, the destruction of forts and tents, confiscation of arms, arrests, and sometimes even executions. Thus, in July 1917, the Kurdshulli had all their stock of 182 cattle and 19 donkeys taken and 100 of their tents burnt in full view of their kalantar, Attär Khān and all three tribes involved in the engagement at Kaftā (i.e., the Kurdshulli, Bāssirī, and Galazān Qashqā'ī); in June 1917, the Fārsī Shaibānī and the villagers of Bānak and Khurrami had 465 sheep and goats, 61 camels, 74 donkeys and mares, 8 bullocks taken from them and 18 men taken as prisoners; in July, the Dihcâzhīn had 4 cattle, 19 donkeys, and 4 horses taken from them and their 200 tent set on fire; in January 1918, in the action against the Lāshānī (headed by Rahīm Āghā Lāshānī) and the Mashādī Janī Khān and Mishnast (headed by Saif Allāh Khān Arab) in the vicinity of Arsanjān, 2 Arab camps of 30 tents each were burnt near Chāh-Surkh and another one near Gümān.

Among the forts destroyed or razed to the ground were those of Husain Khān Büchāqchī's at Bālvard and Khushrū'ī (some miles east of Sirjān) in Sep. 1916; the fort of Chāh-Haqq on 9 May 1918; the fort of Fīn, near Bandar Abbas on 21 Feb. 1918, the headman of Fīn was seized, tried by court martial, and shot for complicity in the attack on an SPR convoy at Sarzeh, near Bandar Abbas; the headman of Rizvān, near Sarzeh, was also arrested at this time. In an effort to lessen hostility towards the SPR, if the governors, deputy governors, and headmen of villages or districts were found to be anti-SPR, every effort was made to dismiss them through the medium of Qavām al-Mulk and Farmān Farmā and to replace them by persons believed to be friendly to the force. Thus, Shir Khān was replaced by Isā Khān as headman of Shahr-e Bābak; Muhammad Khān, Fath al-Mulk, deputy governor of Nairīz was discharged in 1918; Mukhtādir al-Mulk (Muhammad Ja'far Khān) deputy-governor of Lār was also discharged during 1917 as was Ḥāshim Khān Kalantar of Chāh-Haqq. The troubles of 1918, however, revealed that there was no guarantee of loyalty toward the SPR, in spite of the careful selection of local officials. Information on
robbers are with us always," was, as far as they were concerned, an apt summary of existing conditions.¹

It would also often happen that tribal groups not actually involved in robberies, would help or gang up with robbers and other roaming tribes in their area, against the South Persian Rifles, once action began. Thus the villagers of Khurramī linked arms with the Kutū in the fight which took place south of Mashad-e Murghāb with the Dīhbīd column of the South Persian Rifles; the Bāsīrī and the Gallazān Qashqā'ī helped the Kurdshullī in the vicinity of the Kifteh hill.

It was also found that allowances had to be made for the fact that there was much resentment against the Indian troops in the force, both in the towns and in the country, in southern and northern Fars alike. A mixture of reasons accounted for this. The general attitude seemed to be one of bitter annoyance: "... the rotten bones of a skinny-legged Indian are worth more to the English than the whole of Iran."² Moreover, the prestige of the Indian troops was dangerously low in Fars, mainly due to exaggerated accounts of their cowardice. There was one occasion when the Central India Horse while stationed at Shiraz during 1912, were ordered not to retaliate

¹ The above can be found in Appendices 1-10, consisting of reports on operations in South Persia and Progress of the Column on the March, May-Nov. 1916, confidential (printed) despatch, serial no. 5, General Staff (Simla 1918); Report on Minor Operations by SPR, 28 Mar. to 25 June 1917, confidential (printed), despatch serial no. 40 (GS, Simla 1917); Minor Operations in South Persia, 7 Nov. to 31 Mar. 1918, confidential (printed), serial no. 38 (GS, Simla, 1918); Report on Operations in South Persia July to Nov. 1917, confidential, serial no. 6 (GS, Simla, 1917); Sykes Papers, MECL. DS. 315, 5 and WO 106/928, 930-934, 937-939; War Diaries for 1918, serial no. 7/2903, 0 106/940.

² Adamiat, Dalīrān-e Tanġistān, 5th ed. (Tehran, 1341/1962), p. 191, quoting speech made by the khān of Chakhātān, shortly before his fort was rushed by Anglo-Indian troops at Būshīhr in 1918.
when fired at and generally provoked by some townsfolk. This incident on its own was enough to earn them the label of coward. Relationships between the Persian officer corps and the Indian officers were fragile too, the former arrogantly considering themselves belonging to a higher civilization. These strains were probably caused more by humiliation at having to be taught and ordered about by Indians than anything else. More significantly, perhaps, resentment was being directed at the British through the Indians, the latter being representatives of British authority and power in Persia.

There was, however, a degree of sympathy and understanding in some quarters for the Indians. A number of the former tufangchis in the south recall that they felt sorry for the Indians and tried not to aim at them, especially when they realized how frightened they were sometimes. It was generally believed that the "English had told them to pretend that they are Muslims."¹ One story had it that the Indians, on disembarking from their boats in the port of Bushihr during the wars of 1915, would start running to their shelters, clutching their small idols in their hands while repeatedly and loudly shouting "Ya Allāh!"²

It was found that some of the more permanently notorious robber tribes were the Chahārrāhī, living in northern Fars, east of the Shirāz-Dihbīd road; the Tütakī, an independent tribe living near Marvāst in the territory of Yazd, the inhabitants of Shahr-e Bābak and Pāy Kalleh to the north of Sirjān with their chiefs Najaf Qalī Khān and Ghulām Ali Khān respectively; those of Maranjān, a valley in northern Fars, between

¹ Interview: Mr. ZaKāvat, Bushihr, 29 Farvardin 1350 (18 Apr. 1972).
² Ibid.
Dihbid and Marvas; the Būmis of the Fasā regions; a large proportion of the inhabitants of the Farāgheh, mostly cultivators, a village near Ābādeh surrounded by a circle of ten forts each of which was occupied by a small chief with his own following of ten to twenty riflemen. The latter usually combined to rob under one or other of the two strongest of the chiefs, Nāyib Khān and Khusrau Khān Farāghehī (these people were thought to be descendants of a section of Bakhtīārī who had settled in this area recently); the villagers of Paras Khān about six farsakh south of Kāzirūn with their headman Ismā'īl Beg, the Fārsī Madān Qashqā'īs under their kalāntar Masīh Khān, the Dihshaikhī, and Chinār Rāhdārī inhabitants, and the Bābar Salān section of the Mamasanī under their chief Mullā Amīr, were equally troublesome at all times.

The most powerful chiefs against whom the South Persian Rifles were to conduct operations during 1916-1919, were Nāyib Husain of Kāshān and his sons (especially Māshālākh Khān), Rizā Juzdānī, and Ali Naqī Khān who operated in the Isfahan province, infiltrating at times into northern Fars. In Fars itself, it appears that the robber communities were under the influence of the kalāntar of the Labū Muhammadī tribe of Khamsch Arabs, called Amīr Qull Khān Sahām Ashā'īr, whose summer headquarters were at Hirat-e Khurreh and whose winter quarters were near Dārāb. Amīr Qull Khān was believed to be behind almost all the robberies committed by the communities in northern Fars. In eastern and south-eastern Fars, the Bahārlūs and the Mashādī Jānī Khān Arabs were the leading bandits. Ironically enough, some of the more famous bandits

sometimes posed as protectors and guardians of law and order and competed with each other to obtain recognition as such from the Central Government. This happened in the case of Nayib Husain and Chiragh Ali Khan in Kashan. Others called themselves Fadā'ī-ye Vatan and gave a lot of trouble to the South Persian Rifles from this standpoint.¹

It was, on the whole, difficult for the British to come to terms with the more well-known bandits in view of their shifting position within the established social framework. Many of them had close ties, business or otherwise, with local grandees and notables, governors, and kalāntars. Chiragh Ali Khan Saulat al-Saltaneh for instance, was at one point during 1916 sought after by the South Persian Rifles, not only for his pro-German activities but also because he was known to be a brigand. Before he was caught, however, he acquired the respectable position of governor or hākim of a district of Isfahan. It was conferred on him by no less a person than Zill al-Sultan. The family of Zill al-Sultan and most minor Bakhtiāri khāns were known to have at some point been in communication with bandits such as Rizā Juzdānī for business of some sort or other.²

Women as a rule did not take part in the fighting though they helped considerably in carrying messages and giving shelter to runaways and hiding their men's arms and ammunition. This was particularly true of the Arab tribeswomen of the Kutti and the Lābū Muhammadī. These latter also resorted to obstructive tactics such as driving their herds suddenly in front of South Persian Rifles detachments, thus giving time for the men to

¹ Haig, MS, ch. XII, pp. 3-4, MECL.
² Ibid.
either take up position against the South Persian Rifles or to escape. Some of their women were true viragos. In the operations during 1918 against the Labû Muhammadî and Chahârrâhîs of Châh-Haq (in the Hirat-e Khurreh vicinity), the sister of Sahâm Ashâ'îr (Labû Muhammadî) was recognised by Major Dyer as "practically conducting the operations on the heights."1

As to the South Persian Rifles, by the spring of 1918 units were speedily being drilled and trained in squadrons, companies, and battalions. The most promising material appears to have come from Bushihr by October 1918. By then it was no longer a question of acquiring enough men to fill up the units but to make sure that the men became an effective part of the force. The Persians, however, still behaved irresponsibly. The rewards provided by the force were hard to come by, but the opportunity to opt out of it, chiefly through desertion, was always there. Despite the death sentence which desertion

1 Notes from War Diary, part DVII, SPR, Persia, dated Sep. 1918, entry for 15.5.1918, headquarters, Shiraz (8 Apr. 1918 -13 July 1918), WO 106/940. At least a few women (among many, doubtless, whose names missed being recorded in the pages of history for this era) stand out for their extraordinary dash and unconventional behaviour. One was the Bakhtiârî Bibî Mariam, sister of Sardâr Zafar and wife of Zârghân al-Saltaneh, renowned for her pro-German activities and her direct or indirect involvement in attacks on SPR troops. She corresponded occasionally with Haig, asking about war news. Another was Nîntâj Khânûm, daughter of a certain Mullâ Muhammad Shirâzî, who was educated by her brother in Tehran and at one point came to Europe on a trip with the wife of Zâhir al-Dauleh (daughter of Muzaffar al-Dîn Shâh). She acted as a political agent for Saulat al-Dauleh at intervals after 1905 and was said to have helped in evolving the scheme in July 1912 for the overthrow of Habib-Allâh Khân, Qâvân al-Mulk, in Shiraz. She was intermediary between Saulat and Townley in April 1914, when the British Embassy was trying to induce Saulat to co-operate with them in Fars and she continued to act as Saulat's secretary or envoy until 1917. She owned the village of Dashtak in Fars. (Who's Who in Fars, vol. IV, Fars (GS, Simla, 1918), L/P & S/20/23), also Marling to FO, letter no.153, 28 Nov.1916, P.261611, FO 371/2738). Mention must also be made of the admirable wife of Saulat, whose subtle understanding of all that was going on about her, her encouragement to all those near to her, and her tenacity and strength of character, equipped her well for the difficult position of Il-Khân's wife.
carried with it, there were several hundred cases during summer and autumn 1917 and many more during the troubles of summer 1918, as a result of which, at one point, the Fars Brigade was reduced to a third only of its normal strength.

It appeared indeed that the chief condition for unfailing allegiance on the part of the rank and file toward the force and its British command, was at all times very much bound up with the attitude of the Central Government in an overall sense. Within the boundaries of authority and power exercised by the Anglophil Governor-General and other accommodating officials at a local level, various ways and means could be found to afford help to the British, for instance, through the censorship of incoming and outgoing news; the deliberate cutting of the telegraph line; bribes and press campaigns. Yet, to the same extent, all this could be offset by hostility from disaffected elements from within the ranks of local government officials, the ulama, intellectuals and chiefs of tribes, who could resort to the same tactics. The hands of either faction could be strengthened against the other, whenever authority from the Centre was behind them. But while no clearcut attitude emerged from Tehran (except in March 1917 and July 1918), positions and allegiances between factions and groups locally, vacillated and shifted. The South Persian Rifles' Persian rank and file, in turn, behaved erratically and unpredictably.

With the desertions and at each interval when certain groups within the officer corps and the rank and file were found to be misbehaving, new recruits were taken in and trained. The general policy as regards recruits, it seems, was to gradually purify the force by weeding out the more unreliable and undesirable elements in it. Thus 130 men of the
3rd Cavalry, mostly collected at Qavamabād (north-east of Shiraz) and mostly ex-gendarmes, were summarily discharged between 1917 and 1918. By the autumn of 1918, 500 ex-gendarmes had been dismissed. A completely new squadron of the 3rd Cavalry was raised, as a result, at Ābādeh. So, by clearing the force of its trouble-makers, more suitable men from among the rank and file or NCOs, tamed by a year to two years' service and experience, were promoted to higher ranks. 1

As to the problems of eliminating robberies, it was hoped that the gradual acquisition of the force, largely recruited from the tribes, would in itself tend to reduce robbery under arms. The organisers and commanders of the force believed that they had succeeded, in some degree, in bringing this about by the spring of 1918, so that they could claim that the force was now coming to be taken more seriously, and that dismissal from the South Persian Rifles was now regarded as a severe punishment. 2 Yet, unluckily for the South Persian Rifles, it was not long after this that the force was faced with one of the severest and most dangerous waves of hostility it had yet encountered in Fars.

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1 None of the Persians in the force acquired a rank above that of Major. The exception to this was Fath al-Mulk who upon the start of his service was given the rank of Lt. Col. Interview (personal), Rukn Zādeh Adamiat; 27 June 1972, Tehran. But though he received his pay as such from the South Persian Rifles, he was being used by Sykes and Gough for political purposes and due to intrigue he was sent away from Shirz at the end of 1918. Sykes to CGS, tel. no. 179-240, 6 Sept. 1918, Army Dept. Memo, no. 14181, 19 Oct. 1918 enclosing "Notes on Fars, 1916-1918" by W.A.K. Fraser, P.3024; FO 371/3858 and WO 106/941.

2 Orton wrote at the end of spring 1917 that "... people of Fars are beginning to alter their attitude and to realize advantages of the restoration of law and order and the improvement of the roads ... British influence and prestige steadily rising now ..." Orton, Report on the SPR, 19 May 1917, enclosed in Sykes to Marling, no. 11, AQC (Diary no. 41336), 26 May 1917, WO 106/934 and P.177908, FO 371/2981.
The question of the control and organisation of the South Persian Rifles was for a long time enwrapped in hopeless chaos. This was chiefly due to the disparity of views which developed between the Government of India and the Foreign Office on the character and functions of the force. The fact that the priorities accorded to each of the objectives of the Sykes mission, fluctuated and changed according to rapid changes in local conditions, made matters more confusing. From a local standpoint, at one time the uppermost aim was the hunting down of Germans, at another, the raising of an organised force to counter-balance Russian influence, and at yet another time, the support of Persian authority with such force as was immediately available. Thus, the overall aims were the restoration of British prestige and of law and order coupled with that of offsetting other possible alien or enemy combinations in Persia. It was exactly the combination of these aims which gave the force an ambivalent character and prompted a series of controversies as to the lines upon which it should develop. The requirements for the restoration of law and order could be met with a force organised on police lines. Yet, the further possibilities of the force having to take action against hostile elements and deal effectively with situations described essentially as "military", the need
was clearly for the formation of a military and fully mobile force. This inevitably brought into question the wider, more general field of Imperial and Indian control of military operations in south-central and southern Persia as well as in Mesopotamia.

Thus the correspondence of the years 1916-1918, focused mainly on three interlinked issues. At one level, opinions were being cast as to the structure and organisation of the force. At a second level, the issue of the control of the force was being discussed with broad areas of disagreement between the viceroy and the minister in Tehran. Finally, the command of the force or the status of its commander was being questioned and along with this, the suitability of Sir Percy Sykes, in whom the Government of India began to lose confidence, barely a few months after he had reached Shiraz.

The fact that Sykes had not presented a scheme for the organisation of the force, even by the beginning of the year 1917, was what particularly annoyed the Indian foreign and political department. They criticised him, among other points, for his "piecemeal" efforts thus far, his vagueness and apparent lack of initiative. ¹ It did indeed appear that Sykes had not up till then have "any definite scheme in his head,"² as Hirtzel phrased it, but the difficulties were great. The force was in embryo, operating in hostile territory with inadequate means of communication and transport, and shortages of personnel and equipment. Moreover, it was subjected to almost a triple source of control. Those who

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¹ A.H. Grant to Hirtzel, tel. no. 557-D, 20 Mar. 1917, P. 1575, L/P & S/10/690, 2834/1917 and Grant to Sykes, tel. R. 3195, 10 Mar. 1917, P. 80152, FO 371/2981.
appreciated these problems (Major Steel, Hirtzel, and Marling, for example), sympathised with Sykes and the difficulties of envisaging the future of the force in any clear, well-defined shape.

In its early stages of development, the South Persian Rifles based its formation on the skeleton organisational structure of the former government gendarmerie. The barracks, administrative buildings and arms of the former government gendarmerie, not to speak of the residue of trained men, were there to be taken over and used by Sykes. As the force expanded, however, it became increasingly necessary to draw up schemes for its reorganisation. Some opinion on this subject had already been cast before Sykes and his staff officers completed their scheme for the reorganisation of the force in the spring of 1917. Major Steel, of the War Office, drew up a memorandum in June 1916, in an effort to make up for the scarcity of information on the proposed lines of the force's future development and to convince the authorities that a more militant policy was needed in Persia. He began by assessing briefly the comparative econ-strategical positions of Russia and Britain in Persia, outlined the genesis of the

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1 Russia's sphere of influence and interest in Persia, Steel explained, were but a short distance away from her main resources; her communications were continually improving; she had, ready to hand, the long-established nucleus of her Russian officered Cossack Brigade and was preparing for the establishment of the latter by "energetic military action which had dominated the country from Kermanshah to Meshed and from Tabriz to Isfahan." For the British, however, the steam journey to the Gulf ports from India took four or five days and from there to the interior the routes were difficult and ran through country inhabited by tribes who could not be trusted. Whatever action had been taken up to now had not really been adequate to keep Britain in step with her policy, with the means of backing it. In the case of a strengthened SPR, "the backing can be produced with a minimum risk of further entanglements, by little more than British character, money and goodwill." R.A. Steel, "British interests in Persia and the South Persia Military Police," secret, Tehran, 23 June 1916, P. 120812, FO 371/2736.
South Persian Rifles and its supposed future programme and concluded that the force should be reorganised on the same lines as that envisaged by Hjalmarson in 1914 for the expansion of the "Swedish" gendarmerie. Steel argued that whereas Russia stood to gain by the new situation (i.e., that envisaged in the pact with Sipahdār), conditions for the British venture in the south were not nearly so satisfactory. British authorities had not been able to make up their minds to use troops to prepare the situation like the Russians had in the north. Or, at any rate, it had been difficult to provide the personnel for the very "modest" effort now being made. Sir Percy's task in the short term had been to show some speedy and tangible result and despite the lack of resources, he had been practically told to "...'go ahead and do something'... this he has done with the success that always attends 'doing anything' in Persia."¹ It was about time, Steel urged, to plan the future of the force on a more definite basis and to take calculated action in Persia:

"... the present is one of those critical opportunities which we have often let slip in the past, of keeping our military preparations abreast of our policy."²

He "presumed" that the South Persia Military Police (as it was then called) was to be a military force for the protection of British strategical, political, and commercial interests in Persia and proposed that Hjalmarson's scheme,³ with some modification, should serve as a guide-line for its expansion. The character of the new force, however, was very different

¹ Ibid.
² Ibid.
from that of the "purely National" force erected by the Swedes. More officers were needed in proportion to the number of NCOs since experience had shown that British officers were "the backbone, the life and soul of any Asiatic unit."¹ Steel concluded his memorandum by advising strongly that whatever scheme was ultimately adopted, it should necessarily embrace the whole of what had hitherto been known as the Neutral Sphere, owing to the "preponderating nature of the British interests in that sphere."²

Steel thus assumed that the South Persian Rifles would eventually be a military force. He was supported in this argument by Lieutenant Colonel Frazer-Hunter in Shiraz who, in his scheme of March 1917, discussed the issue at length, being in a position to back his arguments with his own experience of almost a year's work in southern Persia with Sykes and the force. This scheme was followed two months later by a detailed report on the organisation of the force, compiled by another of Sykes's senior officers, Lieutenant Colonel E.F. Orton. Both officers agreed that the South Persian Rifles should be primarily a military rather than a civil force. It was essential, they argued, that any organisation perfected, should be a real acquisition of power to the British forces in general, and capable of acting with other British forces with the greatest possible efficiency. Both officers compiled their respective schemes with this assumption in mind and suggested that a cautious and tactful policy should facilitate the transition of the force into a military organisation. The main area of disagreement between the two had much to do with the technicalities of structure and distribution during the force's period of training.

¹ Ibid.
² Ibid.
The question was whether the South Persian Rifles should continue to function and expand within the structural framework of the Gendarmerie organisation or not. Under the latter, the protection of roads was mainly carried out by maintaining a large number of small posts scattered along whole lengths of the roads connecting the main provincial towns. Frazer-Hunter argued that in view of political and other difficulties at a local level, it was desirable to maintain and expand this system as far as possible and for at least another two years. The main policy at all times was to guard and keep open the main routes along which supplies, equipment, ammunition, and trade flowed. This necessitated political measures and dependence, to a large extent, on the co-operation of local Persian chiefs. The main elements of disorder in the country were the raiding tribes inhabiting areas bordering on the great trade routes. Since raids and loot, rather than actual fighting, formed their chief tactics, Frazer-Hunter thought that the task of guarding the roads in an offensive-defensive manner only, was possible during the force's period of training. This involved the provision of a large number of small posts under which the caravans could run for shelter until rescue arrived from the larger posts. Without telephones, roads, or any quick means of communication, roads left undefended except at large centres were completely at the mercy of the raider and thus there was a need for intermediate safety spots.

The position of the posts was dictated by existing communications and this system of small posts, so far as Fars was concerned, had stood the test of five years' experience. Some 12,500 animals had been rescued during February and March
1917 alone on the Shiraz-Aminābād line, despite the fact that the South Persian Rifles was as yet "very imperfectly trained and miserably armed."¹ Levies or tufangchīs, under their own chiefs, were for some time thought to be necessary to prevent them from robbing, to act as guides and hold the posts, and also to act as political and intelligence agents. At the more important centres such as Ābādeh, Shiraz, Kāzirūn, Sirjān, Kirman, and Bandar Abbas, movable columns were provided to keep in check the greater enemy combinations. Only South Persian Rifles' regulars were used for these larger posts. The duty of the semi-trained force for some time, as Frazer-Hunter saw it, should be that of road police, for the force could not at that time deal with the raiders as a military problem. Furthermore, the arrangement of posts in their present order had to be maintained if any supplies, trade, or ammunition, were to come into the city of Shiraz at all. Already, the presence of some 800 India troops (excluding approximately another 1000 all ranks--due to arrive in May), available for the main garrisons, vastly increased the difficulty of feeding the local population. Frazer-Hunter's conclusions, therefore, were that for the present, "the treatment of the SPR as a military force is out of the question without certainty of antagonising the country and inviting disaster."²

Frazer-Hunter's approach was cautious and displayed full alertness to the fact that Persia was not India and was still, in its own idea, a Sovereign State, albeit being "from top to bottom ... a disorganised state."³ He also realized

¹ Lt. Col. F. Frazer-Hunter (31st Lancers, Staff Officer, Officer Commanding, Fars Brigade) to Sykes, "Proposed scheme of organization for the South Persian Rifles", Shiraz, 1 Apr. 1917, printed copy, confidential, P.3892, FO 371/2981.
² Ibid.
³ Ibid.
that an ultra-efficient, swift and sweeping scheme of reorgan-
isation would undoubtedly antagonise the very elements from
which the force was drawn, unless everything was done gradually.

Lieutenant Colonel E.F. Orton, though acknowledging
certain arguments put forward by Frazer-Hunter and some of his
sober observations, was diametrically opposed to his basic
premise. He maintained that the very existence of particular
local problems and characteristics necessitated a departure
from the "system" erected by the Swedes. He did not dispute
the fact that the force, in its present state of existence,
could not undertake duties that ranged beyond the bounds of
a road police force. But the tribes being a military problem,
Orton realized that the success of the force would be assessed
upon its military achievements and the sooner the South Persian
Rifles was set on the correct lines of reorganisation, the
better. Even at the time he was drawing up a supplement to
his provisional scheme, in July 1917, the whole route from
Shiraz to Ābādeh (228 miles) was picquetted by a chain of
small posts, most of which were held by 6-10 men, many not
yet trained or disciplined. Many of the smaller posts were
held by tufangchīs temporarily. The maintenance of these
numerous posts caused isolation, hampered training, increased
the difficulties of supply arrangements, induced slackness due
to the small number of men in each post, and in general
attracted raiders. He dismissed Frazer-Hunter's case for the
retention of small posts as "unsound" from the military stand-
point; a "relic" of the old gendarmerie force, which was
essentially an immobile force and he complained later that
Frazer-Hunter, when Officer Commanding, "obstructed any
efforts made to amend this pernicious system." Orton, therefore, believed that larger numbers of small units involved the provision of more units and therefore greater costs, difficulties and dangers. He preferred to concentrate more men in larger units and launch the force on its military career.

Sykes, who had earlier expressed his general agreement with Frazer-Hunter's proposals, was now prepared to approve Orton's "lucid" report, as he called it. Sykes was too preoccupied with other problems, including the political survival of the force, and was probably prepared to go along with any detailed scheme at this stage in order to satisfy the constant proddings of the Indian establishment. He had, barely two months after his arrival, sent a preliminary budget estimate of the troops under his command to India but this turned out to be "so inaccurate and unintelligible as to be useless." Sykes asked India to ignore his letter since it

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2 Sykes to Marling, desp. no. 11 A.Q.C., 26 May 1917 (Dy. no. 41336), P. 177908, FO 371/2891.

3 Chelmsford to Chamberlain, telegraphic letter, private, 28 Feb. 1917, Austin Chamberlain Papers (the University of Birmingham, private papers' Library), AC/20/4/46.
was "prepared under circumstances of sickness and constant change of staff, and in the stress or organising move to Kerman."  

Since then, the Indian Government had not managed to pin him down to any programme or reliable estimates of expenditure. Failing to articulate his ideas about the future development of the force, he had made matters worse for himself by his premature, if not hair-raising demands from the Indian and Home Governments, for "the most modern instruments of war," including aeroplanes, armoured motor cars, and a tank. Small wonder that rude noises began to emerge from various departments on his methods and personality. "Ye Gods!" exclaimed V.A. Cox (Military Secretary, India Office), tanks and aeroplanes and "mechanical transport companies on Persian roads!" Lancelot Oliphant simply believed that these were symptoms of Sykes's "wild and undigested ideas." Arnold Wilson, too, wrote with characteristic sarcasm to Hirtzel, pointing out the difference between the methods advanced by Sykes and those of the Government of India, as exercised in the "regeneration" of the districts of Dizful and Shushtar, thanks to the efforts of a couple of young political officers:

"[who] are doing, through Persian Agency, and without any foreign escorts, peacefully and with the hearty co-operation of the priesthood, and of many notables, what Sykes is trying to do by other methods at vast expense."  

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1 Sykes to CGS, letter containing a "Preliminary Budget estimate of the regiment, S.P.M.P.", 16 May 1916 quoted in Hirzel's memorandum, Indian Office, secret, 3 Mar. 1917, L/P & S/10/C162.  
3 Cox, minute, no. 11881, 23 Dec. 1917, L/P & S/10/690, 2834/1917.  
4 Oliphant, minute no. 80152, F. 153, FO 371/2981.  
Some of the most merciless criticisms directed at Sykes, however, came from the Indian Government. They complained of his "lack of political insight", his doubtful competence as a military leader, his tendencies to draw hasty conclusions which made for his highly "optimistic" or deeply "gloomy" reports at short intervals, his "mercurial" temperament which was difficult to deal with, and finally, they attributed most of the chaos surrounding the organisation of the force to his "incompetence" in not producing an adequate scheme at an early date. To support their criticisms, India cited as examples, among others, those of the escape of the political prisoners from Sirjān leading to the fight at Sa'īdābād (June-October, 1916), and the military failures at Par-e Zan (winter 1916). The India Office, in a memorandum written by Hirtzel, examined the details of each of the cases cited by the viceroy and exonerated Sykes from most of the charges, except his failure to produce a scheme of organisation, "whether that is because he is incompetent or because he had had so much else to do . . . is uncertain."  

Sykes, in turn, complained to Marling for being so "harshly and severely blamed by the Government of India" for not submitting any schemes sooner. He placed most of the blame on the difficulties of lack of adequate staff and the imperfections of communications. He had one clerk--taken over from the Kirman consulate--and two staff officers only, until May 1917. All three apparently broke down from overwork within a short time after the force arrived at Shiraz. He neither had an Indian Superintendent of Accounts until

1 Chelmsford to Chamberlain, telegraphic letter, private, 28 Feb. 1917; AC/20/4/46.
months after landing in Bandar Abbas nor, until thirteen months after arriving in Persia, did he receive a British Treasury Officer. He was still awaiting a financial adviser from India. Even his officers did not know their rates of pay and allowances or their conditions of service. As to his "piecemeal" recommendations, he had only asked for essentials as the force he took over was organised on a unit by unit basis. The difficulties of supply and transport overshadowed all military movements in Persia, hence, the importance of communications which were sorely lacking. Finally, he complained of being hindered in his work by the red tape regulations stemming from India and that the "necessity for complying with the Government of India's regulations has never been foregone by them and has tied me and officers throughout."\(^1\)

The viceroy, Lord Chelmsford, denied that Sykes had been governed by any regulations and claimed that, on the contrary, so far he had had an absolutely free hand but had failed to evolve any serious budget.\(^2\) Sykes disagreed\(^3\) and so mutual grievances continued relentlessly until Orton's scheme for organisation was submitted to the authorities in

\(^1\) Sykes to Marling, desp. no. 47-C (copy), 3 May 1917, P. 145844, L/P & S/10/690, 2834/1917. Lt. Col. Frazer-Hunter, in the concluding paragraphs of his report of May 1917, admitted that his scheme undoubtedly contained many errors and that no accurate check of the figures and estimates of cost had been possible as the Government was "pressing" Sykes for details. He pointed out that the whole thing had been compiled "practically single-handed, during the strain of constant interruptions, dangerous political situations, Movements, Military Operations, Organization and re-organizations and the responsibilities of Command ..." Apart from a Foreign Service Pocket Book, he had had no books of reference, no guidance or advice from Army Headquarters ever, and very few office facilities. Frazer-Hunter to Sykes, "Proposed scheme . . .", Shiraz, 1 Apr. 1917, P. 3892, FO 371/2981.

\(^2\) Viceroy, Army Department, tel. copy no. 10236, 11 July 1917, FO 371/2981.

\(^3\) Sykes to Marling, letter no. 1417, 16 July 1917, FO 371/2981.
August and began to attract some favourable comments from Simla.

The chief virtues of the proposals, as far as the viceroy was concerned, were that they met local conditions and at the same time followed the general principles of Indian Army unit organisation. Since India was mainly responsible for maintenance and supplies, and was endeavouring to take over the force's military direction, at least until the end of the war, this arrangement established a course which had obvious advantages to them.

By March 1918, Orton was able to report that the mobility and efficiency of the force had greatly increased. Among the most important changes in the reorganisation of the force were that the number of unnecessary posts of tufangchis were abolished and others reduced. The pay of certain tufangchis was increased, to ensure loyalty, and their main duty was now to act as intelligence agents. Scattered posts of the South Persian Rifles, cavalry and infantry, between Shiraz and Dihbīd were now concentrated at Zarghān and Qavāmābād. Orton also made sure that the Indian troops were allotted to the main centres instead of being scattered in small numbers along the roads. Another change which increased mobility was the break-up of central brigade kitchens and bakeries. Cooking and rationing was made regimental, each having its own portable cooking pots. By 1918, too, the force's Brigade Commanders were running their own tailors' and bootmakers' shops.

The total number of men for the South Persian Rifles in its eventual full capacity was calculated to reach 11,000, exclusive of personnel of the ancillary services, mostly
transport and medical (about 2,295). Orton's total estimate of the cost of the force, organised upon its new lines, came
to £553,404 or 30,437,222 krans per annum. This did not
include any unforeseeable or urgent expenses such as might
come due to precarious conditions at a local level and
inadequate information about certain localities.

According to Orton's scheme, the general policy
followed in the distribution of Indian and South Persian Rifles
troops consisted of maintaining garrisons at certain important

1 The numerical strength of the SFR's Persian ranks changed
continuously. Taken as an average, between the years 1916 and
1921, the figure stood somewhere in the region of 6,000. The
strength of the Indian regular troops fighting with the force
and of the British officers, increased steadily until the end
of 1918, with yearly reinforcements. The Indian troops included
the 15th Lancers, the 16th Rajputs, the Burmah Mounted Infantry,
the Baluch Infantry. At the end of 1916, the total strength
of the SFR was just under 5,000 (exclusive of 1,033 Indian
combatants, British and Indian officers, and followers);
toward the end of the year 1917, the total strength was about
6,000 (exclusive of approximately 1,905 Indian combatants,
British and Indian officers, and followers); during March-April
1918, the force probably reached its highest strength of just
under 8,000 with over 2,000 Indian combatants, British and
Indian officers, and followers; by the autumn of 1918, however,
there was a sharp fall in the number of the Persian ranks to a
strength of about 5,000 (the Fars Brigade, which normally had
the largest concentration of men as against Kirman and Bandar
Abbas, was apparently reduced to a nucleus of only 1,800 from
the usual strength of about 4,000). The reduction in numbers
following a period of mutinies and tribal wars was due to
desertions, defections to the "enemy", influenza, cholera,
excommunications, and death in action. After this date, the strength
of the Persian ranks began to rise gradually while the strength
of the Indian troops and British officers decreased due to
arrangements made for the withdrawal of British forces from
Persia and the impending amalgamation of the SFR with other
military forces of the country, into an envisaged uniform all-
Persian force. In the spring of 1920, the Persian recruits
numbered about 5,500 and at the time of its disbandment, during
1921, the Persian ranks had reached a strength of approximately
7,000. Estimates on the strength, composition and distribution
of the SFR, Persian and Indian troops, can be found in: Sykes
to Hamilton-Grant, tel. no. 1133-C (copy), 2 Dec. 1916, enclos-
ing report drawn up by Capt. Williams on the "Strength and com-
position of the South Persian Rifles", WO 106/926; J.H.Kirch
(capt.), Branch Memorandum, "Strength and distribution of the
South Persian Rifles", 15 Oct. 1917, M.I.2c. 464, doc. no. 132,
WO 106/932; Sykes, Notes from War Diaries, part DVII, SPR,
Persia, 8 Apr. 1918-13 July 1918, WO 106/939; Lt. Col. Gough
1918, P. 1306, FO 371/3858; C-in-C. India to Secretary, Army
Dept. India, no. 12127-1, 25 Apr. 1922 (report no. 242),
WO 106/943.
centres, strong enough to undertake offensive and punitive operations against villagers or tribesmen proved to have taken part in robberies. The main military objective was to hold Kirman, Shiraz, and Bandar Abbas, to organise mobile striking forces at these places, and throw a security network over the major and minor routes running through their districts. The overall aim at all times was to open and keep open the lines of communications linking inland centres to the bases on the Gulf shores. The road chosen as the main military artery inland from Bandar Abbas was the western route via Tang-e Zāgh and Saʿīdābād to Kirman. The occupation of this road covered the central road districts from Bahārлу raiders operating to the east of it. More posts and troops were needed to guard the Tārūm-Saʿīdābād-Kirman road against the Bahārлу and other tribes and to garrison Rafsanjān, affording some measure of protection to districts looking toward Yazd. Kirman was later to become a back-water from the military point of view whilst Saʿīdābād gained in importance strategically, as it opened Shiraz to the eastern provinces via Nairīz and allowed contact with Kirman without the dispersion of troops. But so long as the Bushihr-Shiraz route was not effectively held by the South Persian Rifles, eastern Fars, the Kirman province, and the Bandar Abbas base, had to be effectively controlled.

The eventual occupation of Kāzirūn was never lost sight of and steps had to be taken to ensure that any future attempt at this would be successful from every point of view.

For example: the road Bandar Abbas-Sīrjān-Kirman; the connecting link Sīrjān-Shiraz via Nairīz; the main route Shiraz-Dihbīd-Ābād-e Isfahan; the route Shiraz-Lār-Hurmuz-Bandar Abbas; and eventually Shiraz-Khān-e Zīnyān-Kāzirūn-Būrāzjān-Bushihr. Orton, "Scheme of organisation for the South Persian Rifles", 27 July 1917, printed copy, enclosed in Hamilton-Grant to Chamberlain, desp. no. 60 M., 3 Aug. 1917, P. 3597, L/P & S/10/690, 2834/1917 and Marling's despatch no.105, 10 Sept. 1917, P. 194328, FO 371/2981.
The force at Shiraz was not yet strong enough for this venture, consequently, the road from Bushihr to Shiraz, much as always, was only kept open on the payment of blackmail which carried no permanent guarantee with it. Sykes continued to adhere to the policy which he had advocated in December 1916, that Farmān Farmā be used to treat with each petty khān separately and to arrange for the entire route to be eventually taken over by the South Persian Rifles. This experiment may have worked if the force had been backed by the Central Government, but lacking this the British authorities had to fall back almost entirely on the combined co-operation of Qāvām al-Mulk and Farmān Farmā. Actions taken on these lines independently of the latter or without his support, proved ultimately to be unsuccessful, as was the case of the agreement with Saulat al-Dauleh. But even if Saulat could have been made to join the Qāvām-Farmān Farmā alliance, there was still the Kāzirūnīs and the khāns of the garmsir belt to reckon with. In fact, most of these as well as Nāsir al-Dīvān, resisted the South Persian Rifles and British troops in Bushihr to the last. Orton reckoned that an attempt to occupy Kāzirūn should not be made until about March 1918 but events proved that even this was too early.

The same principle of having to rely on and work closely with the civil and political authorities locally, governed the provision of supplies and transport for the force. Supplies were obtained through contractors at the headquarters of the force's brigades in Shiraz and Kirman. At smaller posts, supplied were obtained by an agent of the Officer Commanding, normally through the deputy-governors. If certain posts suffered from lack of supplies, the men received two
krans a day instead of rations, or one kran and some flour. This was, in any case, the usual practice with small temporary detachments. As a rule, it was the civil authorities which took care of providing for moving troop columns, by laying in the supplies at necessary localities in advance. The headmen of villages or districts were paid for the total amount taken over by the column and were responsible for paying the individual suppliers. This practice provided ample opportunity for anti-British elements to delay and hamper the force's operations. It also allowed merchants and officials to profit from the force, especially in times of natural or engineered local scarcity.

An example of this type of malpractice and, incidentally, one which showed up the all-pervasive nature of the governor-general's power and influence, was when, during the troubles of summer 1918, Farmān Farmā and two merchants in league with Qavām al-Mulk and Sardār Ihtishām formed combines to corner grain and to prevent the influx of large stocks into Shiraz, thus maintaining prices at a very high level. By using his influence over Qavām al-Mulk and Sardār Ihtishām, Farmān Farmā came to control the distribution and disposal of the produce of the two men's estates and of their families and retainers, which altogether amounted to over half the produce of Fars. There were large stocks of grain at Fīrūzābād

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All Persian ranks of the SPR received free rations on scales similar to those in India, including all articles needed such as gee, meat, flour, and condiments. Rations were issued daily, one day in advance. Tea and sugar were issued direct to the men while flour was passed to the unit bakeries and other rations to unit kitchens. The men were given midday and evening meals and provided their own breakfast. Lt. Col. Orton, "Scheme of organisation for the South Persian Rifles", printed copy, confidential, 27 July 1917, P 194328, FO 371/2981; "Report of the Joint Anglo-Persian Military Commission on the Re-organisation of the Persian Army", Tehran, 4 Apr. 1920, printed copy, P. 5355, L/P & S/10/859, 5257/1919.
waiting to be transported to Shiraz for the South Persian Rifles and the city but Farmān Farmā arranged with Sardār Ḥtīshām to buy and store grain through his agent (a certain Ḫāl Khān). They shared the profits of what they unloaded to the town and to the British. Among merchant buyers who were doing the same thing through their agents, were Muhammad All Sārūf and Ḥājī Ahmad Allūf, while others, like Ḥājī Muhammad Mīhdī Isfahānī worked for the British by buying directly for the Supply and Transport officer. The overall purchases of supplies by the Supply and Transport amounted to approximately 200,000 tumans per month. It was reckoned that this cost would be halved if Farmān Farmā stopped his intrigues.

The governor-general used every means at his disposal and every loophole to obtain more profit. In the city he had special men of his own, even in the Nazmīeh, to report on conditions of supply. He had absolute control over the chief of the Māḥē and apparently insisted that where possible the māḥīt should be paid in kind. He would buy grain supplies at as low a price as he could force owners to accept and then deduct the customary ten per cent which, as keeper of the Khāzīnēh or treasury, he had a right to deduct for himself on all incoming and outgoing payments. Small wonder that suppliers were generally alarmed. The farmer of the Malik al-Tujjār estates at Gīlkhūn, Arzūnūn and Sahlābīd, where he had about 260,000 man of wheat and approximately 549,000 man of barley, wrote to his agents asking them not to send any of the grain to Shiraz for the time being. Farmān Farmā did not

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give up even when he was no longer able to buy all the supplies arriving in Shiraz by September 1918. He insisted on acquiring a share as partner from the holders of large lots of supplies and thus gained a voice in the sales.¹

By October 1917, Orton's scheme had been in operation for some three months. The force was organised into two brigades with headquarters at Shiraz and Kirman.² The system of drill, training, and administration was that of the British army as were the arms and equipment supplied by the Indian Army.³ The clothing was of Indian pattern except for the Persian headdress which was in the style of the "Swedish" Gendarmerie force.⁴ The pay of Persian officers ranged between 150 to 800 krans per month exclusive of Duty Pay and those of the Persian NCOs and men ranged from 45 to 150 krans per month.

Meanwhile, there were many problems to overcome. Communication was obviously the key to the whole organisation of the force and some routes other than camel tracks were needed to ensure success against the tribes, whose chief virtue in terms of fighting tactics was mobility. In the early

¹ Ibid.
² The Fars brigade had two regiments of cavalry as against one for Kirman. Both brigades had 3 battalions of infantry, one section of field artillery, one machine-gun section, one mountain battery of four guns, and one field company of Engineers. Sykes, History, II, p. 477, and "Report of the Joint Anglo-Persian Military Commission on the Re-organisation of the Persian Army", Tehran, 4 Apr. 1920, printed copy, L/P & S/10/859, 5257/1919.
³ The infantry had the long Lee-Enfield rifle and the cavalry the .303 carbine. The artillery had the 10-pounder British mountain gun, except for two French Schneiders. Ibid.
⁴ The hats or headdresses were decorated with a badge bearing the insignia of the Lion and the Sun below which were written the letters S.P.R. and in Persian, Pulis-e Junub-e Iran. The men were provided with a khaki service uniform and a blue fatigue dress. All arms wore the same uniform except for the mounted men who had a kurta and breeches instead of a blouse and knickers. Special enlistments such as cooks had special uniforms. Renewals were made annually or biennially. Ibid.
days at Kirman, the only means of communication between this place and Sirjān (approximately 112 miles) was by messenger runners only. Most transport during the early months in the Kirman province consisted chiefly of camels; mules were not easily obtainable locally and horses were in short supply too. The horses used by the Fars Gendarmerie were half-starved and really useless by the time Sykes took over command at Shiraz. Many of the pack animals used for inland transport by the force were provided by India but efforts were also continuously made to obtain every available means of transport for the force. This and scarcity made for exhorbitant rates of hire which continued to rise throughout and after the war period. Sykes himself admitted that the trade of Bandar Abbas suffered owing to the large quantity of transport hired by the South Persian Rifles, although this hiring was spread over a long period. Consequently, merchants using the Bandar Abbas-Kirman route inland, harboured grievances against the British. The high cost of maintaining mounted troops also meant that the force's cavalry corps had to be restricted to the bare minimum.

To relieve the transport problem, road making was proceeded with at a remarkable speed. By autumn 1917, the majority of the main roads and some side tracks were passable for motor cars in the Kirman and Bandar Abbas regions.¹ The Bandar Abbas-Tärum section was constructed during the winter of 1917. Tracks were also built between Shiraz and Aminābād (217 miles), Shiraz-Sa'īdābād (239 miles) and Sa'īdābād-Kirman (112 miles). A motor track to Khān-e Zinyān was completed during December 1917 and January 1918 and helped to increase men and stocks at this post. By May-June 1917, over 510 miles of roads were either improved or newly built for light wheeled vehicles. The cost of a rough motor track, stretching over a distance of about 112 miles, was approximately 900 tumans in 1917. For building the above, as well as bridges, posts, forts, and barracks, use was made of gangs of local labour, which was about the cheapest service that could be brought in this period. Orton, "Report on the Progress of the South Persian Rifles", 31 Mar. 1918, enclosed in desp. no. VIII, Sykes to C.G.S., no. 643-1-A, Shiraz, 14 Apr. 1918, confidential (printed), serial no. 78, WO 106/934.

¹ The Bandar Abbas-Tärum section was constructed during the
Bandar Abbas-Bāft-Kirman telegraph was also re-aligned along the Bandar Abbas-Tārum-Sa‘īdābād-Kirman road and a telegraph and telephone line was laid from Sa‘īdābād to Shiraz via Nairīz by March 1918. This did much to open up these areas. An extension of the telegraph lines for administrative purposes was also undertaken with the guiding principle that all outposts should be connected by wireless or telephone belonging to, and administered by, the force. Until this was completed, however, there continued to be delays in the issuing of orders and sometimes confusion or mistakes, due to the fact that orders could be reduced to a minimum by the time they reached officers in far out posts. An instance of this was when Lorimer (consul, Kirman), sent a destitute Indian, formerly a sowar in the Indian army, to the South Persian Rifles' post at Sa‘īdābād—he had applied to be taken on as a trumpeter. The officer in command there, however, promptly put the poor man under arrest. His orders, he said, were to arrest "wandering Indians". The actual orders from Shiraz to the Kirman Command read that "South Persia being a war area, Military Commanders can detain any suspicious characters. (End)." It neither specified whether this also covered British Indian subjects or that the sanction of the consul was required as regards any detentions. The military staff at Shiraz, by assuming that South Persia was a "war area", more or less entitled the South Persian Rifles to deal with persons of any nationality who committed offences against the security of the force. But the consuls and even the Gulf authorities were in the dark on this subject until it was cleared up by

1 Lorimer (consul, Kirman) to Trevor (Deputy Political Resident, Persian Gulf, Bushihr), tel. P. no. 84, 16 May 1917, enclosure in Hamilton-Grant to India Office, no. 52, Military, 6 July 1917, P. 154291, FO 371/2691.
the Foreign Office. Strictly speaking, since the South Persian Rifles was proclaimed to be a Persian force, it could only deal directly with Persian prisoners and offenders, under the powers delegated to it by the Persian Government and not under British law. In the case of British Indian subjects, it could only detain them after having been instructed to do so by the Persian Government, at the request of the British Government. However, the Foreign Office believed that it was not desirable to approach the Persian Government on this issue, "We may assume that they have given a general authority to the officers of the S.P.R. to act at the request of His Majesty's Consuls." This, incidentally, was also an example of the kind of technical difficulty which the South Persian Rifles faced in view of its uncertain status as a nominal Persian force, controlled and maintained by the British Government, operating in a neutral country whose Government was invariably unwilling to recognise its legitimacy.

It was to Orton's credit that some scale of death and wound pension, or gratuities, was introduced. The practice of the Swedes was to keep the names of casualties on the pay roll, thus enabling the man's heir or family to continue to subsist. The organisers of the South Persian Rifles thought that this was an expedient which they could not continue. The men of the force were drawn from many parts of the country and as no civil machinery existed for certain and regular payments, it was not possible to devise a scheme of pensions. But some form of compensation was sorely needed. In Shiraz alone, there were in May 1917, eighteen cases pending of South Persian Rifles men who had been killed or incapacitated by wounds.

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1 Balfour to Marling, copy of tel. no. 200, military, FO 371/2891.
Discontented widows and dependents would often be seen at the barracks appealing for aid. Orton maintained that if a South Persian Rifles man died without aid to his family, the widow usually became a prostitute and the children starved. Besides, more was needed to induce men to develop their fighting capacity and make them "willing to risk their lives." The method ultimately adopted was that a committee of at least three British and Persian officers met, after each casualty, to assess the circumstances of the heir(s) and decide on the most suitable method of payment.

India was also urged to permit the building of more barracks. Mud-brick forts had already been built at Saʿīdābād for half a battalion of infantry and details. Another one was in process of being built at Nairīz for a company of infantry and troops of cavalry. These two posts were very essential at all times for supply and security reasons. Overcrowding was giving rise to its own problems. Over a year after the arrival of the force at Kirman, the barracks in that city, as well as those in Shiraz, had been filled with recruits. The surplus recruits from Kirman were normally sent to Saʿīdābād and from Shiraz, to Khān-e Zinyān, until such time as proper cantonments and lines could be provided outside the towns. Overcrowding brought with it vermin and lice; smallpox and typhoid were endemic and as Orton pointed out, it was unfair and unwise to recruit strong, healthy men from country villages and bring them into unhealthy, overcrowded barracks in filthy towns. Barracks, apart from health and

1 Orton's scheme, "Report on the organisation of the South Persian Rifles", op. cit.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid. Barracks were built partly of burnt brick but mostly with walls of sun-dried mud brick. In Shiraz they had timber supported roofs, in Kirman domed roofs. Many bridges over
training reasons, were valuable too from the political viewpoint, in that they spared the Persians in the force from the influence of town intrigues and gossip. It was also considered that once the Persian ranks were outside the town boundaries, the influence and power of their British officers and instructors over them would increase. This argument held good only when circumstances were favourable to the force. Otherwise, the mutinies of various outposts in the summer of 1918 showed that there was really no guarantee against intrigue so long as popular feeling toward the British remained unchanged.

As to clothing and other such items, it was impossible to make too many demands on India, since the latter was already feeling the strains of having to provide for the Sistan Force, those in south Persia, the Mesopotamian troops, and later for the Dunsterville and Malleson Missions in the north-west and north-east of Persia respectively. Indents for the South Persian Rifles, therefore, had to be restricted to urgent and immediate requirements. The base at Bandar Abbas could not yet handle or store large amounts of stock. The ordinance problems of "a small force operating from a small post in an undeveloped country" were well observed by Major Routh, who was despatched to Bushihr in the summer of 1918 to act as District Assistant to the Director of Ordnance Supplies (D.A.D.O.S.) to the Bushihr Field Force. ¹ This force was

Irrigation channels were also improved on and new ones built. These were made of stones, brushwood, and mud. Local labour was used for all these.

¹ Major C. Routh, A D.A.D.O.S. in Persia (private publication, London, n.d.), p. 423. Major Routh worked as D.A.D.O.S. for Dunsterforce from June to Aug. 1918 after which he was despatched to Bushihr where he remained until Nov. 1919 (replaced by Major Barrow). The D.A.D.O.S., being an officer of Divisional H.Q., was normally under the direct orders of the G.O.C., who in this case was General Douglas. Routh records both his experiences in the north-east and in the south. The force at Bushihr in Oct. 1918 amounted to two brigades, altogether about 10,000 counting as Indian other ranks, 8,000 as followers, 50 British Officers, and 250 British other ranks. Ibid., p. 426.
about to begin work on a cart road from Bushihr to Shiraz in fourteen stages (173 miles) and to lay a light railway line from Bushihr to Dālakī. Routh took over the Ordnance Establishment at Bushihr on 11 September and after studying the country and the force, he reached the conclusion that the "chief enemy is transport." He noted that the bāzār at Bushihr stocked mostly Indian goods in view of the insecure state of the Bushihr-Shiraz road, and that the goods were very expensive. He reckoned that quite seventy five per cent of the Bushihr requirements by weight of ordnance stores could be produced in Persia if local resources were exploited to the full.

In respect of finances, the principle applied was one of equal division on any expenditure entailed, by the Imperial and the Indian Governments. The force's accounts proper were kept in two branches: firstly, the military accounts of expenditure on behalf of the Indian escort troops. These were submitted to the comptroller of military accounts at Quetta and were governed by the regulations for the Indian army. Secondly, there were the accounts of expenditure on behalf of the South Persian Rifles troops, submitted to the comptroller of Indian treasuries at Calcutta. This expenditure

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1 Ibid., p. 433.

2 Ibid. This was, as noted by the vice-consul in Bushihr in the Gulf, also due to the fact that after the collapse of Tsarist Russia, trade previously done with that country was now done with India. The principal increases in the import trade for the year Mar. 1917-Mar. 1918, were in wood for building, wheat, barley, flour, rice, candles, barley, sugar, and cotton goods, showing that South Persia was largely fed and clothed from India. Certain merchants continued to increase their wealth; their purchasing power came mainly from a considerable export of opium which had trebled in price (partly due to the temporary dislocation of the supply). Figures showed that 92% of imports were provided from India and 5% from the United Kingdom. J.H. Bill to Hamilton-Grant, Bushire Trade Report for year March 1917-March 1918, compiled by vice-consul, Mr. Worrall, no. C-368, 8 Sept. 1918 (printed, bound volume of Trade Reports of Persia, 1916-1923).
was governed by Civil Regulations. Sykes and his staff officers believed that the financial control should, as far as possible, be in Persia. The cumbersome system of Indian financial regulations had been built up over many years and had varied according to local conditions to suit India. In many instances this was found to be unsuitable for Persia. In India, for instance, use could be made of Indian clerks for the job, at minimal rates of pay. As regards the force, it was found neither desirable nor possible to maintain a large number of Indian clerks with units, and the British officers were too few in number to see properly to Indian Financial Regulations. Moreover, the officers being mostly non-regulars, they were not used to dealing with military accounts. Persians were obviously ruled out for the job as well. The organisers, therefore, called for a more elastic and altogether separate system of financial control. Their proposals also led to a more centralised system of control, invested in the hands of the Inspector-General at Shiraz headquarters.

Estimates of costs presented another problem. The authorities were reminded that the standard of living in Persia was higher than India and the cost of foodstuffs had more than doubled in the past four to five years due to famine, locusts, and anarchy, let alone the high cost of animals and transport. By the summer of 1918, some progress was made in adjusting advances and accounts which had been outstanding for some eighteen months, in other words, since the arrival of Sykes in Shiraz. The arrears of accounts were indeed appalling; the Persian officers who had joined the force in November 1916 at Shiraz and who were promised their arrears of pay by Sykes, were not in fact paid this amount until April 1917. One of
the chief reasons for the delays and arrears was that the rates of pay and the rates of kran exchange were not fixed. This had caused endless inconvenience to senior officers and they asked for the establishment of a fixed rate of exchange for southern Persia and for the appointment of an audit officer for the force's accounts.

Between 11 November 1917 and 18 March 1918, Sykes made a tour of the operational areas of the South Persian Rifles and also visited India on a four week journey. The chief object of Sykes's visit to Delhi was to get support for the South Persian Rifles in the shape of more personnel and equipment (especially artillery), to obtain permission to start building barracks, to solve some of the financial problems, and finally to get Orton's scheme or organisation accepted. His achievements were quite satisfactory. Orton's suggestions as regards the opening of the Bushihr-Käzirün-Shiraz road, with the co-operation of the Bushihr forces, was approved. Permission was granted to the Inspector-General to take over the base at Bandar Abbas from the G.O.C. Bushihr. A strong intelligence unit was formed in the garmsir regions of Bandar Abbas, with headquarters there and branches at Tārūm and Fin. During the winter months and with the migration of the nomads from the hills, it was this southern section of the line of communications that was most exposed to raids. More quarters, more personnel, a Base Ordnance Depot for Bandar Abbas, and more material (e.g., powder guns, trench mortars, Lewis guns, Hotchkiss guns, Maxims), and 30 Ford lorries, were also

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1 He left Bandar Abbas for Delhi on 3 Dec. 1918 and returned on 3 Jan. 1918. On the details of the tour see Lt. Col. G.P. Grant (who accompanied Sykes throughout the tour), "Report on the Tour of Inspector-General, South Persian Rifles, Nov. 11th 1917-March 18th 1918", Sykes, desp. no. VIII, 14 Apr. 1918, serial no. 78, confidential (printed), WO 106/934.
promised. Special South Persian Rifles allowances of 200 rials per month was sanctioned for all officers doing duty with the force, with retrospective effect. A ruling was also obtained regarding fixing a rate of exchange for the south. The Director of Military Intelligence stressed the importance of flexibility in the organisation of the force so that, if need be, it could readily expand at short notice.

In Persia, the tour included an inspection of the Kirman brigade, Sa'idabād, Nairīz, Tārum, and of the 1st Infantry at Bandar Abbas. The tour contributed to the removal of petty grievances and to the establishment of closer liaison between Shiraz and Kirman and Bandar Abbas. On his way back to Shiraz, Sykes took full advantage of the opportunity to secure good relations with as many local chiefs as possible. He met Qavām al-Mulk on 12 February, who promised to keep his tribes at bay. A friendly kalāntar was appointed to Tārum. Overtures of friendship were also extended to Āqī Hājjī of Durāgheh, a powerful man of the locality of Bainū (or Bīdū), who possessed a force of about 1,200 riflemen. A visit was also made to Bam and Narmashīr and Sardār Mujallal, deputy governor of Bam, promised to arrange the raising of a Baluch Levy Camel Corps for the South Persian Rifles.

Orton's scheme was sound and well-conceived but it was criticised on the grounds that it was too elaborate and expensive for an irregular force which was intended only to operate in an undeveloped country. Nothing had been missed out, not even station bands. The costs incurred during 1916-1917 had been no less than £600,000. This seemed incredible, Hirtzel remarked, for a force which hardly existed in May 1916 and which in November 1916 numbered just over 4,000.
The figure included the whole cost of the regular troops which were with Sykes from the beginning, but even so, Sykes was told that expenditure on this scale would not be tolerated. Taking into consideration that the kran was appreciating against the rupee and allowing for emergency expenditure, the cost of the upkeep of the reorganised force in the following years, was calculated to be just under £1,000,000 per annum. Sykes was told to economise.

The difficulty was that it was dangerous to economise on British officers and troops if the force was to be effective. Half measures invited loss of control over the recruits and failures in general. If the force was to protect the peasant population from robbery, maintain stability, and make sure that goods and supplies reached their destinations safely, then heavy costs, both initially and annually, had to be met. On the other hand, the British Government intended eventually to hand over the force to the Persian Government and the cost of maintaining it had to be such that the Persians could afford it. It was not easily possible to economise on costs while aiming at protecting and furthering both British and Persian political interests; for instance, the force could dispense with many of its outlying detachments such as Nairiz, Dihbīd, or Ābādeh in Fars, or Anār and Bam in Kirman; it could get rid of its tufangchī road guards who kept losing their arms and selling their ammunition to tribesmen. The task of maintaining security on roads carrying inland trade from main centres to outlying districts could be delegated to Persian local authorities and Merchant Guilds. The bulk of British money which was spent in this direction went directly or indirectly into the pockets of merchants and official robbers (viz., local authorities),
and unofficial robbers (viz., tribal, peasant, and urban robbers and bandits). A part of local revenue (the whole of which was invariably embezzled locally), could well be spent on road guards and the police. Orton in fact realized later that from the point of view of British trade in south Persia, it was much better to get British imports safely into the hands of the big merchants at Shiraz and at Kirman. The latter would pay for them and then the Merchant Guilds would themselves be responsible for their distribution. The Guilds commanded a lot of local influence and they knew far better how to arrange their own affairs. Orton found that half the so-called "robberies" were stage-managed by merchants or officials:

"... either to raise the prices of goods in a particular corner (the 'robbed' goods being delivered subsequently by the 'tribesmen robbers' at the back-door) or else to back a demand for more British money for out-posts, tofangchis, local subsidies, arms, or ammunition, all of which are sources of profit to the acute Persian."  

Orton's scheme of organisation aimed at a smooth transition of the South Persian Rifles into a regular military force. If approved totally, this would largely determine the nature of its command and control. The competition between the viceroy and the minister in Tehran to gain complete control of the force persisted throughout 1916-1918.

At the start of the mission, it was understood that Sykes and his force were to be generally controlled by the Foreign Department of the Government of India. However, in view of the differences of opinion which emerged over the

2 Ibid.
objectives of the force and in the midst of the confusion resulting from conflicting directives when the force was marching towards Shiraz, the Imperial Government decided to place Sykes under the orders of Marling and therefore, the Foreign Office. Sykes continued to correspond directly with the viceroy and, when necessary, with Cox at Bushihr and the Indian military authorities. This arrangement led, in practice, to a dual, sometimes treble control, which caused delays, led to mistakes, and made matters very difficult for the local commanders. This confusing state of affairs was acutely prominent during the troubles with Saulat al-Dauleh and Qavām al-Mulk in Shiraz (October-November 1916); during the crisis resulting from the Kāzirūn uprising and the ensuing military failures at Pīr-e Zan (winter 1916); and lastly, during the revolts which overran Fars in the summer of 1918. In all these cases, the situation was described as "military" and necessitated the reinforcement of Sykes with troops either from Bandar Abbas or Bushihr, or their potential co-operation with the South Persian Rifles. These situations led to conflicts between the political and military authorities, between the Indian and the Imperial Governments, over their respective boundaries of influence concerning the command and direction of the South Persian Rifles.

It was during the operations against the Kāzirūnīs and their associates, that the General Staff in London proposed that Sykes and his force be replaced under the orders of the Government of India and that the command of the force should be exercised by a proper military officer appointed by the viceroy. On all questions of policy regarding Persia, they proposed, the Government of India would be guided by His
Majesty's Minister in Tehran, in consultation with the Foreign and the India Offices. The Foreign Office and Marling generally agreed and India was asked to give their opinion. The essence of the viceroy's proposals was that it was desirable to have one officer only, under the C-in-C India, in supreme control of the South Persia theatre of operations. They wished to see the force raised and organised on the same lines as units of the Indian Army, controlled by the C-in-C under the orders of the Home Government and after reference, when necessary, to the minister at Tehran. They agreed that a general officer should be appointed to command the force and be assisted by the advice of a local political officer and the Tehran Legation. Sykes, they thought, could be temporarily used as political adviser and then be replaced by Lieutenant Colonel Gough.

The impression derived by the Foreign Office was that the viceroy was trying to carefully steer the effective control of the force away from the minister in Tehran, and according to Oliphant, "to leave the Legation out in the cold." They argued that Persia was to be treated as a neutral state.

1 Memorandum, "Situation in Southern Persia", confidential, printed for the use of the Cabinet, Jan. 1917, prepared by the General Staff, the Foreign Office, and India Office, F. 1153, FO 371/2981 and LP & S/18/C158.
2 Chamberlain to Chelmsford, tel. no. 3431 (copy), secret, 9 Jan. 1917, P. 3172, FO 371/2981.
3 Viceroy to S.S. (India), tel. no. 940, 21 Jan. 1917, F. 1153, FO 371/2981. The G.O.C. Bushihr Garrison reported to the G.O.C. Mesopotamian troops. The latter in turn reported to the C-in-C India, under the orders of the War Office (the control of the Mesopotamian operations had passed from India to the Home authorities at the beginning of 1916). The forces in eastern Persia were under the Government of India. If the control of the SPR could go over to the C-in-C India, the latter would be able to co-ordinate all military action in south Persia and Mesopotamia.
4 Ibid.
and not antagonised. The South Persian Rifles was in any case under the nominal control of the Persian Government and the intention of the Home Government, from the start, had been that it should be a police or civilian corps and not a military force or small army. This had been emphasised at various points and it was the reason why, for instance, Sykes was not allowed to link forces with the detachment of Barratov's Expeditionary Force in Isfahan in September 1916 when this place was believed to be threatened by the Turks.\(^1\) To connect the force more closely to H.M. Forces in Mesopotamia and India, would raise "grave suspicions in Persia and tend to partition, which though probable some day, would be inopportune at present."\(^2\)

Marling also supported this opinion and emphatically objected to any change in Sykes's status as commander of the force since it would reflect badly on that officer's reputation and lower the prestige of the force, a thing which was most undesirable at the time since he was negotiating the formal recognition of the force with the Persian Government. He suggested that present arrangements should not be upset.\(^3\)

Chamberlain himself professed to favour the proposals of the War Office and the viceroy, but once the Foreign Office and Marling changed their mind and decided to maintain things as they were, he could not reverse their views. The War Cabinet supported the views of the Foreign Office. India was next informed that existing arrangements as regards Sykes and the South Persian Rifles were not to be altered. It was decided

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\(^1\) Grey to Marling, tel. no. 437, 25 Sept. 1916, quoted in Oliphant's minute, ibid. See also above, p. 102.


\(^3\) Marling to Balfour, tel. no. 28, military, 15 Jan. 1917, F.1153, FO 371/2981; same to same, tel. no. 43, 31 Jan. 1917, ibid.
furthermore, to attach to Sykes a military officer of field rank, experienced in tribal warfare, who would advise Sykes and who would be delegated executive command in the field. ¹

The viceroy received this news with "utmost disappointment". The Imperial Government, he wrote, had agreed that existing arrangements were unsatisfactory and needed to be changed but, in spite of India's strong representations, they had:

"... abandoned their previous view, altered their minds and decided not only to continue a system to which they themselves, object, but also to retain in charge an officer in whose capacity for the present undertaking we have lost confidence."²

In their ensuing correspondence, the Indian Government made it clear that if they were not to be granted a decisive voice in the employment of the South Persian Rifles, then they would rather be responsible only for the material needs of the force but not its organisation, distribution, or anything else. They maintained that London's propositions stemmed not, apparently, from the War Cabinet but from the Foreign Office. These propositions were in conflict with sound military practice and involved dual control. India preferred to adhere to their own views.³

Marling, in turn, pointed to the fallacy of India's wish to place the force under a military commander and regard it as in some ways an adjunct to other British Imperial forces. The Persian Government had still not recognised the force formally; in Fars, the force was unpopular and given the slightest excuse, there could be further revolts against it.⁴

¹ F.O. to Marling, tel. no. 35, 29 Jan. 1917; reprinted as no. 3436 to the Viceroy, 31 Jan. 1917, F.1153, FO 371/2981.
² Viceroy to S.S. (India), tel. no. 2731, 24 Feb. 1917, FO 371/2981.
³ Same to same, tel. no. 7358, 19 May 1917, P. 18361, FO 371/2981.
⁴ Marling to FO, tel. no. 129, military, 3 Apr. 1917, FO 371/2981.
It was too much to expect, he wrote later, that:

"... semi-mutinous troops taken over by us a few months ago will have become so loyal as to obey their foreign officers against their own Government."¹

Chamberlain was confused and embarrassed by the impasse. He had wished to remove Sykes, agreeing with the viceroy, and he now found it difficult to override the Government of India. His private correspondence with Robertson (CCIGS) and Curzon displays a certain degree of diffidence and timidity in his approach to the various problems concerning the South Persian Rifles. He could not quite make up his mind where he stood in the quarrel between India and the Foreign Office. This prevented him from making effective use of his position to either defend India properly or to find a compromise solution to calm them. He wrote to Curzon pointing to the inconsistencies of the Foreign Office and his own awkward position in all this: "I have felt that I was made to look rather a fool (which does not matter) and the Government of India may well feel that they have a grievance."² He turned to Robertson and the War Office for support, explaining how the Foreign Office had earlier, "very likely rightly", overruled the views of India and insisted on adopting those of Marling, as regards the question of the control of the force. After this, he had "repudiated responsibility and told the F.O. that as they assumed authority they must take responsibility."³ But finding himself involved again over the removal of Sykes, he now hoped that Robertson would raise the question.

¹ Marling to F.O., tel. no. 203, military, 13 June 1917, P. 118680, FO 371/2981.
again, "... you and I and the Government of India are agreed. The War Cabinet and the Foreign Office took a different view... [the question]... inaugurated with you, and you speak with an authority I cannot pretend to have."\(^1\) Robertson said that the General Staff were aware that the Foreign Office had, in the first place, "butted in", but they thought that it was for Chamberlain "to get the thing put right."\(^2\) Robertson had, in effect, got the impression at the last meeting of the War Cabinet that Chamberlain was "inclined to support the opposite view," or at best, to remain neutral.\(^3\) The General Staff, however, promised support but the War Cabinet was still not convinced that their former decisions warranted any change. They condoned Sykes's shortcomings provisionally and decided to give him another chance. The viceroy did not give way and this time Chamberlain wished to wash his hands of the whole matter.\(^4\)

By Autumn 1917, however, both Marling and the viceroy came round to thinking that the case in favour of maintaining the South Persian Rifles in its existing form had considerably weakened. Both suggested that the force should be turned over to the Persian Government. Several factors accounted for their views. The Russian Revolution had resulted in the withdrawal of Russian troops from Persia and had thus removed the need for the South Persian Rifles to act as a counterpoise to Russian military presence in Persia, or at least, in south

\(^1\) Chamberlain to Robertson, letter, confidential, India Office, 1 Mar. 1917, AC/20/4/51.
\(^3\) Same to same, letter, War Office, 1 Mar. 1917, AC/20/4/49.
\(^4\) See minute, F.O., no. 106367, comments by Nicolson, Oliphant, R. Cecil, and Hardinge, 26 May 1917, FO 371/2981.
Persia. The possibility of further trouble from the Turks and Germans in south Persia seemed fairly remote now that Mesopotamia and Persia's western provinces were free from "enemy" occupation. As to the South Persian Rifles's role of maintaining law and order, the facts were that the Persians did not trust the force and there had already been trouble with the tribes, the recruits, and the inhabitants of Fars and Kirman. The main route to Shiraz from Bushihr had not yet been opened by British forces or the South Persian Rifles and required at least two brigades for the job. Moreover, the roads were being kept mostly open, not because of the South Persian Rifles, but because heads of tribes, notably Saulat al-Dauleh, were being paid to do this job. Marling thought this was "a poor bargain". The viceroy believed that if matters were allowed to drift, then at the end of the war, Britain would be faced with the alternative of "either downgrading the force, or of accepting a permanent and embarrassing burden of expenditure on its account." 

The War Cabinet, however, was still reluctant to make any change until the end of the war. By June 1918, however, with the outbreak of tribal revolts against the South Persian Rifles and the need to mobilise the Bushihr troops or to reinforce Sykes from Bandar Abbas, it was necessary to reconsider the question of control. With everyone in the south reporting to a different authority, the situation, at one point, became so chaotic and was causing so much delay, that Sykes took the initiative of undertaking military action against the

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1 Marling to Hardinge, extracts from copy of telegram, 10 Sept. 1917, P. 201617, FO 371/2981.
tribes before receiving instructions or sanction from any of the authorities. The Imperial Government then decided to submit all British troops in south Persia under the command of a single officer of the rank of Brigadier General, to be sent from India and to be under the instructions of the Military Department of that Government. Sykes was to be kept on as Inspector-General of the South Persian Rifles and the force was still to be considered as a Persian force. What this meant in practice was that dual control continued but Sykes was now under the orders of the military authorities in India (instead of the Foreign Department) and the political authorities in Tehran. Nevertheless, Sykes expressed relief at this change which remained for the command of the force until it disbanded in 1921. The termination of hostilities both on an international and local scale made it possible for the Imperial Government to reconsider the position of the South Persian Rifles in the light of fresh arrangements made with the Persian Government concerning the military and financial affairs of the country.

The controversies over the control of the South Persian Rifles showed to what extent political and military questions in Persia were inseparable. The control of the force depended on the policy adopted as regards its organisation and employment. This policy, in turn, depended for its

1 War Office to C-in-C India, tel. (copy) no. 59390, 1 June 1918, L/P & S/10/727, 299/1918; Balfour to Marling, tel. no. 304, 2 June 1918, ibid.

2 Sykes limited himself to a bland footnote in History, II, p. 471, "... I would state that the India Office supported me in every way throughout, and that when I was placed under the Commander-in-Chief in India instead of under the Foreign Department, matters speedily improved. At the same time I was severely handicapped by the dual control exercised by the Government of India and the Legation at Tehran. It is laid down that 'No man can serve two masters', but I had sometimes to try and serve three."
success on a satisfactory conclusion of the negotiations being conducted in Tehran for the recognition of the force. Throughout the last years of the War, these negotiations remained inconclusive. The point was that so long as the Persian Government refused recognition, the incompatibility of two commands ought to have been theoretical rather than practical. But the Foreign Office feared that passing over control totally to the military authorities would rob the force of its civilian character and offend the Persians. The Persians, however, very likely did not understand the technicalities involved, nor had they been consulted about the points in question, nor were they particularly interested in whether the Foreign Office controlled the Force or India. So long as the South Persian Rifles was commanded and supplemented by British officers and troops, and controlled by the British Government, they had no doubts that the force was there to uphold British interests and belonged to the British.
Chapter V

THE PROBLEMS OF RECOGNITION

The question of the official recognition of the South Persian Rifles by the Persian Government was a prolonged and frustrating one for all parties concerned. Its significance cannot be overemphasized, both in terms of the impact it had on political relations between the British and the Persian Governments, and on the fate of the South Persian Rifles. Indeed, the real achievements of the latter tended to oscillate with and depend, to quite a marked degree, on the changing attitudes of successive Persian cabinets toward this question. These attitudes were in turn formed by considerations of public opinion and by the degree of influence which the two Legations could, at any point, exert on Persian politicians. Changing war conditions, both from the local and international standpoints and in particular, the effects of the Russian Revolution, regulated the impact of Anglo-Russian pressure or influence, which flowed from the two Legations at Tehran, in the form of financial inducements, bribes, other promises, or outright threats.

It soon became evident to the Persians and the British that the prerequisite for the smooth working of the South Persian Rifles in the south was its formal recognition by the Central Government. No public declarations had been made to this effect during Sipahdār's term of office. Local authorities in Kirman, Yazd, Isfahan, and Shiraz, had been
vaguely instructed to greet Sykes formally, as the commander of a force for the restoration of law and order. Everyone seemed to be aware that arrangements on these lines had, or were, in process of being made with the Central Government, but no one was really clear about details. The so-called Sipahdār Agreement of August 1916 was supposed to have provided the force with full formal backing from the Centre. Or so the Foreign Office believed. Yet the issue proved to be less simple.

The agreement, which was the product of negotiations begun in January with the cabinet of Farmān Farmā and then passed over to that of Sipahdār-e A'zam, was formulated in draft form in July and communicated to the Persian Government on the 3rd August. The reply of the Persian cabinet, which amounted to a note signed by Sipahdār himself, bearing the date of 5th August, began by thanking the two Governments for their friendly offers of assistance to Persia, to carry out the proposed military and financial reforms, "which will guarantee the progress and prosperity of this country . . ."  

Sipahdār then continued:

"With due consideration to the aforementioned proposals and bearing in mind the present condition (force majeure) this government accepts that a military force of 22,000 in strength will be gradually organised and trained by a sufficient number of Russian and English military instructors, under the orders of the Iranian Ministry for War,

1 See above, pp. 83, 84 (f.n. 1).
2 Text of proposals in French (typescript copy) and its Persian Translation, Tehran, 19 July/1 August 1916, enclosure in de Etter's despatch to Vūṣūgh al-Dauleh, no. 135, 12 Sept. 1916, IFQA, 26/16(1).
3 Original draft of Persian text, written and signed by Muhammad Valī Khān Sipahsālār-e A'zam (Ra'īs al-Vuzarā'), no. 2062, 5 Aug. 1916 (5 Shāvīl, 1334), IFQA, 66/4, 1334/1916; copy of final text in Persian, no. 2349, enclosure in de Etter's despatch to Vūṣūgh al-Dauleh, no. 135, 12 Sept. 1916, IFQA, 26/16(1), 1334/1916.
to establish order and public security. The two Powers are thanked for their friendly co-operation in providing and employing these instructors and paying the necessary expenses for this project, which is dependent on their financial aid ..." 1

The Government accepted further, the formation of a Mixed Financial Commission and all the articles which defined the powers and obligations of this Commission, 2 and was glad to be in receipt of a monthly subsidy of 200,000 tumans, from the date of the signing of the agreement. In conclusion, Sipahdär reminded the two governments that:

"... in accordance with the observation of those regulations established by the laws upon which the foundation of the Iranian Government has been based and in regard to the articles of the Constitutional Law, these proposals will be ratified by the National Consultative Assembly and the Senate, as soon as these houses next assemble." 3

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1 Ibid.
2 Ibid. This was an important concession and amounted to the virtual control of Persian finances by the Commission. The first session of the M.F.C. took place in May 1916, its members comprised of one British, one Russian, two Persians, and one Belgian. Its duty initially was to supervise the expenditure of the subsidy of 200,000 tumans and enquire into the resources of the empire to obtain the necessary funds for the future upkeep of the envisaged military forces. By August, however, a supplementary agreement was added to the main text of the proposals, which in practice extended the powers of the Commission to include, among other things, control over all the sources of revenue, the imposition of new taxes, revision of existing ones, and the power of veto over all questions dealing with finance. In return for this concession, the two Powers in turn, agreed to consider the imposition of various taxes, such as those on houses, trade licences, etc., on their own subjects, who were otherwise exempted from paying these. Furthermore, it was agreed that an extra sum of 20,000 tumans per month would be given to the Government for the organisation and maintenance of a Persian force in the capital, called the Central Brigade. The Persians were also assured that the powers of the M.F.C. would not be "retrospective", i.e., that it would not show up or investigate past financial misdeeds or shady transactions of government personnel, "which had been numerous of late." Marling to Grey, tel. no. 500, 7 Aug. 1916, FO 371/2736; Marling to Grey, tel. no. 514, 12 Aug. 1916, P. 158232, FO 371/2736.
3 Sipahdär's letter, no. 2349, 5 Aug. 1916, IFOA 26/16(1), 1334/1916.
Sipahdär's letter turned into a very controversial document. It amounted, the Persians believed, to the formal recognition of the main principles of the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, in other words, the partition of Persia into the Russian and British zones of influence, not only in terms of political but also military control. As if this were not enough, Sipahdär had enslaved the country totally, by agreeing to grant such wide powers of control to the Mixed Financial Commission. In practice, the proposals under consideration were already in process of being implemented. Sykes was forming a military-police force in Kirman and Fars; the Russians were increasing the numerical strength of Cossack officers and men, and the Financial Commission had already been formed. The Persians realized that the country had turned into an effective Anglo-Russian protectorate, on terms far better than the two Powers probably ever anticipated. That both representatives of the two Powers in Tehran were also aware of this bargain, was substantiated by the haste with which they pushed through the first advance on the subsidy, thus setting the seal on the agreement, on the very day that Sipahdär fell from office (12 August 1916).

The exchange of notes coincided approximately with the occupation of Hamadan by Turkish troops and their advance toward Qazvin, while Russian forces retreated before them. Tehran, not for the first time in the course of the war, was being threatened; Armenian and European communities began auctioning their belongings and leaving the capital. The families of Allied Power representatives also began to leave, among them Marling's wife, and there was talk of the two ministers going as well. But the latter were strongly advising Ahmad Shah to leave the capital with them if the Turks
were to enter it. This suggestion, if carried through, and following so soon after the agreement, would have committed the nation firmly to the cause of the Allies. The situation compared well with that of November 1915, at which time the two ministers were struggling to prevent the Shah and his court from leaving the capital when Russian troops stood nearby, since their departure would have meant breaking Persian neutrality in favour of the Central Powers.

Ahmad Shāh, perturbed at the crisis and the news of Sipahdār's pact, dismissed the cabinet and decided to call a meeting of the High Council at the palace of Şāhibqarānīch, to discuss the matter. Votes were cast by secret ballot and the almost unanimous decision was that Ahmad Shāh should not leave or alter the seat of government from Tehran to elsewhere in the country. The ministers of the two Legations were also urged not to leave and a delegation was sent to the Turks, asking them not to advance any further.

The High Council was composed of court and cabinet ministers and generally of notables, grandees, and some of Tehran's mujtahids. Members appear to have been selected arbitrarily by Ahmad Shāh. According to Marling, after he and de Etter saw the Shah on 17 August and failed to get a decision from him, they wrote a letter to him expressing their views as to why he should leave. The Shah received the letter before the meeting of the 19th but "did not allow it to be read and did not also allow Vussugh, Sarem and Sepahsalar to attend." (Vüssügh apparently was in favour of the Shah leaving). The proceedings, therefore, as far as Marling was concerned, were a mere "farce" and the votes were falsified, "since the voting papers were opened by Mumtāz al-Daula and then immediately destroyed." Marling to Grey, tel., confidential, no. 104 (copy), 25 Aug. 1916, P. 158807, FO 371/2737. Among the thirty five odd members attending on this occasion, were: Zill al-Sultān, Kāmrān Mīrzā, 'Āīn al-Daula, Ağā Saiyid Muhammad, the Imām Jum'eh of Tehran, Samsām al-Saltaneh, Mushīr al-Daula, A'īlā al-Saltaneh, Mukhbir al-Saltaneh, Mustaufī al-Mamālīk, Dabīr al-Mulk. Report of the Meeting of the High Council, Persian text (unnumbered), 19 Aug. 1916 (19 Shāvīl 1334), including list of voters, IFQA, 66/4. The presence of deputies or ex-deputies of the so-called Democrat-Nationalist Camp in this gathering, tends to suggest that despite Marling's misgivings, the majority decision would not have been any different.
The crisis precipitated Sipahdär's downfall but the real reason for his dismissal appears to have been the displeasure which his letter of 5th August had aroused. He had written it without even consulting the Shah. Claims were later also made that he had not obtained the approval of his cabinet ministers either, though this is open to doubt. What is clear is that there was a strong general resentment, at court and among the public generally, at what was felt to be the "crime" of the cabinet in "signing away the independence of Persia."^1

Thus, the position of cabinets succeeding that of Sipahdär was made awkward. The episode inaugurated an interesting era, during which successive Persian ministers, at first timidly but eventually boldly, sought to bargain their way out of the pact without having to lose the subsidy as well. On their side, the British Government tried to commit the Persians to the agreement, or to the public declaration

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^1 Marling to Grey, despatch, confidential, no. 102, 6 Sept. 1916, P. 206566, FO 371/2736. Sipahdär's cabinet, which was labelled "Russian", had never been popular. The corruption and peculation in public administration which was really the cause of Farmān Farmā's fall, continued unabated and increased threefold. Personal quarrels between individuals, complicated by the fierce competition between politicians who formed the "Russian" and "British" camps respectively, increased intrigue and inefficiency. Expediency required that the two Legations work closely and harmoniously together. Marling and de Etter themselves got on fairly well and trusted each other as far as was possible. The problem was that sometimes they lost control over their own agents and their Persian partisans in the cabinet and at court. Thus, though the two ministers were fairly pleased with the cabinet of Farmān Farmā in January 1916, the Russian financial agent, Kominski, who was apparently the head of the Russian "party" and the chief instrument of Russian intrigue, helped to bring about the downfall of Farmān Farmā and promote Sipahdär to power. Again, the two ministers were working very well with Sipahdär, but this time it appears that Farmān Farmā and his Anglophil associates, "poisoned the Shah's mind against Sepahdär" and hastened his downfall. Marling to Grey, tel., confidential, no. 104 (copy), 25 Aug. 1916, P. 158807, FO 371/2737. Same to same, letter, confidential, no. 153, P. 261611, 28 Nov. 1916, FO 371/2738; same to same, tel., no. 127, political, 29 Feb. 1916, P. 40598, FO 371/2732.
of the recognition of the South Persian Rifles, before really
giving way to Persian demands for more favourable concessions.
In all this, "public opinion", expressed through demonstrations,
sit-ins, newspapers, pamphlets, works of literature, speeches,
and appeals to the Shah, formed and led by groups from among
the intelligentsia, the ulama and bazâris, appears to have
played a very important part in determining the course and
character of political moves and counter moves.

The Persians argued that the pact with Sipahdâr
was not a valid document. Sipahdâr himself, aware of the
dangers of his action, had sought to protect himself (and
just possibly also the country), by the inclusion of two
points: firstly, that he was accepting the proposals under
conditions of force majeure, and secondly, that the document
would have to be passed by the legislative institutions of
the land before being considered as legitimate. Marling
wrote that this was "a sop to the Constitution and to save
ministers from attack."¹ Hirtzel was quick to notice the
implications of this statement. What if Sipahdâr's cabinet
was to be succeeded by a Nationalist one? At all events,
did the Persians really have any intention of calling the
4th Majlis together for the purposes of ratifying the agree-
ment?² It soon became quite clear that they did not.

Vüsâgh al-Dauleh was nominated by the Shah to the
post of Sadr-e A'zam and named his cabinet on the 29th August.
The need for financial assistance made it very difficult for
Vüsâgh to reject the Sipahdâr accord outright. On the other
hand, considerations of public opinion made it impossible to

¹ Marling to Grey, tel., no. 500, 7 Aug. 1916, FO 371/2736.
² Hirtzel, I.O. minute no. 145996, 11 Aug. 1916, FO 371/2736.
provide it with official sanction. Two other courses were open to the cabinet. They could try and find a formula by which the monthly subsidy could be accepted without an explicit recognition of the agreement, or, if the Powers insisted that non-recognition would also result in the withdrawal of subsidies, the cabinet could then at least try and change the face of the proposals and extract more favourable terms in exchange for recognition. Both courses were tried by Vüsûgh al-Dauleh. Yet, first of all, an attempt was made to disassociate the new cabinet altogether from Sipahdâr's letter, by pleading ignorance of its existence.

Marling understood that the cabinet did not wish to repudiate the agreement but merely to delay its execution until a more propitious moment. They argued that "if they have to confirm compact signed by Sepahdar for partition of Persia their position will be untenable." Indeed, there appeared to be one practical difficulty in the way. Marling was told of the curious revelation that though the offices of the President of Council and of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs had been thoroughly searched, there seemed to be no trace of the notes in question. Moreover, the members of the late cabinet had apparently claimed that though they had knowledge of the contents of the joint note of 3 August, they had never seen the reply to it, nor indeed, had they been consulted as to its preparation.

Marling showed himself to be greatly surprised by this "astonishing statement." His own version of the events was that he had been visited by Akbar Mîrzâ Sârim al-Dauleh

1 Marling to Grey, tel. no. 577, 2 Sept. 1916, P. 174563, FO 371/2736.
2 Marling to Grey, despatch, no. 102, confidential, 6 Sept. 1916, P. 206566, FO 371/2736.
(Foreign Minister in Sipahdār's cabinet), sometime between 8 and 16 August, at which meeting he had enquired whether the Persian minister and Sipahdār had had any difficulty in bringing the cabinet to accept the proposals of the joint note, and Akbar Mīrzā had replied in the negative. The acceptance, according to him, had been voted unanimously at a meeting of the cabinet with all members present save Sardār Mansūr who was ill and sent his acceptance in written form. The drafting of the reply had then been undertaken by Sipahdār, but

"the result of his labours had been so unsatisfactory that Akbar Mīrzā himself prepared the text, submitted it to Sipahdār at whose desire the curious phrase 'in view of force majeure' was inserted, and had then read it to myself and the Russian Minister for our approval . . ."¹

Sārīm al-Dauleh added further that great haste was necessary in view of the imminence of the fall of the cabinet. Marling is vague as to the exact date of the ministerial meeting and the time or place where the reply to the joint note was prepared and signed. His evidence is based on what he heard from Sārīm al-Dauleh, yet the latter had a different story to tell. According to his account, made later to Vūsūgh al-Dauleh and as quoted in the latter's circular to Persian representatives abroad:

"Before they passed their note [i.e of 3 August] to Sipahsālār, the English and Russian ministers gave its draft to the Foreign Minister, Prince Sārīm al-Dauleh, and the latter, after carefully considering its contents, held a number of meetings with the two representatives, during which he pointed out that the present Iranian Government cannot permit herself to take part in acknowledging the proposals of the note, and in the absence of the Majlis and without consultation with, or the knowledge of the public, they cannot accept a note, the contents of which are injurious to the interests and independence

¹ Ibid.
Despite this, however, the two ministers insisted on obtaining a reply to their note and even threatened that if they did not, "there is no telling what may befall the fate of your country."\(^2\) They apparently even refused to consider Sārim al-Dauleh's suggestion that the High Council should be called to discuss the issue. Thus, on 4 August they sent the note to Sipahdār, who "wrote a reply on the 5th August accepting the joint proposals without consulting his Majesty or at least obtaining the written approval of the vuzarāt."\(^3\) No copies were made of it and Vüşūgh's cabinet had not been able to find it yet.

To back his statement, Sārim al-Dauleh had as proof a letter he had written to Marling on 9 August in reply to one addressed to the cabinet by Marling on 7 August. In this, Marling had asked the government to notify local authorities that Sykes was now, according to the recent agreement, in the service of the Persian Government and that they should co-operate with him to organise the force.\(^4\) In his reply, Sārim al-Dauleh wrote that orders to this effect had already been issued, but he went on to deny categorically that he had

\(^1\) Vüşūgh al-Dauleh, Report no. 3130, Cabinet Office, 13 Sept. 1916 (15 Zū al-Qā'dah, 1334), IFOA, 66/4, 1334/1916. Siphihr's account corresponds to the contents of this circular, see M. Sipihir, Iran dar Jang-e Buzurg, p. 365. None of Sipahdār's ministers appear to have ever commented or written about this. Sipahdār himself kept his silence over the matter, except for an outburst against an article written in the Caucasian Achtq Süz newspaper, condemning him and the agreement. The late Prince Sārim al-Dauleh, on being asked at an interview if he could recall and expand on this episode, simply replied "no!". Interview, personal, Isfahan, 28 Feb. 1972.


\(^3\) Ibid.

any knowledge of the notes of 3 and 5 August, to which Marling had referred. 1

Oddly enough, Marling does not seem to have ever commented on this reply in his reports to London. Whether this letter was left in the Persian Foreign Office archives, without ever having been sent to the British Legation, is another question. If Sārim al-Dauleh is to be believed, then this letter comprised evidence of his non-involvement in the affair. If Marling is to be believed, then the object of Sārim al-Dauleh's letter was to leave behind formal evidence of his innocence, with or without the concurrence, or knowledge of Marling. At all events there is doubt as to the honesty of both of them. The temptation is to conclude that they had probably come to some understanding behind the scenes and that the rôle of Sārim al-Dauleh in all this was more important than that of Sipahdār.

As to the lost note, Marling explained that Sipahdār himself had probably "... in the vain hope of evading responsibility ... destroyed the joint note and the draft of the Persian reply." 2 But this was not totally the case. The text of the joint note of 3 August does seem to have disappeared but the original draft of the reply of 5 August, written by Sipahdār himself is in the Persian archives today. 3 Sipahdār had merely given the wrong number to his letter and it had gone into the wrong file. The Foreign Office in London do not appear to have ever received a copy of Sipahdār's letter,
either in its original Persian form or in its French translation.

Marling's explanation of the behaviour of the new cabinet and the whole rigmarole, which he termed as "this bit of truly Persian trickery,"¹ was that it aimed at relieving all the members of the late cabinet, except Sipahdär, "of the odium of having agreed to the surrender of Persian independence."² He told Vüsūgh's cabinet, however, that he could easily furnish them with copies of the notes in question. Furthermore, he had knowledge that at least one minister, if not all the ministers of the late cabinet, knew about the exchange of the notes. Finally, he could prove that action had been taken on the basis of the terms agreed upon, since part of the first monthly instalment of the subsidy had been granted to the Persian treasury on 12 August. Vüsūgh next asked whether, in order to safeguard his cabinet from "popular attack," he could send a letter to the two Legations, to the effect that the Persian Government had no knowledge of the pact alluded to in the joint Anglo-Russian letter of 12 August which informed the late Government of the payment of part of the subsidy.³ Marling and de Etter replied that sooner or later, the Legations would have to provide them with copies. So Marling concluded that Vüsūgh would probably content himself with a simple acknowledgement of the receipt, "reserving the right to revert to the question later."⁴

The whole incident is significant in showing up the behaviour of a weak government acting under constant pressure,

¹ Marling to Grey, despatch no. 102, 6 Sept. 1916, FO 371/2736.
² Ibid.
³ De Etter's despatch, no. 135, 12 Sept. 1916, IFOA, 26/16(1), 1334/1916.
⁴ Marling to Grey, desp. no. 102, 6 Sept. 1916, FO 371/2736.
notably those of financial bankruptcy and the meddlesome nature of Anglo-Russian domination. The results were lack of collective responsibility; lack of unity and communication between the executive body, the royal court, the head of state, and the public in general. The episode was also indicative of the absence of any security of tenure attached to the office of sadr-e a'zam, or indeed to any ministerial post and the absence of any guarantee to protection from the two Legations in the face of public outcry.

Vüsûgh's cabinet next came forward with eight points on which they wished to receive assurances from the two Powers, "so as to render the recognition of the agreement more palatable to the public." Among the most important of these were firstly, that officers of a third Power should, after the end of the war, be substituted for British and Russian officers in Persia. Secondly, that all foreign troops should be withdrawn from Persia at the end of the war. Thirdly, that the Powers should abstain from acts of interference in

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1 Marling to Grey, tel. no. 719, political, 23 Nov. 1916, FO 371/2736. Vüsûgh was at this time furiously writing to Persian representatives abroad, asking them to refute the allegations of pro-Allied newspapers, notably the Noviyi Vriemya, the Ruskuve Slovar, The Times, Gazetter de Hollande, etc., that the Persian Government had voluntarily placed herself under the protection of the Governments of Russia and Britain and had signed an agreement with them to this effect. Mushîr al-Mulk wrote from London that the embassy there had not been properly informed about the agreement and knew practically nothing about it. Miftâh al-Saltaneh echoed similar things from Simla. The ambassador in Holland wrote that so long as the Persian Government continued to go without a full-time agent, representing her in one of the international news organs or agencies, she could not influence international opinion effectively. Vüsûgh's cabinet sent a circular to all missions abroad, outlining the circumstances under which the SPR came into being, enclosing copies of the exchanged notes which he had received from Marling and de Etter on 12 Sept. and listing the embarrassments and difficulties faced by his cabinet due to Sipahdâr's action. Vüsûgh al-Daulah, Report no. 3130, 13 Sept. 1916 (15 Zu al-Qa'îdah 1334), IFQÁ, 66/4, 1334/1916.
Persia's domestic arrangements, such as concluding alliances with tribal chiefs and lastly, that the two Powers should not conclude in future, any convention between themselves or with other Powers which would infringe Persia's independence in any way. As regards the first point, Marling explained that the Persian Government understood that neither of the two Powers would be in a position to accept this but they were satisfied to receive an affirmative reply, qualified by some condition, which, he suggested could take the form of a common agreement between the three Powers on the selection of neutral officers.

This was received with mixed feelings by the Foreign and India Offices. Both Curzon (Chairman of the Persian Committee) and Chamberlain offered destructive comments on Marling's suggestions, on the basis that the subterfuges proposed were dishonest and undesirable and that under present circumstances, the British and Russian position in Persia was satisfactory. Curzon remarked that the proposed reply was "frankly dishonest", since "neither Russia nor ourselves have the slightest intention of withdrawing our officers. I cannot see why we should be parties to a make-believe or tie our hands in any way."¹ He did not like the other assurances either and explained that as Persia was disintegrating and British responsibility for the new British zone was becoming more marked, "the only way to sustain local order was to make arrangements with the Khans."² If Britain were to accept the new proposals, there was nothing that would really stop the Russians from making agreements with the Bakhtiāris, "... on

¹ Curzon, comments attached to copy of Marling's telegram, 25 Nov. 1916, P. 237263, FO 371/2736.
² Ibid.
paper it might. In practice it won't."¹ He showed irritation at having to consider the question at all. He did not quite know "what there is in the present circumstances to call for past assurances . . ."²

Chamberlain, in the same vein, argued that the suggested reply to the question of officers, was "in its transparent insincerity, apart from its doubtful effectiveness, unworthy of the two powers."³ All this talk of dishonesty at this point, prompted at least one voice to be raised in defence of the Persians. Sir Lancelot Oliphant, reminded everyone "with due respect," that when in 1915 the Anglo-Russian position in Persia was very precarious, the two Powers reserved no scruples and passed no moral judgements over their decision to agree to secure the Persian Government's adherence by financial inducements, and that since then Persia had been given £30,000 a month "under the guise of a moratorium and of 200,000 tumans advance." He thought the assurances now asked for by the Persians, should, with certain reservations, be granted to them.⁴

¹ Ibid.
² Ibid.
³ Chamberlain to Grey, internal letter, no. 4899, 29 Nov. 1916, FO 371/2736.
⁴ L. Oliphant, FO minute, no. 241222, 29 Nov. 1916, FO 371/2736. The "moratorium" scheme had been in operation since Sept. 1915 and involved the receipt, by the Persian Government, of a joint Anglo-Russian subvention of £30,000 per month (approximately 166,000 tumans), with retrospective effect from Jan. 1915. The subvention was to continue until six months after the end of the war. After the Sipahdār agreement, Persia ought to have this latter sum plus the 200,000 tumans subsidy envisaged in the agreement. On 12 Aug. the Government received the sum of 200,000 tumans from the two Powers (100,000 tumans as an advance on the new subsidy and the rest as a loan to the Mixed Financial Commission to meet "urgent" expenses). However, due to the Persian cabinet's refusal to recognise the Sipahdār agreement, they continued to receive only the sum of £30,000 per month under the "moratorium" arrangements. The M.F.C. was responsible for the expenditure of this sum; between May 1916 and May 1917, this body held some 89 sessions
With opinions such as those expressed by Oliphant and Marling and news of the troubles which the South Persian Rifles was encountering in Fars, the British Government conceded to compromise her position a little, or at least, appear to do so. They refused to give any assurances to the demand on the change of officers but agreed that troops would evacuate Persia after the war, as soon as, in the opinion of the two Governments, "a normal state of security has been re-established." On the question that the two Powers should abstain from acts of interference in Persia's domestic life, assurances were offered in "general" terms only. Another demand that Persia should be allowed to send her representatives to attend the Peace Conference at the end of the war, was refused. So too the demand that Persia should not be bound to pay compensation to the two Governments for losses suffered by their subjects during the war. In reality, therefore, none of the assurances were accepted unconditionally.

It appeared that, but for a few exceptions, British officials could not properly appreciate the psychology of the Persian situation. Nothing much was ever expected of Russia's honesty. But the existence of the South Persian Rifles and

but after this date, its work was hampered by the cabinet of A'ila al-Saltaneh and by May 1918, Samsâm al-Saltaneh's cabinet dissolved it altogether. For more detailed information on financial questions see J.E. Shuckburg's note on the "Persian Moratorium Scheme", minute, F 2377, 27 Nov. 1916, P. 206288, FO 371/2982; the "Report of the Mixed Financial Commission", no. 220, 13 Aug. 1917 (24 Shavvâl, 1335), Tehran, signed by Mr. Marc Modèle (Russian representative), Mr. Heynssens, president. (By this time the two Persian Delegates, Amin al-Dauleh and Abd al-Husain Khân Sardar Mu'azam, had resigned their posts. The British member was Mr. Huson, replaced by Mr. Maclean in July 1916); IFOA, 26/16(1) and 26/16(11). 1

1 F.O. to Marling, tel. no. 517, 2 Dec. 1916, P. 241227, FO 371/2736.
2 Ibid.
last vestiges of trust in Great Britain's repeated utterances and assurances that the "independence and integrity" of Persia would always be respected. Public pressure and the withholding of the formal recognition of the South Persian Rifle became assets to be exploited by Persian cabinets. They tried to stretch the advantages that this situation offered to their limit.

Yet, on its own, it is doubtful whether public opinion could have constituted a strong weapon with which to resist the two Powers. Ultimately, the weight of resistance depended on whether other circumstances, such as the war situation in general, was favourable to the cause of the Allies or not. During the early months of the year 1917, it seems that favourable conditions just about existed. 1 Vāsīgh's cabinet was told that if they refused recognition, subsidies would be suspended. 2 After much deliberation and discussion, the cabinet committed itself to a form of conditional recognition of the South Persian Rifles. They made a point of stating that as far as they were concerned, no agreement had been reached between the Persian Government and the two Powers over Sykes and his force. However, in view of the fact that

1 The position of Russia and Britain in Persia and the East generally was considerable strengthened by the seizure of Baghdad from the Turks in March 1917 and the successful spring campaign of Russian forces in Persia against Turkish troops, who were still in occupation of parts of Persian territory in the west. By the end of March, the Turks were driven back beyond Khānīqān and were fighting a rearguard action with the Russians on the Diala river. The situation on the western front also looked slightly more optimistic at the start of the year. The French, though still weak, recovered much of their lost ground at Verdun; the battle of Arras brought one little success to the British and although the Franco-British offensive of April on the Aisne brought them little strategical gain, news of the declaration of war on Germany by the United States (April 1917) and later, of preparations for a big offensive in Flanders, were temporarily encouraging.

2 Marling to Balfour, tel. no.: 774, 234 Dec. 1916, P. 260956, FO 371/2736.
Sykes had for sometime now been organising a force for the restoration of order and that the previous cabinet had taken some measures in supporting his activities, the Persian Government:

"... was prepared to recognise General Sykes in his present position with respect to him being under the direct orders of the Iranian government, until the end of the war, and on condition that the two powers would consider passing over the force to the Persian Government when war ends and assist that government in raising the funds for its upkeep, by a revision of customs tariffs."¹

This had a salutary effect in Fars for the South Persian Rifles, at least temporarily. Saulat al-Dauleh was finally induced to sign an agreement with Sykes and Gough concerning the maintenance of security on the Bushihr-Shiraz road. This was effected on 24 May.² Saulat may in any case have come to terms with the South Persian Rifles, regardless of the Centre's attitude, since it was in his interest to do

¹ Letter to Marling signed by Vüsûgh al-Dauleh and all members of the cabinet, no. 647/2750, 14 March 1917 (19 Jamâdî al-Avval 1335), IFOA, 48/37, 1335.
² For a copy of the text of the agreement in Persian, see despatch from the Governor-General of Fars to the Ministry of the Interior, 30 May 1917 (8 Sha'bân 1335), serial no. 10162/1015, IFOA, 48/27, 1335/1917. It was Gough who first opened up relations with Saulat and sent Mr. Bristow, his vice-consul to Saulat's camp at Jîreh for preliminary talks. The first agreement was signed on 6 May 1917, according to which Saulat was placed in charge of the whole of the Bushihr-Shiraz road and was to be given £30,000 for the expenses of his tufangchîs. The arrangement was to be tried for 3 months. Sykes was very angry since the agreement was made without consultation with him and he argued that parts of this road were still controlled by the SPR. So Saulat was persuaded to sign another agreement with Sykes and Gough, on 24 May, near Khân-e Zînyân. He consented to allow the SPR to retain their posts on the Kâzîrûn-Shiraz road with half a garrison of Qâshqâ'îs co-operating. Nâsîr al-Divvân was to be expelled by him. He did, however, restrain his tribes from attacking the SPR. Army Dept. Memo. no. 14181, 19 Oct. 1918, enclosing "Notes on Fars, 1916-1918", by W.A.K. Fraser, P. 30241. FO 371/3858 and WO 106/941.
so. Yet there was probably a direct correlation between the cabinet's temporary recognition of the South Persian Rifles and Saulat's compromise. He seems to have expected Fārman Fārma to have given his signature to the agreement too. The latter, for reasons which, according to British sources, arose from jealousy, but were doubtless more complex, delayed and finally refused to give the agreement his approval.¹

Vūsūgh's recognition of the South Persian Rifles was not well received at the capital. His cabinet had not been very popular from the start. The tide of Nationalist/Democratic opinion, encouraged by the cordial exchanges of greetings with Russia's new government after the February Revolution, showed itself less and less tolerant of the British and their partisans. A symptom of this was the emergence in the capital of a small terrorist organisation, operating under the name of Kumīteh-yē Mujāzāt.² The Kumīteh caused several assassinations and threatened more violence toward those believed to be spies or close associates of Britain and Russia. Vūsūgh al-Dauleh resigned on 27 May 1917 and AʿĪlā al-Saltaneh formed his cabinet by 5 June.

¹ See below, pp. 245-246.
² The founder members of this group were Abū al-Fath Zādeh Salmāsi, Muhammad N. Khān Mishkāt al-Mamālik and Mīrzā Ibrāhīm Khān Munshi-Zādeh. All three had at some point served in the Cossack Brigade or the Nazmīeh and belonged to fairly well to do families. Munshi-Zādeh was serving in the Ministry of Finance under Vūsūgh until he was dismissed. Other members included Ihsān Allāh Khān, who later became very active in the contentious Jangalī movement of Gilan. In ideology, the Kumīteh leaders appear to have been motivated by extreme anti-foreign sentiment of a non-religious nature. Many members of the Kumīteh were arrested during 1917 and punished by death, imprisonment, or exile during Vūsūgh al-Dauleh's second term in office, 1918-9. Ihsān Allāh Khān escaped to the Caucasus at this time. Muvarikh al-Dauleh Sipihr himself was arrested at one point for suspected connections with the Kumīteh. He published Munshi-Zādeh's confessions as regards the formation, beliefs, and objectives of the Kumīteh. Sipihr, Irān dar jang-e Buzurg, pp. 416-430; Bahār, Tārīkh-e Mukhtasar-e Ahzāb-e Siāsī, pp. 32-33.
A'1ä's cabinet displayed less flexibility than the last on the question of the formal recognition of the South Persian Rifles. The first sign of this was that they prevented Sykes from being presented formally to Ahmad Shäh, as the Commander of the South Persian Rifles, on the occasion of the annual Salâm ceremony. A'1ä argued that if this had taken place, it would have meant "our commitment to the recognition of the force." Marling was extremely annoyed. He now began to wave around not only Sipahdär's August agreement but also Vüsügh's cabinet's note of March, and kept saying that the recognition of the South Persian Rifles had already been effected. A'1ä retorted that he could not accept promises or agreements which contravened the laws of the land. Besides, the government considered the points raised in Vüsügh's note as "incomplete and inconclusive." Mushîr al-Mulk was asked to clarify what the intentions of His Majesty's Government really were. Did they mean to keep the force indefinitely in its present form? Did they intend to consider the question of replacing British commanders in the south with officers from a neutral country? If so, when? Mushîr al-Mulk was instructed to let the Foreign Office in London know that, with regard to the importance which the Persian Government attached to the prosperity and security of

1 The cabinet was prepared to allow Sykes to be presented to the Shah as a member of the British Diplomatic Corps, but not as the Commander of the SPR. Churchill and Marling, however, were so insistant that Sykes and Gough were somehow ushered into the palace assembly halls and stood in line with Russian officers of the Cossacks. A'1ä and his ministers, however, got round the problem by persuading the Shah to see Sykes and chat to him privately, before the start of the ceremony. A'1ä al-Saltaneh to Mushîr al-Mulk, telegram, no. 207, 25 June 1917 (5 Ramazân 1335), IFOA, 48/37, 1335/1917.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.
British commercial interests, especially in south Persia, and their concern about security throughout the country:

"... the Persian Government has for some time been thinking in terms of the formation of a force, under instructors from a neutral nation, for this purpose." ¹

Thus, A'lä's cabinet stumbled onto the idea of a force for the whole country and MushIr al-Dauleh helped to strengthen and develop the idea in London. It was irrelevant, he wrote to A'lä, to centre the discussions on the permanent or temporary character of the South Persian Rifles. The difference between north and south, whether temporary or not, had "division" as its objective and it was pointless to leave matters to be settled at the end of the war. ² No one knew when this would come about and present circumstances, favourable to the Powers, "may not alter till doomsday."³ The need, as he saw it, was for Persians to rely on their own initiative, trust, and unity, and not to depend for ever on the paternalistic assistance of foreign powers. The declaration of intentions was not enough, there was a need to act and study carefully the question of organising a uniform force for the whole country.⁴

The negotiations over the latest proposals continued. During the meetings with the British minister, some of the more important or sensitive points appear to have been discussed orally and when recorded on paper came to be wrongly interpreted by both sides. By July, when the Persian cabinet came forward with some details of the scheme for a uniform

¹ Ibid.
² MushIr al-Mulk to F.O. (Tehran), tel. no. 953, 8 July 1917 (18 Ramazän 1335), IFOA, 46/37, 1335/1917.
³ Ibid.
⁴ Ibid. As regards Sykes's Tehran journey, MushIr wrote that the F.O. in London was not particularly bothered by the episode. It appears that it was the Gulf officials and Marling who had arranged for him to come to Tehran. Besides, MushIr continued, "everyone is aware that this meant much to Sykes himself, since he is known to love publicity, pomp and ceremony . . ." ⁴ Ibid.
force, the talks with Marling had generally slumped into semantic quibbles with Marling storming in and out of the office of the sadr-e a'zam, accusing the cabinet of attributing to him things which he had never said. The cabinet in turn kept changing words and phrases in the text of their proposals and complained that Marling was not helping but hindering their work. This situation did nothing toward bettering relations between the Foreign Office and the Persian Government, between Marling and A'la, or the latter and the Persian Minister in London.

The Foreign Office procrastinated, demanded to see more details and declined to bind themselves in any way to Persian demands. At the inter-departmental conference of 31 July, chaired by Curzon and attended by Balfour, Montagu, and Major-General Sir G. Macdonogh (Director of Military Intelligence), and others, members discussed the Persian situation in general and concluded that the moment was not suitable for the reconsideration of British policy in Persia, nor for the modification of existing agreements. The South Persian Rifles should be maintained, if possible, on present lines under British officers for the duration of the war and "for such further period as may be found necessary for the protection of British interest." There was no objection to changing the title of the force "if this will make the force more palatable to the Persian Government."

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1 Edwin Samuel Montagu (1879-1924); Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for India, 1910-4; Financial Secretary to the Treasury, 1914-6; Minister of Munitions, June 1916; member of War Ctte., resigned after the fall of Asquith; replaced A. Chamberlain as Secretary of State for India in June 1917. Resigned 1922.
2 Inter-dept. conference held at the Privy Council Office, 31 July 1917, minutes in f. 152954 (2 Aug. 1917), FO 371/2891.
3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.
On 3 October, Marling addressed another letter to the Persian Government informing them that their military and financial reform projects were long term considerations but that they should in the meantime define their attitude towards the Sykes Mission. A'lä was clearly confused about the attitude of the British Government. The impression derived from the reports of the Persian Ministers in London and Simla was that the authorities there were willing to look favourably toward the latest Persian proposals, yet, at the same time, a steady pressure was being maintained on the Persian Government, through Marling, to obtain the formal recognition of the South Persian Rifles. A'lä showed exasperation at Marling's behaviour. He believed that the Persian case was not being well presented or explained by Marling to his superiors in London and he hoped that Marling would be recalled.

Marling in effect was at about this time beginning to change his view about the value of the South Persian Rifles and all questions related to it. He was obviously going through one of the most difficult phases in his capacity as minister in Tehran. He was overreaching himself in all directions but obtaining no proper results. Perhaps this accounted for the apparent contradictions in his behaviour. His private vendetta with the cabinet of A'lä was matched by his bickerings with Lord Chelmsford, the viceroy, over the question of the control of the South Persian Rifles. He gave the impression that he understood the Persian point of view toward the force yet the Persian cabinet believed that he was being generally obstructive; he was quietly chiding Sykes about the latter's independent decision on political questions
in the south, yet, at the same time, he was defending Sykes against the Government of India's criticisms and strictures. His task was admittedly a delicate one to carry through, but perhaps Miftāh al-Saltaneh who knew him well, was right in saying that Marling functioned best under circumstances which did not require speedy decisions and hasty actions.

A'īla's resistance to British demands was at this time strengthened by reports from Fars telling of desertions from the South Persian Rifles and of hostilities directed against it. Also, of the growing tension between the Governor-General and British authorities. The outcome of the disorder in Russia was not clear and on the western front, the so-called third battle of Ypres, launched by Haig on 31 July and lasting for almost three months, had brought but little gain to the Allies. In Tehran, the press continued to attack the friends of Britain. The independent anti-British daily, Șitâr-e Șīrān, addressed an appeal to the Shah to the effect that:

"... former cabinets of nation-betrayers such as that of Sipahsâlār, which placed Fârmân Fârmā in charge of Fars, and all those persons who allowed the country to sink into ruin and assisted in strengthening the English hold over the unfortunate people of this country... are traitors to the nation and the government. Prevent them from

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1 Marling that that Sykes appeared to have lately considered himself, not only as Inspector-General of the SPR but to some degree also, a political officer as well as the G.O.C. Command-in-H.M.G.'s forces in south Persia. The "influence in political affairs by the British Inspector General of what is officially a Persian force is most undesirable," he wrote to Sykes. The SPR was "ostensibly and even ostentatiously," under the orders of the Persian Government and the participation of the Inspector-General in political questions was not only undesirable but would "confirm the existing suspicion that our real aim is to create a force to be employed by its British officers in British political interests." Marling to Sykes, Qulhak, letter, private, 20 June 1917, IO L/P & S/10/690, 1917.

2 Miftāh al-Saltaneh (General-Consul, India) to A'īla al-Saltaneh, Simla, tel. no. 1621, 5 Sept. 1917 (17 Zū al-Qa'dah, 1335), IFQA, 48/14(1).
furthering their activities lest they surrender the rest of Iran, just like the south, to thieves."

According to A'lā, G. Churchill (Oriental Secretary to the Legation), was doing his best to bring the cabinet down and place 'Ain al-Dauleh in power. He succeeded in this but just before it, and perhaps because they knew that the fall of the cabinet was imminent, A'lā and his ministers carried Persian demands to near extremes. They repeated that they could not even temporarily recognise the South Persian Rifles and proposed boldly that British Indian officers and troops should be withdrawn from Persia altogether; the South Persian Rifles should be handed over to the Governor-General of Fars and fall under the direct control of the Persian Government until other officers arrived to organise the proposed uniform force; the expenses of the latter, pending the modification of customs tariffs, would be paid out of existing customs revenues and finally, that financial experts, possibly from Sweden or Belgium, would be employed for this purpose. Lastly, the Government asked for the abrogation of the 1907 convention.


2 A'lā al-Saltaneh to Persian Ministers in London and Simla, tel. no. 341, 28 Sept. 1917 (11 Zū al-Hijjah 1335), IFOA, 41/37(11), 1335/1917.

3 Cabinet Office, memo. addressed to Marling, no. 448, 9 Oct. 1917 (22 Zū al-Hijjah 1335), IFOA 48/37(11), 1335/1917 and enclosure in Marling to Balfour, desp. no. 121, 12 Oct. 1917, Document no. 363, WO 106/936. Marling believed that the object of the Persian Government was to "put on record such uncompromising proposals as will embarrass their successors rather than counting upon effect of possible enemy advance into Persia to induce us to concede all these requests," Marling to Balfour, tel. no. 339, 12 Oct. 1917, WO 106/932. This may have been the case but A'lā's correspondence with Mushir al-Mulk indicates that they regarded Persian demands as reasonable and, under the circumstances, justifiable.
Yet again, the conclusions of the Persian Committee conference remain negative. From this point onwards, it is possible to discern a clear division of opinion among British authorities as regards British policy toward Persia and the South Persian Rifles. There were those who began to advocate some form of compromise and a policy of conciliation, while others preferred to maintain existing arrangements and defer all questions until the end of the war. To the first group belonged the General Staff, the Government of India, some members of the Foreign Office (for example, Hardinge) and lastly, Marling. To the second group belonged the Foreign Office and the Admiralty. The India Office, headed by Chamberlain, was divided—Chamberlain wanted to support India but at best and in practice, he remained neutral. His senior assistants, notably Hirtzel and Shuckburg tended to support the Foreign Office (Edwin Montagu, who succeeded Chamberlain in June 1917, effectively opposed the Foreign Office and supported the viceroy).

The Foreign Office continued to believe that the transfer of the South Persian Rifles to the Persian Government was neither practicable nor desirable at the moment. Their unbending attitude was shaped chiefly by two considerations. Firstly, they were apprehensive as to the outcome of disorder in Russia. With one change of Government followed by another in the space of several months, they feared that the political situation in Russia might change yet again, bringing back into power the old regime. In that case, and if, for instance, Britain were to renounce the 1907 convention or pass the South Persian Rifles over to the

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1 Meeting of the Persian Committee held at the F.O., 20 Oct. 1917, P. 202357, FO 371/2981.
Persians, her position vis-à-vis Russia in Persia would suffer, were Russia to insist on recovering her former privileges there. Secondly, they mistrusted Persian Nationalists or the Milliyên (i.e., that body of Persian opinion which, inspired by nationalist and patriotic feeling, under various shades of moderate to extreme political ideals, opposed British policy). Thus, doubts were expressed, notably by Balfour, on the value of Persian "good-will", as to whether it was worth making any "sacrifices" to secure it or whether, indeed, there was any Persian Government with whom it was worth negotiating at all.

These conclusions were challenged by the General Staff. They argued, significantly, that since it appeared that the Persian Government's orders carried considerable weight in the country, Britain should be prepared to show more favor toward some of the proposals. They suggested that the uniform force should be recognised and should be placed under the nominal command of Persian officers and that British troops should be withdrawn, as soon as the Persians had something else to replace them with. Hardinge also suggested that the South Persian Rifles should be transferred to the Persian Government in view of its doubtful value as an asset to British interests. This expressed Marling's own opinion that the cost of the South Persian Rifles was out of proportion to the value of British trade in Persia and as a war measure, "the force promised to be of little or no value in the near future.

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3 Hardinge (Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs since 20 June 1916), note read before the meeting of the Persian Cttee, 20 Oct., P. 202357, FO 371/2981.
because some of its contingents were sources of embarrassment and danger." Marling, as early as June, had in fact suggested that:

"...since Persian feeling is not with us ..., one possible way of making a success of S.P.R., with altered situation after the Russian Revolution, is to make it a truly Persian force to be used by the Persian Government ..."  

Marling was at this point objecting to the Government of India's expressed desires to give the force a military character. For, parallel to the negotiations being conducted in Tehran, the Indian and Imperial Governments were also exchanging their opinions on the questions of the command, control, and organisation of the South Persian Rifles.

The Indian Government had recognised that the only hope for a permanent stabilisation of southern Persia lay in the presence of a really efficient force under British officers. They had accordingly put forward their views as regards measures which would push the force toward this end. The Foreign Office overruled India's views on the grounds that they were not in line with the maintenance of the "civilian" character of the force, nor with the desired aim to lessen its "British" character. But whereas Marling, who adhered to this point of view, proposed a compromise of some sort, Whitehall preferred to play for time. The viceroy now began to doubt whether it was worth falling out with the Persian Government over the stabilisation of the south. India admitted that the trend of their policy had been to create an expensive and highly organised mercenary army, under British officers in

1 Marling to Hardinge, 10 Sept. 1917 (copy of letter produced for the benefit of the Persian Cttee meeting, unnumbered), P. 202357, FO 371/2981, and Marling to Balfour, tel. no. 203 of 13 June 1917, quoted in Viceroy to I.O., tel. P 1186680, FO 371/2981.
2 Marling to Balfour, ibid.
south Persia, but:

"... this force appeared to be distasteful to Persians and [their] government and presumably lacks original justification, i.e. to counterpoise similar Russian undertaking in the north. It was time to decide whether regardless of Persian opinion we should elaborate force or compromise it."

They suggested that the force should meanwhile be "Persianised" and the position be reconsidered after the cessation of hostilities.

The shifting or unchanging attitudes and opinion of the authorities reflected to no small degree the reaction of each toward changing circumstances brought about by the Russian Revolution of February and the Bolshevik seizure of power in October 1917. The Provisional Government, according to Russian sources, appears not to have altered her relations with Great Britain in Persia. On the contrary, they were apparently willing covertly to support British policy while outwardly encouraging liberalist trends there. A symptom of this was that Kerensky's Government never called for the evacuation of Russian troops from Persia. Indeed, they reinforced Barratov's Expeditionary Force in the summer of 1917. This force went some way in co-operating with the British Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force in undertaking offensives in northern Mesopotamia against the Turks. After October, however, the situation in Persia underwent a radical change. The Bolshevik armistice with the Germans in December 1917, the Russian Peace Proclamations of the same month, followed on 2 March 1918 by the Russo-German treaty of Brest-Litovsk,

2 See L.I. Miroshnikov, Iran in World War I, pp. 73-74, who quotes verbatim from unpublished Russian contemporary sources on this subject.
3 According to Miroshnikov, Barratov's force reached the staggering strength of 75,000 men. Ibid.
secured the withdrawal of Russian forces from the various theatres of war, and their evacuation from Persia. It also declared as null and void the agreements of 1907 and the secret Anglo-Russian understanding of March 1915.

The Eastern Front almost ceased to exist. The evacuation of troops from Persia was more or less completed by the end of March 1918. Russian officers of the Cossack Brigade, as well as Russian soldiers, left for Russia amidst conditions of utter chaos, selling their arms and equipments to Persians and Turks. Not all the Russians left. Those who remained were gathered and organised into a force under the command of Bicherakov (commander of the Caucasian Corps who refused to recognise the Soviet regime's directives) and proceeded to co-operate with British forces in reconstructing the Perso-Caucasian military front.

The policy of the British Government in Persia can be viewed against this background. Up to the beginning of Autumn 1917, the impact of the Revolution on the local scene had not caused them undue anxiety, though local observers were noticing the change. After October, however, their position in Persia had to be reinforced. Thus, in anticipation of the evacuation of Russian troops, they began to introduce more troops or "missions" into Persia.

In February 1918, "Dunsterforce", nicknamed after its commander, General L.C. Dunsterville, moved with a small force from Khānīqīn to Baku, with a view to holding the lines.

1 Sykes wrote that in June 1917, he was the "unhappy spectator of the unruliness among the Cossack troops at Isfahan. They had "ceased to mount guard or to salute their officers, whom they had even turned out of their quarters. Some of them took to highway robbery and others lay about drunk ... patrolling ceased [and] before the autumn the Russian troops in Persia were everywhere demoralized . . . ." Sykes, History, II, p. 486. Haig spoke of the same things in Isfahan and Marling gave the occasional sounding that the local scene was altering.
communication in the west and to prevent the provinces of Transcaucasia (i.e., Russian Āzarbaijān, Georgia, and Armenia) from falling into Bolshevik hands. In eastern Persia, the northern half of the East Persia Cordon was reorganised with units of the Indian Army, after the dispereement of the Russian Cossack forces. By August 1918, "Malmis", a mission under Sir Wilfrid Malleson, established itself in Mashhad with the object of preventing interference in north-east Persia by the Soviet forces in Turkistan and lending support to counter-Bolshevik elements there. It was reorganised as a Field Force and extended to the trans-Caspian railway at Ashkābād, whence it came into touch with detachments of British troops who managed to occupy Krasnovodsk by the end of 1919. In Bushihr, Anglo-Indian troops were reinforced to a strength of 20,000 fighting men and followers during the autumn and winter of 1918.¹

The argument ran that Afghanistan and potentially India were exposed to the threat or attack of the Central Powers now that the road through Caucasus and trans-Caspia lay open to them. Besides, some thousands of Austrian prisoners of war were interned in Russian Turkistan and could constitute a grave source of danger. Moreover, Persian feeling at this time gravitated strongly toward the Germans² and the

¹ The primary object of the Bushihr expeditionary force, under the command of General C. Douglas, was to relieve the garrison at Shiraz during the troubles of late 1916 and early 1917. In a more general and political light, the force was there to meet requirements for keeping communications and traffic in south Persia secure. During the revolts in Fars in summer 1918, the opening of the Bushihr-Shiraz trade route and the pacification of the hinterland with a view to assisting the South Persian Rifles became the paramount concern of the force. J.E. Shuckburg, I.O. minute, no. 206, 16 Feb. 1919, I.O. L/P & S/10/728, file 3, 1919.

² Sulaiman Mīrzā was captured in Feb. 1917 on Persian soil by the British, just as he crossed the border from Turkish territory. There were instant protests in the capital over
Bolsheviks; various revolutionary societies or committees had sprouted among political activists, Persians and Caucasians, in the north and the Nationalist revolutionary movement of the Jangalis, led by the charismatic Mirzâ Küchik Khân, began to consolidate their hold over the Caspian provinces. Thus, the

his arrest. Among the documents captured on him were those showing that the Germans were, according to an agreement with the Persians, prepared to supply Persia with German officers and a corps of 20,000 men with provisions and funds to form a Persian National Army during the war. Emphasis was placed on Persian command though the implication was for an army with joint commands. This was recorded and signed between the German emperor and the Persian nation, represented by the Persian National Council, on 28 Jan. 1917. Letter of General Headquarters, M.E.F. 'D', Baghdad, 31 Jan. 1918, doc. no. 267, enclosing extracts of contracts nos. 25 and 365; M.I.R. 878, WO 106/55 (box 4).

Among these was the revolutionary organisation set up in Baku during 1918. This went by the name of Anjuman-e Inqilâbiyân (Association of Revolutionaries) and was supported by the Ijtîma'îyân-e Amiyûn faction of the Democrats and, by and large, by other Persian, Caucasian, Turkish, Armenian, Georgian, and Russian revolutionaries (the term literally meant Social Democrats but served to cover all shades of political ideology ranging from democracy to revolutionary socialism). The Anjuman was in close touch with Germany and Russia and had sub-branches in Rasht, Constantinople, and Europe. The headquarters of the branch in Europe was in Berne with sub-committees at Geneva and Lauzanne, composed of such personalities as Husain Qûlî Khân Navvâb (Persian Ambassador at Berlin); Taqi-Zâdeh, Rasûl-Zâdeh and Ahmad Bey Aghayev (Constantinople). The last two were said to be in close touch with the militant revolutionary Haidar Khân Tarivardiev, alias Amûghli, who operated mostly from the Caucasus and was responsible for organising the secret sub-committees of the Anjuman in Tehran. The Rasht movement appeared to be directed by the brothers Kasmâ'î (one of whom was formerly secretary to the Russian consulate at Rasht and another a former newspaper editor in Tehran). The objectives of the Anjuman were to proclaim a republic in Persia and to Bolshevise Muslim Caucasus and northern Persia. The Jangalis co-operated through their own organisation, the Ittihad-ye Islâm (Union of Islam). Taqi-Zâdeh and Vahid al-Mulk were also responsible for the foundation of the Perso-German Society in Berlin in January 1918, which took on an increasingly literary-historical slant, supported by such literary figures as Jamâl-Zâdeh, Qazvînî, and Taqi-Zâdeh himself. See "Report of the Director of Military Intelligence on the Persian Revolutionary Movement," (based on French sources), no. 4234 (M.I.2), 28 June 1919, P. 97595, FO 371/3861; F. Adamlat, Fîrâk-e Dimukrâsi-ye Ijtîma'i dar Nâhzât-e Mashrûlât-e Írân (Tehran, 1354 A.H.), particularly interesting for its analytical study of Rasûl-Zâdeh's thoughts, pp. 155-253; Ahmad Mahrad, Die deutsch-persischen Beziehungen von 1918-1933 (Bern/Frankfurt, 1974), pp. 51-56, 402-404. On the Jangali Movement and the origins and foundation of the Persian Azarbaijân Communist Party in 1920, see Schapour Ravasani, Sowjetrepublik Gilan: Die socialistische Bewegung im Iran seit ende des 19. Jahrhunderts Bis 1922 (Berlin, n.d.), pp. 279-348 and 37-719 respectively.
objectives of British military missions turned out to be as much anti-Bolshevik as they were anti-German.

The British Government found itself committed to the military occupation of most of the border regions of Persia, not to mention the occupation of Kirman and Fars by the South Persian Rifles. This only strengthened Persian convictions that Britain now aimed at the overall control of the country. The Imperial Government's policy as regards north-west and east Persia was decided upon by the end of December 1917 and Dunsterville's mission began entering Persian territory in February 1918. His Majesty's Government found itself clearly in an embarrassing position. To compensate for the escalation of their military activities in Persia, it was decided to inform the Persian Government that the British Government was prepared to grant them certain concessions; they looked favourably toward the formation of a uniform force for the whole country, subject to the condition that British officers would be retained till the end of the war and those of another nation, to be selected after consultation with the British.¹

Muṣṭaʿuf al-Mamālīk, who, with the support of Persian Democrats had come into office in January 1918 after the ineffective, short-lived cabinet of 'Ain al-Dauleh, was in no mood for compromise. He asked for the unconditional acceptance of all the demands made by Aʿlā's cabinet in October.² Conditions in the country had grown from bad to

worse. High prices and famine raged throughout the greater part of the land. Hale, former British consul in Birjand, who found himself in Kirmanshah in the early months of 1918, recorded that the price of bread was seven times its normal figure; peasants and villagers on the line from the Turkish frontier to Kirmanshah were largely destitute and villages were in a state of utter ruin and deserted. There were even reports of cannibalism in Hamadan, two women have been stoned to death for it. In Tehran, death tolls from hunger during autumn 1917 amounted to 40,000 and doubtless many more afterwards. Martchenko, a Russian who travelled from south Russia to Tehran during February and March 1918, observed that, "En Perse, mourir sinon de faim, au moins de privation, est très fréquent." He too noted that the climate of public opinion was fiercely anti-British.

Marling, Mustaufi al-Mamalik told him that he could not detect any real change in the British Government's "concessions". It was to be regretted, he told Marling, that even now that Russia had recalled her troops from Persia, Britain, who professed to be a friend of Persia, was not prepared to do the same thing, despite the fact that they were aware of the unpopularity of the SPR and their troops in Bushihr. Is it right, he asked, that "you are placing your troops in all those parts in Khurasan which the Russians are evacuating?" Marling replied, yes, they had to secure their position against possible German threats toward Afghanistan. Mustaufi next said, "I have also heard that you intend to concentrate your troops in Qazvin," but Marling denied this. He then added that there was no question of changing existing arrangements as regards the SPR and if the Persians insisted much more, he would suspend present negotiations. Mustaufi al-Mamalik to Mushir al-Mulk, note of his conversation with Marling, 29 Jan. 1918 (16 Rabi' al-Sani), no. 55, IFOA, 48/14(1), 1336/1918.

1 Hale, From Persian Uplands, pp. 216, 228. Hale also noted widespread hostility toward the British—the general content of the press being "... away with the S.P.R. ... let this harassed neutral country settle its internal affairs in peace!" Ibid., p. 216.


3 Ibid. This was out of a population of 200,000 in the capital.

This opinion had no doubt been encouraged by the decision of the cabinet to communicate a proclamation to the press for the benefit of the public, in which they outlined the content of their negotiations with the British Minister and emphasized that since the Persian Government wished to maintain the genuine neutrality and independence of Iran, they refused to accept either the South Persian Rifles or British conditions as regards the formation of a uniform force.¹

There was evidently a need for a re-appraisal of British policy towards the Persian Government. Marling urged a policy of conciliation and India, too, had asked for a change of policy toward Persian nationalists. The Viceroy reminded the authorities in London that the Government of India had "always regarded a policy which caused Great Britain to appear as unsympathetic to the Persian nationalists as unfortunate and have pressed for a change of policy."²

Among the reasons behind India's rather enlightened attitude toward Persia was that they had really lost interest in the South Persian Rifles. Mesopotamia had been secured and Imperial Russia had been removed from the Persian scene. From the time of the force's initiation until now, India had not succeeded in either gaining control over it or removing Sykes, in whom they had lost confidence as the force's commander. The force was not popular and was causing more trouble that had been anticipated. Besides, it was turning out to be a costly burden on India at a time when she was heavily weighed down by the demands of the troops in Mesopotamia,³ and now,

¹ Office of the Council of Ministers, Proclamation no. 7760, 16 Feb. 1918 (5 Jamādī al-Avval 1336), IFOA, 48/14(11), 1336/1918.
² Viceroy to I.O., tel. (copy) no. 22, 26 Dec. 1917, secret, FO 371/2982.
³ The reorganisation of the force in Mesopotamia, much more
by the envisaged military policy of the Imperial Government as regards north-east Persia and southern Russia.

The Admiralty displayed less sensitivity in their opinion. To them, nothing was more important than Persia's oil and in order to ensure full security in the south, they even pressed for the acquisition of the lease of Persia's principal islands in the Gulf, notably Khishm. They considered that:

"... the world supply of oil is such that the question of the control of the Persian oil field has assumed great importance and should possibly now be regarded as the determining factor in matters which have hitherto been regarded as primarily of diplomatic and political significance." ¹

The decision of His Majesty's Government to "secure the fullest practicable control over the whole of the country comprised within the D'Arcy Concession," they believed, should not be deflected by the ephemeral political movements in Tehran. ²

The importance of oil was never denied in any quarter but some

than one division, in preparation for the advance on Baghdad, had necessitated extensive changes in the organisation of sources of supply. Moreover, fresh demands were created by the development of the port of Basrah and the provision of a large river flotilla for service on the Tigris. In addition to these, road construction and the provision of mechanical transport drives and the laying down of rail-lines in Mesopotamia, southern Persia (50 miles inland from Bushihr to Dālāk) and eastern Persia (the railway was extended during 1917 and 1918 from Quetta to Duzdab on the Persian frontier), were additional strains. The drafts of officers and men despatched by India overseas to replace wastage in the units fighting in France, Gallipoli, Egypt, Mesopotamia, East Africa, and the Cameron, during the war, amounted to about half a million. Despatch from C. Monroe, C-in-C, India, printed in supplement to the London Gazette, no. 31476 of Friday, 25 July 1919, WO 106/56.

¹ Admiralty to F.O., letter, no. M. 20538/17, 4 Dec. 1917, FO 371/2980. The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty argued that demand for petroleum products in the world was increasing and that demand in the United Kingdom would inevitably increase after the war. There were indications that U.S.A. would, in a comparatively short time, cease to export petroleum on the scale they had up to then and this meant that Britain had to develop to the full the large, under-developed field in Persia, ibid.

² Ibid.
Foreign Office officials rightly thought that this was no time to escalate militancy in Persia. Harold Nicolson's comment was that the Admiralty misapprehended the psychological aspect of the Persian situation, while Oliphant thought that their letter, beside being "very nautical in tone", showed a "complete ignorance of the political situation." 

Yet, in the various meetings of the Persian and Mesopotamian Committees of the War Cabinet, in February and March 1918, during which the Foreign Office view tended to predominate, it seemed that Persia was not destined to be offered any real concessions. The objectives of His Majesty's Government in Persia were at last articulated as being, firstly, the maintenance of the genuine neutrality of Persia; secondly, the protection of British interests in Persia, Afghanistan, and neighbouring territories, and lastly, the support of a friendly cabinet, which would definitely co-operate with the British. On the basis of this, the British Government was prepared to consider the withdrawal of her regular troops from central and southern Persia excepting those stationed in the Persian Gulf ports.

This was to be the compensation of a Persian Government "friendly" to the British. Marling had the awkward task of informing the cabinet of Mustaufi al-Mamālik about the introduction of troops into northern Persia. He did this by addressing a letter to them on 11 March in which he first listed all the concessions which the British Government were to offer to Persia but which had so far not met with their

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1 Minute, no. 230677, 5 Dec. 1917, FO 371/2980.
2 Ibid.
3 Meeting of the Persian Committee held in Balfour's room with all members present. 25 Feb. 1918, P. 40527, FO 371/3259; for minutes of this meeting see f. 41145, Ibid.
He then explained that since disorder and lawlessness was rife, and the northern and western provinces were exposed to hostile movements:

"... His Majesty's Government have been reluctantly forced to conclude that they must make themselves responsible for measures of protection against common danger which the Persian Government are either unable or unwilling to adopt."

The points to which British troops were to advance in the north-west depended "upon the steadying influence which the pressure of this detachment will be found to exert and upon the degree of authority exercised by the Persian Government themselves." It was added that this was only a temporary arrangement. The British Government, Marling wrote, was ready to offer financial assistance to a friendly cabinet.

To this, Mustaufi's cabinet replied on 18 March, accepting the "offers" so far made but protesting firmly against the conditions still attached to all other Persian demands. They then denounced the South Persian Rifles as an "Alien" force, whose presence:

"... renewed the sufferings of the last few years and menaced the independence and neutrality of Persia. The Persian Government strongly protests against these actions which are contrary to its expectations and requests that ... the forces may be recalled as soon as possible and the responsibility which falls by right on British authorities on account of the presence of the troops may be avoided."

Marling suggested that the authorities should wait for a change of cabinet. Presumably Churchill was very busy

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1 Marling to Mustaufi al-Mamälih, letter (copy), 11 March 1918, enclosure in copy of Marling's despatch to Balfour, no. 27, 19 Apr. 1918, in F.O. to W.O. no. 138464, WO 106/54.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.
4 Reply of the Iranian Ministry for Foreign Affairs to Marling, letter no. 3400, 18 Mar. 1918 (5 Jamādī al-Sānī), Persian text, IBQA, 48/14(11), 1336/1918.
again. However, the influence of the Milliyün proved the stronger. Samsām al-Saltaneh was asked by the Shah to form a cabinet. This cabinet showed a pronounced hostility toward the British. It proceeded to lend tacit support to anti-British elements everywhere and to foment trouble for the South Persian Rifles. It also declared the abolishment of all treaties made with, and concessions accorded to, Russia, during the past 100 years, and suppressed the Foreign Office tribunal and the Karguzârates, thus abrogating certain judiciary rights which had been accorded to European Powers by treaty. In Fars, the Qashqā'îs broke into a serious revolt against the force. The negotiations over the recognition of the South Persian Rifles thus remained in a state of deadlock through much of the summer. It was with another change in cabinets, in August, and the coming to power of Vüsūgh al-Dauleh, that the negotiations were once more resumed and gradually changed their form to give way to an agreement signed in 1919.

Thus, out of the negotiations over the question of the recognition of the South Persian Rifles, emerged the idea of a uniform force for the whole country and the murmurings of British intentions to withdraw their troops from the south. Both these questions were to have far reaching effects on Persia's internal, politico-military developments. What prolonged the haggling between the two Governments was the changes brought about by the war in internal and external conditions. The key factors affecting negotiations on the British side appear to have been doubts over the outcome of the Russian Revolution and uncertainties over the objectives and effectiveness of the South Persian Rifles, after this. Persian reaction was in turn affected by a revival of hopes for a Turko-German
victory as well as hopes for the start of friendly relations with Russia's new regime. The Foreign Office failed to come to terms with any of the so-called Nationalist cabinets, partly because she mistrusted them and also because she underestimated the pressure of public opinion. Hamilton-Grant, secretary to the Foreign Department, India, was to say later that the impression derived from both Marling's and after him, Sir Percy Cox's correspondence, was that "there is a very real volume of public opinion in Persia which is strong enough to upset governments and without the support of which no prime minister can hold his own very long." 1

It was believed that this volume of opinion was subject to the "ordinary influences", 2 i.e., that it could be bought off and made use of. But part of this opinion was formed and controlled by the very persons who, however weakly, were in control of political power and up to August 1918, at least, could use this as a weapon to resist British demands. Circumstances were more favourable to the Persians during this interlude. Yet, on their side, none of the Persian cabinets appear to have taken their work seriously and shown genuine concern, by probing more deeply into the problems of creating an all-Persian force and strengthening their position. The difficulties were, admittedly, enormous but the lack of individual trust among politicians and the failure to act in unity led to weaknesses and a continuous shift in allegiances. The cabinets of A'lä, Mustaufi, and Samsâm, were considered by extreme Democrats to be composed and headed by men whose

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1 Hamilton Grant, note of own and the Government of India's proposals read at the Eastern Committee meeting of 19 Dec. 1918 (copy), enclosed in U.S.S. India to F.O., F. 150, 31 Dec. 1918, P. 31941, FO 371/3858.
2 Ibid.
political outlook remained encapsulated in the old-fashioned framework of liberal thought. Compared with the cabinets of Farmān Farmā and Sipahdār, however, they certainly fell well within the orbit of the Milliyyūn's camp, especially the person of Mustaufī al-Mamālik, no less his Foreign Minister, Mushāvir al-Mamālik and Mukhbir al-Saltāneh, Mushīr al-Dauleh, among other ministers. Vüsūgh's cabinet in 1917 was considered to stand somewhere between the rightists and the moderate-leftists. The Russian Revolution gave the Democrats scope to come out into the open after their dispersement and weakness following the failures of 1915. However, differences of opinion and policy led to bickerings and sharp splits in the movement. On the whole, it may be held that, apart from a minority group emerging from among them, the Democrats were more noisy than effective during this period and after. It is true that they shaped, influenced, and directed public opinion and were periodically strong enough to upset governments but their chief function, broadly speaking, was limited to preventive tactics rather than constructive action.

The Persians were justified in seeing a contradiction between what the British Government said and what it did. As L. Abraham (Assistant Under-Secretary of State, India Office), was to remark at the War Cabinet meeting of 14 March

1 The leadership of the hizb remained in the hands of those who had gone into exile in Germany, Switzerland, and elsewhere, either at the start of the war or after 1915. The sharpest split to occur during 1917 and 1918 was that between roughly the extreme left, styling themselves the "tashkilāt-e Dimukrāt-hā-ye Zidd-e Tashkīlī" with their organ, Sīthārech-ye Īrān, and the left of centre members who were endeavouring to call elections under Vüsūgh's term in office (1917), to reconvene the 4th National Consultative Assembly. Among the organiser's of this group was Malik al-Shu'ārā' Bahār, who edited at least one of their organs, the Nāv-Bahār. They also controlled the semi-official daily, Īrān. Bahār, Tarīkh-e Mukhtasar-e Ahzāb-e Siāsi, I, 27-28.
1918, "our present policy in Persia offers the Persians nothing." Even Curzon had to admit that he could not "disguise from himself the complete change in the policy of His Majesty's Government by their decision to send British troops into north-west Persia." It was thought, however, that no other course was possible. This they called a "departure" from previously held policy and some among them genuinely believed that Persian neutrality and independence had been frankly respected until then. The shift in policy was more obvious in two respects: firstly, it brought to a halt the British Government's drifting military policy and secondly, whereas in 1916 they had felt the need to obtain the Persian Government's approval, however superficial, for the purpose of introducing troops into Kirman and Fars, in 1918 they proceeded to bring more troops in without even this pretence. By then, however, they probably needed Persian approval far more. But on a more general level, this policy continued to fall confusedly between two different goals; it turned out to be neither a policy of conciliation nor one of absolute or direct control. The Government of India, supported by the new secretary of state, Montagu, saw through this and criticised the Foreign Office for it.

Ironically enough, both the Viceroy and Marling came to adopt similar stands in the face of the Persian problem. Both asked for more leniency toward the nationalists' demands but their conclusions were reached from different standpoints and for different reasons. Whereas Marling wished to weaken

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1 L. Abraham, "Policy in Persia and Transcaucasia", War Cabinet meeting, minute 50294, 14 Mar. 1918, FO 371/3259.
2 Curzon, Persian Committee meeting of 11 Mar. 1918, minute 46807, FO 371/3259.
the Nationalist-Democrat movement by removing their asset, viz., hostility to British interference, the Government of India thought that they could be used as a support and should be supported as a force against anarchy.

India, whose chief anxiety over Persia appears to have been the presence of Imperial Russia, and who regarded the primary objective of the South Persian Rifles as being that of countering Russian motives, could, after the withdrawal of Russian troops, afford to relax her attitude towards Persia. She did show some anxiety about the possibilities of trouble from the Muslim populations of southern Russia but with Mesopotamia, the Gulf shores, the eastern frontier line, and Khurasan secured, she tended to minimise the German threat. This was especially so, when, after July 1918, the initiative on the Western Front passed over to the Allies and in the east, the centre of gravity moved from Mesopotamia to Palastine. But the inauguration of various missions in Persia increased India's commitments and the South Persian Rifles was an additional commitment of doubtful objectives and value.

Meanwhile, during 1917 and 1918, when both the British and Persian Governments marked time in trying to maximise their bargaining powers, the situation became extremely awkward for the British and Persian men of the South Persian Rifles.
Chapter VI

THE FARS RISING AND THE AFTERMATH OF WAR

The non-recognition of the South Persian Rifles and its denouncement as a "foreign" force, had far reaching effects on the situation in Fars which was already acute and potentially explosive. In May 1918, the Qashqā'īs, leading most of the greater or lesser tribes of Fars behind them, declared war on the British and the South Persian Rifles. During the period of active hostility, which lasted until the autumn of 1918, the South Persian Rifles fought for its survival against enemies both from within its own ranks and from without. The highlights of the war were the mutiny of the South Persian Rifles' garrison at Khān-e Zinyān in May; the near-encirclement of the force's Shiraz garrison by the tribes in June and July, and finally, the mutiny of the garrison at Ābādeh. A significant feature of the episode was that there was practically no trouble with the South Persian Rifles' garrison in the city of Kirman and in that province generally. Affairs in Kirman were always far less complicated than in Fars. One of the chief reasons for this was the absence of any powerful unfriendly tribe in the province; at the most, the Afshār, Buchāqchī and Fārsī (Sirjān), the Sarhaddī and Palangī (of the Bam and Narmashīr districts) and the Afshār Amu'ī and Surkhī Arab Khān (of Bardsīr), had given the force
some trouble but the rest remained quiet. Another important factor was that, in contrast to Shiraz and Isfahan, Kirman was relatively less vulnerable to events in Tehran and the outside world; long distances, the poverty of communications, and the fact that Kirman looked toward the east and the Gulf for its trade and commerce, contributed to the semi-isolation of the province from the capital and the more turbulent regions of the country. The Democratic-Nationalist group in Kirman, though at times very noisy, were relatively small in numbers and rather ineffective compared with their counterparts in Shiraz who were able to turn that place into a hot-bed of intrigue and propaganda against the British and the South Persian Rifles. The leading local government representatives in Kirman were sharply split into two camps — that of the governor-general, Nusrat al-Saltaneh and his adviser Ihtishām al-Dauleh Tabātabā'ī, the other led by Sardār Nusrat, one time deputy governor and head of the Naqmieh, who was one of Kirman's wealthiest and powerful notables and commanded a great deal of influence in his own right. The British authorities in Kirman were able to take advantage of the state of rivalry between the two camps to manipulate situations to the advantage of the South Persian Rifles. As a result, the South Persian Rifles in Kirman never really became a target of attack and was never put to

1 W. Fraser, Diaries, entry for 7 Dec. 1917. The Indian regulars were certainly better off in Kirman than they were in Fars. Kirman was more accessible from the coast and it was possible to grant some leave in urgent cases, a thing which had not been possible to effect in Fars. Also, letters and posts reached Kirman more quickly and regularly. In Fars, there were often intervals of six weeks to two months and at one point one of six months, without letters. Parcels were often lost or stolen in transit. E.F. Orton, "Notes on South Persia and Proposals for the Reduction of Expenditure", Shiraz, 14 Dec. 1918, received with Army Dept. memo. no. 268, 7 Jan. 1919, doc. no. 1031, WO 106/55.
any severe test. The ulema in Kirman, too, were so success-
fully bought off after the rebellions of 1915-1916 that even
if a few among them raised a voice in opposition to the
British during the troubles of 1916, it went by unheard in
Fars or elsewhere. Altogether, the men in Kirman suffered
less from sickness, overwork or short-handed conditions.
Besides, due to the reduction in the number of former members
of the Swedish Gendarmerie and the fact that from June to
August the brigade was isolated from the city at a distance
of about three miles, the men being kept in quarantine camps
to avoid cholera, the force remained unaffected by unrest
or sedition. At one point, during July 1918, some landowners
did combine to keep stocks off the market and cause an in-
crease in the price of grain bought by the British for the
force, but this show of resistance, which was in response to
a Central Government directive made through the kārquzārs of
Fars and Kirman, did not cause too much inconvenience to the
force as they could fairly easily replenish from the base at
Bandar Abbas.¹ All these reasons contributed to keep Kirman
quiet. During the summer and autumn of 1916, the rôle of
the Kirman brigade was to act as supplementary support to
the Fars brigade and to send out detachments (especially from
the garrisons at Nairiz and Saʿīdābād) for combined oper-
ations with detachments in Fars against the tribes.

The troubles in Fars were sparked off by a rather
trivial incident which occurred at Khān-e Zinyān. Evidence
on this incident, both from the British and Persian points
of view, is neither adequate nor satisfactory. On 10 May,

¹ C. Skrine (Consul, Kirman), Administrative Report of the
Kerman Consulate for the year 1918, B.M. I.S.209 (printed
report, Delhi, 1920).
some men of the Darrihshūrī tribe of the Qashqā'ī, who, with about ten households of the tribe, had encamped near Khān-e Zinyān (29 miles due west of Shiraz), were arrested by the South Persian Rifles post commander of Khān-e Zinyān on the alleged charge of having stolen two donkeys belonging to the force. The Darrihshūrī chief, Āyaz Kikhā Khān sent in a demand to the officer commanding the post, Captain Will, asking for the release of the men. The demand was refused and sometime between 10 and 11 May, the Darrihshūrī opened fire on the post. On 12 May, a column of South Persian Rifles troops, under Lieutenant Colonel Williams, was despatched to Khān-e Zinyān from Shiraz and caught the Darrihshūrīs in a surprise attack, causing at least fifteen deaths or casualties. The column returned to Shiraz, strengthening the Khān-e Zinyān post from its original 70 men to 140 men. Within the next ten days Saulat al-Dauleh and his followers moved camp from Firūzābād to Khān-e Khābīs (about two or three marches south of Shiraz), while over a thousand Kāzirūnīs moved down the valley into Dasht-e Arjhan and joined by some 300 tufangchīs from Kulūnī, Ābdu'ī, Pirishgat, and some Qashqā'ī, amounting to some 2,000 men, closely invested the post at Khān-e Zinyān. On 21 May, news was received that a small outpost on the Sineh Safīd range, overlooking the pass leading to Dasht-e Arjhan plain (some six miles beyond Khān-e Zinyān), had been attacked and invested. Of the 20 South Persian Rifles holding the post, less than half exchanged fire with the tribes and retired to Khān-e Zinyān while the rest joined the tribes. Soon, the Qashqā'īs, over 3,000 in strength, joined the tribes. Soon, the Qashqā'īs, over 3,000 in strength,
joined by small contingents of Bahārlūs, Burāzjānis, Dashtīs, and local men from Kūhmarreh and Siākh, now collected between Khān-e Zinyān and Deh-Shaikh (a small post between Chinār Rāhdār and Khān-e Zinyān, situated near the head of the Siākh valley), and in the Siākh valley, while the Kāzirūnīs were joined by about 300 more local men from Masjid-e Bardi and Bulvardī. The atmosphere was tense everywhere. In Shiraz, there were agitations and demonstrations led by Democrats and some of the mullas, advertising the fact that the South Persian Rifles had definitely been disowned as a Persian force by the Central Government, and that the British should get out, taking their troops with them. Efforts on the part of Farmān Farmā and Gough to avoid conflict with Saulat al-Dauleh came to nothing and on 23 May, the governor-general received a letter from Saulat declaring that he had decided on fighting and apparently claimed that he was doing so with full backing from the Central Government.¹ In the course of the following days, Āqā Shaikh Abd al-Husain Lārī declared the jihād against the British from Firūzābād and wrote to the Kūhistānīs, Lāshānīs, and the Arabs, to assist in the fight. The Buyir Ahmadī were also encouraged while the Labū Muhammadī (Jabbāre Arab of Khamseh) were reported to have gone over to Saulat.² Military action on a full scale thus began between the forces of the South Persian Rifles and those of the tribes led by the Qashqā'ī.

² Ibid.
Saulat's forces (mostly the 124th Baluch Infantry and the Burma Mounted Rifles) on 24 May, without waiting for sanction from Tehran. The Qashqais and their followers, being spread from Khan-e Zinyan to Deh-Shaikh, were a flank menace to any South Persian Rifles column moving toward Khan-e Zinyan and had to be dealt with first. Orton's column fought a fourteen hour action near Deh-Shaikh against the tribes on 25 May. The tribes were pushed back to Khan-e Khabis, Saulat's camp was shelled and the site was bivouaced by the South Persian Rifles for the night. The South Persian Rifles then advanced south on the morning of the 26th. Saulet fled toward the south-south-east of Deh-Shaikh and the pursuit was called off in view of the troops being needed for a move against Khan-e Zinyan. The casualties among the tribes were heavy and included approximately 200 dead and about 250 wounded. On the South Persian Rifles side, two officers, Major S.M. Bruce (37th Lancers, attached to the 15th Lancers) and Captain H.C. Dobbs (3rd Battalion, 124th Baluchistan Infantry) were killed together with about 50 Indian ranks killed and wounded. The South Persian Rifles claimed a victory against the tribes, but before any relief could reach the post of Khan-e Zinyan, news arrived on 25 May of the mutiny of the South Persian Rifles men at that post resulting in the bloodthirsty murder.

1 On 21 May, Sykes received reinforcement in Shiraz—about 100 men of the Burma Mounted Rifles. The British position at this time became stronger than at any other time, numbering some 2,200 in Shiraz and including the 16th Rajputs, the 124th Baluchis, one squadron 15th Bengal Lancers, 3 squadrons Burma Mounted Rifles (mostly Punjabis), and the 38th Mountain Battery. Sykes claimed that one third of the new arrivals had less than six months' training. In addition to these, there were 200 Indian troops at Abadeh and a platoon at Dihbol. The SFR Persians outnumbered the Indian troops in Shiraz and elsewhere. Sykes, History, II, p. 503; Sykes, tel. no. 179-260G, 20 Sept. 1918, rec. with Army Dept. Memo no. 14318, dated 23 Oct. 1918, P. 30241, FO 371/3858.

2 Gough, despatch no. 9, op. cit. Cf. Sykes tel. ibid., where he quotes 500 casualties among the Qashqais and in his tel. 30 May 1918, no. 179/53/G to India, quotes 6 to 700 including 200 killed (enclosed in C-in-C (India) to W.O, no. 42547, L/P & S/10/727, 299/1918).
of the two British officers commanding the post, Captain Will and Sergeant Comber. A 700-strong South Persian Rifles detachment arrived too late from Deh-Shaikh. The tribes, however, withdrew from the area and the South Persian Rifles column returned to Shiraz. This constituted the first phase of the Qashqā'īs' war against the South Persian Rifles.

Interpretations on the immediate cause of the war, i.e., the 10 May incident at Khan-e Zinyān vary. Sykes maintained that the "attack" on the South Persian Rifles post there was "premeditated". He believed that the Central Government was largely responsible for Saulat's "deliberate" war and cited Mukhbir al-Saltaneh as the chief culprit in the plot to destroy the South Persian Rifles. His theory was that early in 1918, Saulat al-Dauleh's plans were to alarm the British into buying him off with a large subsidy so that he would be placed in charge of the Bushihr-Shiraz road alone and that other highly placed Persian officers had arranged to share in the spoils. By the beginning of May, however, Sykes maintained that Saulat and Nāsir al-Dīvān Kāzirūnī received orders from the Centre to destroy the South Persian Rifles. According to the plans, the Chāh-Haqqīs and Labū Muhammadīs, and Lāshanīs were to begin the attack on the Nairiz and Sa'īdābād posts while Saulat and the Kāzirūnīs planned to move via Khan-e Zinyān to attack Shiraz; the Sarhadd village Qashqā'īs were to attack the Dīhbīd-Ābādēh road and the Bahārlū were to close the road from Bandar Abbas thus ensuring the encirclement and, hopefully, the extermination of the South Persian Rifles, at least in Fars. Examples

1 Sykes to C-in-C., Desp. no. 9, "Report on the Operations of the S.P.R., May-July 1918", confidential, no. 643-4-1-A (Diary no. 66188), 27 July 1918, WO 106/941.
of hostility where Sykes detected the Central Government's hand in them were firstly, the raids of the Mashadi Jānī Khān Arabs on the Yazd-Anar road in January 1918 and those of the same tribe, the Chahārrāhīs and Chāh-Haqqīs in the neighbourhood of Nairīz. Secondly, the fact that the Kārquzar received instructions to draw up claims for compensation in all cases where the British had destroyed property, and thirdly, Sykes's conviction that the desertion of men from the South Persian Rifles from January onwards, which had increased, were in their nature "political and anti-British".

It was on the basis of this theory that Sykes decided to act before the tribes had time to take to the field. So it was, that between 8 and 16 May, a South Persian Rifles column, 1,000 strong, moved against the Mashadi Jānī Khān of the Hirāt-e Khurreh district (60 miles north of Nairīz); the Chāh-Haqqīs who had three of their forts razed to the ground; the Labū Muhammadīs encamped at Burū, were surprised and disarmed and the camp of Saham Ashā'īr at Chināvar destroyed; and finally, an attack was made on the Chahārrāhī and the Mullā Qurbān of Sarchahān. It was while

1 The claims were extensive and included such things as "blood" money and compensation for the various operations undertaken by the SPR or Indian troops against the inhabitants of the south; for the motor car service controlled by the British military authorities of the Sīstān and Khurāsān road carrying mails, passengers and merchandise, and causing a loss of revenue to the Persian Government; for the moral and material losses suffered by the Persians generally. Marling to Balfour, letter (copy) no. 42, 2 Apr. 1918, WO 106/55.

2 Sykes, Notes from War Diaries, Part DVII, SPR, Persia, April-July 1918, entry for 20 Apr. 1918, reports showed that the twelve men (six of them northerners) who deserted this day left a letter behind, apparently "taunting those who were selling their country to the British", ibid., WO 106/940.

3 The casualties on the side of the tribes were altogether about 200 with between 27 and 50 dead and about 57 taken prisoner. 500 looted livestock was recovered from the Chahārrāhī. The SPR lost 7 killed and 3 wounded. Marling to F.O. no. 420 (R), 17 May 1918, F299, military, L/P & S/10/727, 299, 1918, and "Operations against Herati-Khurreh and Chahar-Rahi Tribesmen, May 8th-16th, 1918", appendix 1 to Eastern Committee Conference, 4 June 1918, no. 5056, L/R & S/10/727, 299, 1918.
these operations were being conducted that the South Persian Rifles inflicted their attack on the Darrihshūrī at Khān-e Zinyān.

Sykes's analysis of the causes leading to the outbreak of hostilities, notably his notion of the "premeditated" nature of the Darrihshūrī's "attack" on the post at Khān-e Zinyān, besides being too simplistic, is open to doubt. There is little doubt that the action of the Central Government in not recognising the South Persian Rifles was a major factor in intensifying anti-British feeling. Similarly, the failure or reluctance of Samsām al-Saltaneh's cabinet to take any effective action in preventing the revolts, helped to prolong hostilities. It is also quite probable that democrats in Tehran and Shiraz were in touch with each other and possibly also with Saulat. However, there is less evidence to prove the existence of a premeditated, carefully worked out military plan on the part of the Qashqā'ī and other tribes to destroy the South Persian Rifles. It may be suggested

1 His evidence included an "intercepted" letter from the Ra'īs-e Māleleh (head of the revenue department) at Nairīz, a "noted Democrat", to Mukbir al-Saltaneh, acknowledging the latter's instructions for the planned attack of the Chāh-Haqqīs and Labū Muhammādīs on Nairīz and Sa'īdābād. Sykes does not quote in full either from this or his other sources but admits to actually having seen some of Saulat's letters to his supporters (Sykes, History, II, p. 502). At another point, he states that Mīrzā Abd al-Rahīm, the newly appointed officer of Justice, a "notorious Democrat", was "bringing verbal and written instructions from Mukbir al-Saltaneh to Shiraz. There were also, apparently, "reports" that Saulat was writing to friends of his in Shiraz saying that "he had no quarrel with the British but was being urged from Tehran to fight them." For the rest, Sykes relies on somewhat brittle, second and third hand information derived from extracts from the belated diaries and reports of the officers commanding at Bandar Abbas and Tārūm, who in turn base their evidence on "rumours", on nameless "reliable agents" and "a sayyid who came round begging", telling that Saulat's rising was based "on orders . . . from Tehran to place a notice on all gates of the city directing the expulsion of the English and the massacre of those who remained." Sykes to C-in-C., desp. no. 9, no. 643-4-1-A, 27 July, 1918, op. cit.; same to same no. 161-39-G, 10 Sept. 1918, enclosure in IO to FO, inter-dept. letter, 22 Jan. 1919, P. 13066, FO 371/3858.
that Sykes played some part in prompting military action and
provoking the Qashqā'īs to fight, chiefly because he thought
it a good moment to punish Saulat in one speedy, heavy blow
and reduce his power once and for all. For, there is strong
doubt as to whether Saulat was intent on war prior to the
Khān-e Zīnyān episode, and whether indeed, this episode in
itself, was in any way a pre-planned plot.

The ingredients for an outbreak of hostilities
against the British were already present and had been steadily
building up throughout the previous months. At the outset,
the causes of the 1918 revolt paralleled those which led to
the troubles of late 1916-1917 at Kāzirūn and Shiraz—there
was the usual distress caused by chronic economic poverty,
famine, and high prices; there was tension between Farmān
Farmān and Saulat al-Dauleh; some degree of German influence
(Wassnuss having maintained his influence among the southern
tribes was very active again) and hopes of German victory,
especially as things were going well on the Western front for
the Central Powers between spring and July 1918. Lastly,
there was an element of patriotic fervour on the part of a
large number of Persians, who simply wished to see their
country free from all foreign interference. The new factor
this time, however, was that the whole situation was governed,
on the one hand, by the attitude of the Central Government
and on the other, by rising fears and uncertainty among local
tribes, especially the Qashqā'ī, as to the motives of the
British controlling a now much more strengthened force of
the South Persian Rifles.

Sykes is right in beginning his analysis with Saulat
as a problem, but his interpretation lacks body and is too
one-sided. The roots of Saulat's *casus belli* may indeed be traced back to the preliminary attempts on the part of the British to come to terms with him, viz. the agreement of May 1917, which more or less limited the circumference of the South Persian Rifles' sphere of control to the country lying to eastern Fars and north of Shiraz while the western regions running to Kázirún and then southward to the coast were made the responsibility of the Qashqâ'i, financed in part by the British authorities in Shiraz. It was to last for three months with a view to renewing it if all went well. Whether this was considered a temporary expedient at the time to keep Saulat quiet because the South Persian Rifles was in a weak disposition, or whether Sykes and Gough genuinely intended to compromise Saulat on a more or less permanent basis, is another question. Possibly both considerations were taken into account. The nature of the agreement itself set limits to the desirability of prolonging its operation for longer than was deemed necessary. The whole purpose of the South Persian Rifles, one would have thought, was not that it should

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1 According to British sources, Saulat was paid 30,000 tumans for keeping Kázirún quiet, guaranteeing that Násir al-Dívân would be exiled from there for six months, and for turning over to the British authorities one of the most active agitators in the area, a certain Muhammad Rizâ Khân said to be Wassmuss's "chief agent and propagandist". Saulat was also "to receive 5,000 tumans a month to cover the salary of the [new] Governor of Kazerun and the pay of a force of 450 men for policing the road." See "Origin of the Present Disturbances in Fars, and Events in that Province since September 1916" (note prepared by the General Staff, W.O.), secret, 5 June 1918, E.C. 494, Cab 27/27. and Sykes to CGS, no. 179-240, 6 Sept. 1918; Army Dept. Memo, no. 14181 of 19 Oct. 1918, enclosing "Notes on Fars, 1916-1918", P. 3024, FO 371/3858 and WO 106/941. The Persian text of the Agreement does not mention the actual sums involved, see IFOA, 48/27, 1335/1917. Malik Mansûr Qashqâ'i said Saulat did not get the money but some guns and bullets for the *tufanchîls*, interview (personal), Tehran, October 1972. This is in line with what R. Âdamiat writes on the subject in Âdamiat, *Fârs va Jang-o Bain al-Milâl*, p. 346.
establish itself in some corner of Fars and relegate the control of the rest of the province to the powerful tribal chiefs of the locality by means of complicated arrangements and pacts. Ultimately, the South Persian Rifles had to succeed in subjugating Kāzirūn and controlling the road to Bushihr. This may or may not have involved any trespass into Qashqā'ī territory but it would have meant that the right flank of their territory would be blocked by the South Persian Rifles. This helps, incidentally, to explain why Saulat never severed his relations with Nāsir al-Dīvān Kāzirūnī. He seems to have come to some sort of arrangement with Nāsir al-Dīvān as regards his temporary exile from Kāzirūn, as set out in the agreement of 1917. Whatever this arrangement was, Nāsir al-Dīvān kept quiet throughout the rest of 1917.

But even if the agreement is not to be considered as a short-term measure on the part of the British to deal with the various problems which the South Persian Rifles was facing during 1917, its other effects rendered it so. One such important effect was that it damaged, to some degree, relations between Farmān Farmā and the British authorities in Shiraz, while it left Qavām al-Mulk wavering between the two camps. Sykes says that Saulat al-Daulah became the envy of Farmān Farmā now that he was "King of Fars". ¹ Farmān Farmā apparently proceeded to flirt with the Democrats in Shiraz, shifted his usual ultra-friendly attitude toward Gough and Sykes to one of semi-hostility, and even went so far as to denounce Saulat "to the mullahs for having become a British subject!" ² He also protested about the illegitimate nature

² Ibid.
of the agreement to the cabinet of A'lam al-Saltaneh, which was only too ready to make capital out of it. Gough and Sykes, worried at Farmān Farmā's behaviour, persuaded him "to give his adherence to the agreement" and some time later, in July, Farmān Farmā and Saulat did meet to discuss the matter, but it appears that by August relations between the two were no better.

Beside the "envy" and jealousy factor advanced to explain the governor-general's behaviour, other reasons may be considered. The agreement set limits to the degree of control which Farmān Farmā could exercise over Saulat, both on personal and on official grounds, by virtue of his position as governor-general, representing the authority of the Central Government. He apparently insisted that Saulat should receive his pay from the British (for the upkeep of tufangchis, etc.) through the governor-general, rather than directly from Gough. In principle, Farmān Farmā was right to insist on this but respect for correct principles and honest loyalty toward the duties of office were not, as a rule, well observed practices on the part of most governors-general. Farmān Farmā (except for a short spell during March and April when recognition was openly refused by the Centre to the South Persian Rifles and the situation looked very unsatisfactory for the British), had always assisted the force and facilitated its establishment in Fars. So there was probably an element of both private and official interest to account for his behaviour and his subsequent reluctance to sign a renewed agreement.

In any case, by the end of August, when the stipulated time limit on the agreement came to an end, Saulat himself refused

Ibid.
to give his signature to renew it unless both the governor-general and Qaväm al-Mulk also placed their signatures on it. He argued that though it was to his own interest to maintain the pact with the South Persian Rifles, he had been so unfairly attacked by "the very people who were responsible for advancing the influence of the British," that, though he had every desire to maintain peace in the south, he would not sign an agreement on his own.¹

The whole matter dragged on into autumn and winter 1917 with a series of somewhat garbled and undecypherable correspondence passing between Saulat and Farmān Farmā and between both of them and the Central Government. To what extent Sykes and Gough were doing their best to maintain the alliance with Saulat at this point is not clear. It appears though that the idea of renewing the agreement was more or less abandoned after November when Sykes left Shiraz to tour through South Persian Rifles country on his way to Bandar Abbas and India. What becomes fairly noticeable then is the closer ties which were being established with Qaväm al-Mulk and certainly, after the end of April 1918, with

¹ Sykes, op. cit. Quoted in the Kārguzār's letter from Shiraz, no. 1071, 31 July 1917 (11 Shavvāl 1335), serial no. 10162/1015, IFOA, 42/27. Farmān Farmā had apparently urged Saulat to sign promising that he and Qavām would then endorse it. Saulat argued "they want me to sign first and then to accuse me again of having sold my services to the British." Ibid. See this file generally, for correspondence between Saulat, Farmān Farmā, and others, on the subject. Adamlat holds the view that the British had no intention of renewing the agreement and that Saulat did not pursue the matter because they broke one clause relating to a promise that they would not increase the strength of the SFR, but in autumn 1917 he heard that they intended to do so and protested to Sykes, so relations deteriorated because the Qashqā'īs felt threatened. Adamlat, Fars va Jang-e Bain al-Milal, pp. 345-349 and chapters VI-VIII. The agreement, unless more than one version existed, had no clause to the above effect though clause nine set down that Sykes and Gough promised to consider carefully any suggestions made by Saulat concerning the affairs of the Qashqā'ī and not to interfere in their management of these affairs by Saulat, copy of text, 10162/1015, IFOA, 48/27.
Farmān Farmā and the adoption of a more militant outlook on the part of Sykes, on his return from India to Shiraz in January 1918.

The dispute over the agreement and the breakdown in negotiations thus caused the alienation of the Qashqā'ī chief from the British and Persian authorities in Shiraz at a time when other, lesser tribes, were feeling disgruntled because of the rough handling they had received from the South Persian Rifles for their robberies. It also came amid rumours that the British were bringing in many more troops into Fars and were intent on crushing the power of some of the tribes once and for all.

British sources blame Saulat for not trying hard enough to implement the clauses of the agreement because "at heart he was anti-British." But Saulat did comply with the principal demands of the agreement; the Qashqā'ī did not give any trouble to the South Persian Rifles during the summer and autumn of 1917. Nor indeed after that, though it may be that with their spring migration to the uplands of Fars, some of their tribes revived their petty raids and robberies. No adequate proof was ever provided by Sykes or Gough that Saulat never intended to keep to the agreement, except that he did not turn over Muhammad Rizā to them and allowed Nāsir al-Dīvān to drift back to Kāzīrūn after some three or four months. Even so, there was no trouble from Nāsir al-Dīvān either during this period. Saulat may or may not have been at heart anti-British but evidence supports the case that it was not in Saulat's interest to fall out with the British and that he himself was well aware of this. It may be suggested, on 1

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the other hand, that the experience taught the British authori-
ties that they could not risk worsening relations with
their friends, Farmān Farmā and Qavām, at the expense of the
Qashqā'ī. The outbreak of hostilities with Saulat, therefore,
can be viewed in the light of the failure on the part of
Gough and Sykes to find any peacable solution to the problem
of satisfying the interests both of their friends in Shiraz
and of Saulat. By spring 1918, moreover, the position of
the South Persian Rifles vis-à-vis Saulat was stronger than
it had ever been previously. The alienation of Saulat implied
potential trouble. This, together with conditions as affected
by the Centre's hostility, probably convinced Sykes that it
was better to strike at the Qashqā'īs quickly. The situation
also made him think, by choice, chance, or facts, as they
may have been, that every move by the tribes was part of a
premeditated conspiratorial plot to destroy the South Persian
Rifles. But this too may be questioned.

The Darrihshūris were clearly following their
migration route northwards and a number of their households
put up camp near the post.1 The presence of women, children,
and flocks, weakens the case in support of the idea of a
"planned" tribal attack. Moreover, it is not clear whether
the Darrihshūrī even did steal or intend to steal the two
South Persian Rifles' donkeys grazing nearby. One report had
it that it was one of their kadkhudās who actually came for-
ward to bring in the donkeys and was then promptly arrested.2
Another version of the episode is that the South Persian
Rifles commanders took in some Darrihshūrī women along with

1 Malik Mansūr Qashqā'ī, youngest son of Saulat al-Daulch,
interview (personal), Tehran, Oct. 1972, quotes ten households.
2 Gough, desp. no. 9, July 22, 1918, doc. no. 4775, WO 106/55.
the men and this was the real cause of the Darrihshūrī's fury. Furthermore, if it was simply a case of robbery, the British officers ought to have come to some arrangement with one of several kadkhudās present or should, at least, have responded more tactfully to the requests of Āyāz Kīkāhā, who was no small figure to bluntly ignore. Then again, Sykes maintained that the Darrihshūrī "attacked" the post while it seems that they simply fired some shots at it. It was indeed the Darrihshūrī who felt wounded and provoked. It is not clear from British sources whether women and children were among those killed during the attack of Williams's column on the 12th. The Persians maintained that they did, and in any case rumour had it that they did and that their bodies were taken to Saulat's camp where "Saulat's wife took an oath that she would divorce him unless he took up arms to avenge the death of these women and children." Reports generally told of Saulat's reluctance to begin military action but that he was being egged on by the women and the hotheads of this tribe. Saulat wrote to the mujtahids of Shiraz and Firūzābād and to the authorities in Shiraz, maintaining that it was not the Qashqā'ī who had been the aggressors so far. He was still prepared to restrain his men provided the British left the Qashqā'īs, their interests, and territory, alone. This appears to have been his chief concern throughout.

The Democrats in Shiraz, encouraged by events in

1 Malik Mansūr, interview, Tehran, 1972; Ādamiat, Fārs va Jang-e bān al-Mīlāl, pp. 247-396, gives a very involved account of the episode but implies that the British were the aggressors.
Tehran, intensified their propaganda and opposition to the South Persian Rifles. Their meetings became more frequent and open and among the more fiery spokesmen were Häjjī Mīrzā Muhammad Bāqīr Dastghaib and Saiyyid Javād Muḥaqiq. Around them gathered the group of ex-gendarmerie men who had been dismissed during 1917 and early 1918 from the South Persian Rifles for their suspected anti-British stance. The practice of dismissal had been earlier criticised by the press with comments such as:

"... they [the British] are dismissing former members of the Gendarmerie in the force and are instead recruiting beggars and peasants who have suffered from the very famine which the English have themselves brought about."

During April, the extreme Democrats and Nationalists were obviously jubilant at the idea that the Central Government had openly adopted an anti-South Persian Rifles line and was resisting British pressures to accept the force. But opinion as to what should be done in view of this situation was not altogether unanimous. The ʿashrāf, aʿlām, and the greater percentage of influential landowners and conservative faction of Shiraz society, feared extreme actions of any nature and believed that this might lead to a renewal of the revolts experienced in 1915 and 1916. The general consensus of moderate opinion, however, from among the ulema, tujjār, local government officials and other classes of "freedom-seekers" though encouraged by the situation, believed that effective opposition to the British could only be possible if the Persian Government was to be positively assisted by the Germans. Otherwise, there were no real grounds for success against the British and another failure, like that of 1915-1916 would

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1 Abd-Allāh, Shirāz Kārgūzārī, Report no. 1062, 10 Apr. 1918 (28 Jamādī al-Sānī), IFOA, 48/14(1), 1336/1918.
result in another cabinet "like that of Sipahsālār-e A'zam, in which case no-one could entertain any hopes for Iran."

But tension continued to rise. There was, above all, great indignation at the execution of some deserters from the force. Adverse propaganda had already affected the rank and file of the force at the turn of the year and from January 1918 onward, desertions became more frequent.

The Persian ranks of the South Persian Rifles found themselves increasingly under heavy strain. Up to April, it had been generally understood by them that the South Persian Rifles had been semi-officially recognised and that the Persian Government was negotiating the future organisation of the force with the British. After news reached Fars that the Centre had officially denounced the force (on 18 March) as a non-Persian one and refused to have anything to do with it, the position of the men in the South Persian Rifles became hard to define and their loyalty was put to a severe test.

In April, the assistant to the Kārguzār at Shiraz had passed through the posts along the Shiraz-Isfahan road, on his way to Tehran, spreading a lot of anti-South Persian Rifles propaganda and adding that the British were suppressing all news from reaching Shiraz and the men in the force, and prevented the publication of Mustauffī al-Mamālik's note of 18 March to Marling. Tension began to rise at it became noticeable that people were keeping away from the force and that even Fārmān Fārmā was markedly hedging Sykes and Gough.¹

¹ Gough was understanding as regards the difficulties which the governor-general was having at this time in his dealings with the British but Sykes thought that since Fārmān Fārmā "was being paid by us . . . he should have helped more than he did." He was apparently asked to help to supply transport to meet the reinforcements then on their way up from Bandar Abbas, but he did not and subsequently 500 animals were stolen from the convoy. Sykes, no. 179-240, 6 Sept. 1918, WO 106/940.
There was more alarm when it was noticed that the consul in Isfahan was sending in new batches of recruits from Isfahan to headquarters, Shiraz; that more troop reinforcement had landed at Bandar Abbas and was moving toward Shiraz; and above all, that the South Persian Rifles Supply and Transport section had been furiously buying up stocks and foodstuff filling up the South Persian Rifles' stores. All these were positive signs to Persian onlookers that the South Persian Rifles was either guarding itself against anticipated trouble or was preparing and strengthening itself to annihilate its adversaries and exert its complete domination over southern Persia.

The Persian ranks were obviously disturbed by the attitude of the Central Government. They could not even have any assurance from the British as to what would happen to "those who had thrown in their lot with the SPR and thus made enemies with a large section of their own people." A few of the officers, whose pro-British proclivities were well known, were particularly disturbed and the men generally argued that "they had no profession to fall back on if they were to..."
leave the force... [and that] the alternative to leaving the force, for many of them, was a return to existence at below subsistence level.\textsuperscript{1} This kind of strain became more acute after the mobilisation of the force against Saulat at Khân-e Khabis. The mullahs began preaching the jihâd and cursing all who served the British; Persian servants were reported to be leaving the force daily all over Fars; pamphlets and sheets were being distributed ordering people to loot houses and property belonging to the South Persian Rifles and to all civilians who had helped the British; the rank and file were being molested and jeered at by people everywhere.\textsuperscript{2}

On 21 April 1918, twelve men deserted from the Dihbîd post and then increasingly, especially in April and May there were more desertions, usually in groups of 12-15 from Ābâdeh, Dihbîd, Saʻīdābād, Qadrābād, Bāft, Zarghūn (Zargān), and other places. What increased public outcry was the execution by firing squad of some of the deserters (notably six of the ones caught after deserting their post on 21 April) without trial. This was carried out in Isfahan on 24 April by the consul, Haig, on the orders of Sykes, the men having been caught in the Isfahan district. The South Persian Rifles had given itself special plenary powers to punish deserters without trial. Even Marling admitted in writing that the execution of these six, without trial, was "too severe a punishment" and that British authorities should use their plenary powers with great discretion.\textsuperscript{3} Besides,

\textsuperscript{1} Abd-Allâh, Shiraz Kârguzârî, tel. no. 1139, 20 Apr. 1918 (9 Rajab 1336), IFOA, 48/14(1), 1336/1918.
\textsuperscript{2} Sykes, "Notes from War Diaries", Sept. 1918, entries for 17 and 18 June 1918, WO 106/940.
\textsuperscript{3} The regulations regarding deserters were that if any "are
the executions should never have been carried out in Isfahan, which was neither within the jurisdiction or practical sphere of the South Persian Rifles' operational area. The Kārguzār of Isfahan wrote to the Centre recounting how the local authorities in Isfahan district were assisting the South Persian Rifles runaways on their flight northwards by providing them with civilian clothes and sheltering them from the British. He also pointed out that as regards the executions, there had been no such precedent or any experience like it with the Russians and the Cossack Brigade. So, although the executions carried out at a later stage in Shiraz were preceded by trials, nonetheless their effects advanced ill feeling all the more against the British.

Thus, Sykes seems to have engendered much of the panic by himself by persistently smelling conspiracy in the air, and becoming more bellicose in attitude. Perhaps part of the reason for this was that he was feeling shunned and persecuted by both the British and Persian quarters. Apart from local Persian hostility, he had recently come under heavy captured, officers and any ringleaders among the rank and file should be tried summarily by Officer Commanding Abadeh who will record evidence, briefly, in writing. Guilty ringleaders should be sentenced to death and execution carried out immediately. Remainder of deserters if guilty in lesser degree should be flogged and deported." "Notes from War Diaries", Part DVII, SPR, headquarters, Sept. 1918, diary entry for 21 Apr. 1918, WO 106/940. Up to 5 May 1918, Sykes wrote that out of the total number of mutineers who had surrendered or been captured, one-third had been executed. Ibid., entry for 12 May 1918. The number of men who deserted the force during 1917 and 1918, or indeed the number of those executed, do not appear to have been recorded systematically. Judging from the record of the War Diaries, the minimum numbers who deserted between Jan. and 5 May 1918 were between 150 and 200, and many more by October 1918. Of these, at least 25 were executed.

1 Asad-Allāh, Isfahan Kārguzār, tel. no. 1171, 26 Apr. 1918 (10 Rajab 1336), IFOA, 48/14(2), 1336/918.
2 Isfahan Kārguzār, tel. no. 1397, 27 May 1918, IFOA, 48/14(2), 1336/1918.
criticism from the viceroy and now relations between him and Gough, as also with Marling, were severely strained. He had reacted strongly to Marling's instructions in the previous June, that he should steer clear of political decisions concerning the operations of the force. He argued that this was in direct opposition to what was laid down for a General Officer in command of a force in the field, in time of war. Furthermore, he complained that not only the minister in Tehran complicated the task of the South Persian Rifles by formulating policy affecting it without consulting Sykes and his staff but that the political authorities in Shiraz (meaning Gough especially) worked behind his back with the governor-general and upset the work of Sykes and his staff by meddling in South Persian Rifles affairs or by not taking necessary political measures urged by Sykes, at the right time.

Sykes sent a rather provocative letter to the Qashqā'ī chief some time in May without first consulting or showing it to Gough, in which he had warned Saulat that the South Persian Rifles had plenty of guns and ammunition to deal with any hostile moves from the direction of the Qashqā'ī.

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1 Sykes to Marling, tel. no. 179-203-G, 3 Aug. 1918, received with Army Dept. Memo. no. 1108, 17 Aug. 1918, doc. no. 4775, WO 106/55.

2 Sykes to CGS, no. 179-49-G, 29 May 1918; Sykes to CGS, no. 292-40-G, military, 26 May 1918; same to same, Confidential Memorandum, no. 179-143-G, 3 July 1918, L/P & S/10/727, 299, 1918. The principal point of disagreement between Sykes and Gough after 25 May was over the policy to be pursued toward breaking the Qashqā'ī's power. Gough claims that if it was not for his own and Farman Farma's efforts, the loyalty of Qāvām al-Mulk would not have been secured. Sykes seems to have believed that it was more important to have won over some of the leading Qashqā'īs (especially those who normally did not get on with the Ill-Khān, like Muhammad Ali Khān Kashkulī) and weakened Saulat's leadership as quickly as possible. Though this did take place ultimately, Sykes thought that Gough and Farman Farma should have used their political power sooner than they did. Gough argued the implementation of this policy could not have taken place or been carried out sooner than it was. Ibid., and Gough, desp. no. 9, 22 July 1918, WO 106/55.
Gough tried to ease the situation by addressing another letter to the İll-Khān giving him gentler warnings but emphasizing that the British had no quarrel with him and that their only wish was to preserve peace and order in Southern Persia.¹

It was also significant that Sykes did not despatch a political officer to accompany the column which marched against the Darrihshūrī on 12 May to Khān-e Zinyān, nor that "any political assistance was invited."² Gough regretted this and stated that "it is almost certain that such a trivial incident could have been settled without recourse to punitive measures."

In Gough's words:

"... it was, however, apparently considered a favourable moment for putting a check on the ambitions of the Soulat, and that the punishment of the tribe would prove an easy affair."³

On the part of Saulat, even after his first confrontation with the South Persian Rifles, he maintained that the Qashqā'īs had not been the aggressors and that even after the Darrihshūrīs had been struck, he had restrained his tribesmen until they had again been attacked by the South Persian Rifles on 25 May. Even so, he was prepared to come to terms with the British and the South Persian Rifles.⁴ But by then, events

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¹ Gough, desp. no. 9, 22 July 1918, paraphrases Sykes's letter but does not reproduce it in full. His own letter to Saulat, dated 18 May 1918, is attached to the above despatch; see also Adamiat, Fars va Jang-e Bain al-Milal, p. 349.

² Gough, op. cit.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Saulat's propositions prompted a series of correspondence between Tehran, India, and Shiraz, as regards the future position and status of the SPR and as to the nature of support which should be given to it in the meantime. Saulat said that if the British could give him assurance that Qashqā'ī interests and territory would not be interfered with, he would, in return, guarantee to keep his tribes in order and maintain order on the roads which passed through his territory. But if his offer was rejected, his tribe would fight it out to the end. If this had been agreed to it would have really limited the sphere of the SPR's area of command in Fars and Marling wondered if the bargain would involve the disbandment of the SPR. Gough sensibly
were too far gone. So, it was decided to opt for the policy of maintaining the lines of communication open with Saulat as long as possible, in order to gain time and place the force on a strong offensive/defensive footing.

To ensure the loyalty of the men, they were given the choice of resigning or remaining with the force to the end of the war, receiving as compensation a bonus of two month's pay. A few resigned and those who stayed were made to solemnly swear loyalty to the South Persian Rifles and their British officers. A stern proclamation, rather medieval in tone, was then read out to the men warning of the consequences of any mutiny and citing those punishments by death meted out to the men of the 3rd cavalry at Ābādeh who had deserted. It continued:

"... such men are vile and despicable traitors and are not fit to live ... in future he that shall desert from the S.P.R. with his rifle and ammunition, or anything that is the property of the Government, and break his oath of allegiance, will run the risk of the same fate overtaking him, and be shot to death in the same way ... Work steadfastly and loyally --be loyal to the S.P.R. and your country--be warned against all evil-seeking men who may poison your minds and lead you to ruin and death."

Among the other security measures were those of placing all machine guns, guns, and spare ammunition, in the hands of Indian and British ranks; taking over and controlling all available transport as far as possible, especially that believed that it need not but that the force could be largely reduced in numbers and organised in such a manner "as to secure popular approval." Sykes and his staff, who were in the first instance offended at Marling and Gough's correspondence on the SPR, without reference to themselves, were firmly against any talk or idea of disbandment. Gough, desp. no. 9, 22 July 1918, op. cit. Marling to Viceroy, tel. no. 746, 27 Aug. 1918; Sykes to CGS, tel. 179-G, 7 June, enclosed in Hamilton-Grant to I.O., desp. no. 68, 6 Sept. 1918, 30 Oct. 1918, doc. 4775, WO 106/55.

1 Appendix no. 1 to "Notes from War Diaries," Part DVII, SPR, 8 April-13 July 1918, serial no. 38, printed and confidential, WO 106/939, entry for 31 May 1918.
running from and securing as much supplies as possible. The supply problem caused much anxiety; the force could just about stretch its rations to last for three months but at one point Sykes thought that the mounted troops might have to be sent away and their horses killed,¹ a thing to which Gough strongly objected. Incoming news was severely censored and controlled by the governor-general and at some crucial points, when authority from the Centre was urgently required for certain political measures affecting the course of the war, such as the occupation of certain strategic positions in the town or entering into pacts and agreements with various tribal chiefs, the telegraph lines to Tehran were conveniently cut with the co-operation of the governor-general. In practical terms, during the course of fighting, Shiraz and the road running to Isfahan as far as Ābādeh, were cut off from the north. During May and the following months, the force at Bushihr was also increased with two more battalions from India, bringing its strength up to over 10,000 fighting troops. But owing to the roads being blocked by the tribes, no support could reach Sykes at Shiraz until some time in October, when it was expected to start the expedition against Kāzirūn from this position. More troops were being earmarked for Bandar Abbas, to reinforce the Shiraz garrison from this place.

Apart from military measures taken at Shiraz and elsewhere, attempts were immediately taken to secure the loyalty of Qavām al-Mulk and prevent the Khamseh and its myriads of sub-factions joining the Qashqāʾī, likewise to stop the Mamasani from linking up with Saulat. Relations were also opened in due course with Muhammad Ali Khān Kashkulī and Sardār Ihtishām.

¹ Ibid.
The second phase of the war with Saulat, probably the most dangerous for the South Persian Rifles, was the investment of the force in Shiraz by the tribes during June and July. Most of the actions were fought within ten miles of Shiraz to the west, in the upper part of the Shiraz valley which lies roughly within the triangle Chinār Rāhdār, Ahmadābād, and Bulvārdī. The strength of the Indian columns in and around Shiraz, left little margin for the formation of offensive columns. Moreover, the uncertain loyalty of the Persian recruits in many ways paralysed the South Persian Rifles' striking force. So, the circumference of the force's operational line grew smaller and smaller, as one outpost line after another was withdrawn. Finally, the South Persian Rifles concentrated its position in a cantonment behind the perimeter of this belt of walled gardens to the north-west of Shiraz. The consulate and telegraph office were situated in this cantonment and civilians such as the Imperial Bank officials and other British residents also lodged themselves there.

The walled gardens and high, dense vineyards of Jinat and Kūshān played an important part in many of the actions. Throughout June and July, the tribes kept creeping up to the enclosures, where skirmishes would occur with South Persian Rifles' troops, who would push them back along their lines of retreat towards the foothills of the Kūh-e Barfī. This operation continued relentlessly throughout the month of June and early July by which time, excepting for the mutiny

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First from Chinār Rāhdār (7 miles from Shiraz), then to the Bāgh-e Jinat (5 miles west of Shiraz) and Bāgh-e Nāvāb, Gulshan and Affīfābād (or Khushk-e Qavāmī)—most of these gardens belonging to the Qavām family.
at Ābādeh, the situation in Shiraz began to improve. But the situation was fraught with danger during June when there was great excitement and agitation in the city with placards going up everywhere calling on the people to join the "national army" (i.e., Saulat's forces) and Saulat was bringing great pressure on Qavām al-Mulk and tempting Farmān Farmā, to link forces with him. On 15 June the bāzar and shops closed and people flocked into the streets and mosques to join or watch anti-British demonstrations. The mulla and ākhunds played a prominent rôle in inciting anti-British sentiment from their pulpits and on the streets, leading processions. One such mulla was even seen to have climbed to the top of a tree during the attack of the Qashqā'ī on Afifābād (14 June), haranguing the tribes in a loud voice. The governor-general's own troops and the Indian troops were particular targets for mob molestation and insults.

The city suffered a lot. On top of scarcity and instability, there was additional hardship when the tribes cut off the main irrigation water supplies to Shiraz, stopping nearly all the mills from working. The South Persian Rifles had no water problem because there were sufficient wells in their cantonment, but both the force and the inhabitants went short of flour as it could not be ground in adequate quantity.

1 Of the more important actions against Saulat's forces were the actions fought at Bāgh-e Jīnat and Kīshān (11 and 16 June, E.F. Orton commanding); at the post of Afifābād (13-14 June, Major B.F. Garrat commanding); at Ahmadābād (16 June, E.F. Orton commanding); at Muhammadīeh (22 June, Orton again); and at Buīvardī (27 June and 7-9 July, Orton in charge). War Diaries, desp. no. 9, 27 July 1918 (Dy. no. 66188), WO 106/941 and Sykes to CGS, no. 179-95-G, 11 May 1918, IO, L/P KS/10/727 and no. 45884 of 13 May 1918.

2 Gough to Marling, 6 June 1918, enclosed in Marling to F.O., no. 516, 7 June 1918, IO, L/P & S/10/727, 299/1918.
for consumption.¹ In addition to all this, cholera, which had already broken out in the city, began to take a greater toll of the inhabitants and also to hit the South Persian Rifles troops in small numbers.

The biggest onslaught on the South Persian Rifles was expected to take place on 18 June. But on the suggestion of Farmān Farma, the South Persian Rifles and Indian troops occupied three key points in the city (the Madrasseh-ye Khān, the Shāh Chirāgh, and a strong position covering the Kāzirūn Gate). Arrangements were next made to arrest some of the more vocal and influential agitators or democrats. Within the next few days, the bāzār re-opened and with Qavām al-Mulk having taken up residence once again in the Arg, he publicly announced his intention to defend the town against any attack from outside by the forces of Saulat. Fodder and barley began to arrive in the town. The situation in Shiraz showed some improvement. By the first week of July, in effect, despite news that the South Persian Rifles garrisons at Zarqūn (about 26 miles on the Isfahan-Zarqūn road) and at Qavāmābād, had for the most part deserted to the enemy, the scales were beginning to turn against Saulat al-Dauleh and the focus shifted to the north and the road leading to Isfahan. At this point the second stage of the war against the tribes may be said to have ended.

Several factors accounted for the gradual weakening of Saulat's forces and his defeat. Among the most important were the steps taken by the British authorities in Shiraz with

¹ Gough had handed over to the SRR Supply & Transport about 150 tons of wheat and flour which had been received from India for the consumption of the poor of the town. Even then there was a great scarcity of food for the troops and it was at this point that the Staff were discussing whether the mounted troops should be sent away. Gough, desp. no. 9, 22 July 1918, WO 106/55.
their Persian friends to create dissention among tribal chiefs; the debilitating impact of cholera and influenza in the province; news and rumours that the South Persian Rifles was being reinforced in large numbers with troops from Bandar Abbas and the start of military activity from August onward from the direction of Bushihr; the fall of Samsām al-Saltaneh's cabinet in July; and finally, news of victories for the Allies in the west and the end of the Great War itself.

The policy of splitting allegiances and shifting support away from the Iill-Khān, was achieved through a complicated and involved process of negotiations and counter-negotiations, pressure, bribes, and intrigues. These resulted in the investment of Sardār Ihtishām (Ahmad Khān Zaighām al-Dauleh) one of Saulat's half-brothers, as Iill-Khān of the tribe in place of Saulat al-Dauleh and of Sālār Hishmat (Ali Khān), another half-brother of Saulat and a full one of Ihtishām, as Iill-Begī. 1

1 Sardār Ihtishām had been on the British pay-roll ever since the beginning of 1917. He remained in Shiraz and at this point wished to have an assurance (signed by Sykes and Gough) that they would assist him in getting the Iill-Khānsīp. In 1917, Gough had paid him a sum of 200 tumans a month as a "sort of retaining fee" until 24 May when the agreement with Saulat was effected and Gough stopped payments to Ihtishām since it was not compatible with the terms of the agreement. About the beginning of June 1918, payments began again to Sardār Ihtishām, through Farmān Farmā, including arrears. Ihtishām then opened negotiations with Ali Khān Sālār Hishmat to detach him from Saulat. A sum of 200 tumans per month was promised to Ali Khān while Ihtishām's pay increased to 250 tumans plus a written assurance of the Iill-Khānsīp on 22 June. For a while the talks broke down but were resumed again with Qavām acting as mediator. On 2 July a meeting took place between Ali Khān and Muhammad Ali Khān Kashkulī, Qavām and Ihtishām. Agreements were drawn up by which Ihtishām was recognised as Iill-Khān and Ali Khān as Iill-Begī. Thus the anti-Saulat league was formed. A sanad or document confirming the appointments was unofficially presented to the parties concerned by Farmān Farmā. It is not clear how the document endorsing the appointment was obtained from the Central Government. It appears, from British sources, that Marling pushed it through with the assistance of Vusīgh al-Dauleh, who was being backed for the office of Sadr-e Al'zam by the Legation.
The fact that Qavām al-Mulk was bought off at a very early stage contributed much to Saulat's failures. For, had the Arabs been mobilised en masse against the British and the South Persian Rifles, the latter would have had little chance of survival under existing circumstances. Qavām, co-operating with Farmān Farmā, maintained some 2-3000 tufangchīs in Shiraz to keep order, together with the troops of the governor-general who lent some of these troops to the South Persian Rifles for operations in July against Saulat. Qavām was also instrumental in the negotiations which led Saulat's half-brothers and the Kashkulī chief, Muhammad Ali Khan, to break from Saulat. Thus the British and Persian authorities in Shiraz succeeded in detaching first, Sardār Ihtishām, then Ali Khan Sālār-e Hishmat and finally Muhammad Ali Khan Kashkulī from the rest of the hostile tribes, by 3 July. The appointments of the new Ill-Khān and Ill-Begī, were made official on 5 July. Before this date, however, as a result of the dissension of some of the Qashqā'ī khāns and some of Kashkulī, and doubtless the distribution of more money, the Bahārūlū chiefs with 3,000 men left Saulat and joined Qavām on 29 June; on 30 June, a lot of the Darrīshūris under Nasr-Allāh Khan left and joined Muhammad Ali Khan Kashkulī and on the same day Ali Khan Hishmat joined his

but meeting Ahmad Shah's resistance. Samsām al-Saltāneh had been dismissed by the Shah in late June and had refused to resign, but the country was really without a cabinet. This state of affairs existed until Vusūgh al-Daulā had finally formed his cabinet on 7 or 8 August. The power to dismiss and appoint an Ill-Khān was vested in the Central Government and not in the governor-general of Fars or the Qashqā'īs themselves. Gough reported that "Vusūgh could not openly or more quickly," obtain the documents for the British in Shiraz. The whole affair cost high in money, in worsening relations between Sykes and Gough, and in creating more mistrust between the force and the political staff in Shiraz. See Marling to Grey, tel. no. 125, 3 July, 1918, L/P & S/10/727, 299, 1918, and Gough, despatch no. 9, op. cit.
half-brother Ihtishäm with 500 Qashqā'ī followers. At a later stage, between 2 and 15 July, the bulk of the Kāzirūnīs left the Shiraz valley and started for home. Saulat was left with a following of about 1,000 and after a defeat at Chinār Rāhdār at the hands of the South Persian Rifles, reinforced by the forces of the tribal "Allies", on 8 July, he went to Fīrūzābād. His pursuit was left to the Persian forces as it was considered a better tactic if these, rather than the Indian troops followed him into Qashqā'ī country.

All this while, Farmān Farmā had worked hard to detach merchants and mullās from supporting Saulat in Shiraz. This became easier after the British authorities assumed control of political and military affairs in the city on 20 June. The measure of the South Persian Rifles' confidence in their strength and new position may be judged by the decision to execute 14 South Persian Rifles men found guilty after a trial, for taking part in the murder and mutiny at Khān-e Zīnyān.

1 Ādamiat maintains that Nāṣir al-Dīvān was firstly, worried about rumours of troops moving onto Kāzirūn to occupy that place in his absence. Secondly, that he believed the war, in view of the desertion of Saulat's brothers to the other camp, would now degenerate into genocide, which may well have been the aim of the British but was not the original purpose of the Kāzirūnīs and the Qashqā'ī. He had no wish to take part in or to prolong this state of affairs. Ādamiat, op. cit., p. 424.

2 The strength of Saulat's supporters, at its highest, was about 5-6,000, the bulk of whom were made up of the Qashqā'īs, Kāzirūnīs, and contingents from the southern tribes of Dashtī and Tangistān. The average fighting strength of the tribes, for the most part until the end of June, was probably in the region of 3-4,000 after which it shrank, reaching its lowest ebb at the end of July at 500, picking up again to over a thousand in October. Some of the tribes and sub-tribes (affiliated to bigger confederacies or being independent) who (exclusive of the Qashqā'ī, Kāzirūnī, and southern tribes) supported Saulat in the initial phases of the war, were the Labū Muhammadī and Shaibānī (Khāmshēh); the Bahārlū, contingents from the Buyīr Ahmadī (e.g. Mullū Qubādī, Sīsakhtī, Badī'ī); the Lāshānī; Chahār Rāhī; Kūhistānī; Kūlū, Abulvardī, Surkhi. The Mishmast seem not to have been involved; the Mamasānī were prevented from joining him by inducements through Qavām al-Mulk. Information on the above has been compiled from references made to all reports on military operations referred to in this chapter.
This was effected on 6 July. The men of the 5th Infantry, South Persian Rifles, to which unit the "mutineers" belonged, were made to form the firing squad.\footnote{Whether in fact the 14 men executed were active participants in the mutiny is difficult to establish because it is not clear who actually did the killing and at whose instigation, at Khān-e Zīnyān. According to Gough, "enquiries appeared to prove that the garrison of Khān-e Zīnyān murdered...[and] handed over 140 rifles and 60,000 rounds of ammunition to the Kashgālī. Some of the Garrison have not returned but remainder marched in and have all been arrested." Gough to CGS, via Tehran, no. 464 (no. 89), 26 May, LP & S/10/727, 299/1918. Of those arrested, 14 were found to be guilty after their trials. It is not clear how many men returned to Shiraz. Sykes states that Saulat instigated them to mutiny (Sykes, History, II, p. 503). Another version is that it was Muhammad Ibrāhīm Farrāshbāshī of Nāsir al-Dīvān who incited them to overthrow their officers and help the rebels, since he had to pass through Khān-e Zīnyān with a contingent of Kāzirūns to join Saulat at Deh-Shaikh. The men complied and stores of ammunition and rations were given to Farrāshbāshī, who, however, proceeded to strip them of their arms and told them they were now free to go where they pleased. Adamiat, op. cit., pp. 371-378. The return of the "guilty" party to Shiraz and their voluntary surrender to punishment by death, however patriotic they may have been, seems a little odd, especially since some men never returned. Perhaps it was done in ignorance of the situation actually prevailing in Shiraz; perhaps, too, in the hope that they could blame everything on the tribes. Whatever the reasons, their execution was an unpleasant event for the Shirazis, "...people said that on top of misery, starvation and all other misfortunes, the absence of any guardian to protect us now led to this..." Interview: Mr. Murshid Ali Āqā Tanā Khān, Shiraz, 1972. People can still point to the spot where the execution took place, near the Imānzādeh Saiyid Abd-Allāh Vafā, where a petrol station now stands. Adamiat, op. cit., pp. 371-378.\footnote{Gough, despatch no. 9, 22 July 1918, op. cit. Adamiat maintains that on this occasion Farmān Farmā genuinely wished to prevent the executions from being carried out and approached the mullas privately asking them to protest or do something in order that he may have an excuse and bring pressure on the British authorities to reduce the sentences. But the mu'tahids remained quiet. Among those who had apparently}

Surprisingly, there was little or hardly any fanatical protestation on the part of the inhabitants. So successfully had Farmān Farmā brought pressure on the mullas as Gough put it, "i.e., by presents of money," notwithstanding his "constant policy of leniency towards the Democratic leaders," that he did not succeed in reversing their loyalty, even when he tried.\footnote{2}
Other minor reasons which contributed to weaken the rebels' case was that Shiraz landowners had become disenchanted with the war and the Qashqä'ís since, during the pèle-mèle, their harvest stocks and outlying gardens had been looted by peasants or tribes, and several village headmen in outlying villages were reported to have been murdered by the Qashqä'ís. On the 2nd July, Qaväm al-Mulk, in order to secure the loyalty of all his tribe, issued a proclamation that the South Persian Rifles would, in future, only be dealing with robbers on the roads and promised not to enter their tribal territory unless the matter were first put before himself and the governor-general. The Qashqä'í tribe received a proclamation to the same effect.

The third stage of the war was the mutiny at Äbädeh, news of which was received on 8 July in Shiraz. Here, there was mutiny among the men within the ranks, encouraged by outsiders. The strength of the garrison was 14 British officers and two regiments of South Persian Rifles, and three platoons of the 16th Rajputs. Fraser had removed most of the arms and ammunition from the Persians and given them to the Indian troops and had offered all the ranks their discharge. About 20 had apparently accepted but within the next weeks, there were about 26 desertions. The South Persian Rifles men here were mostly ra'vät or agricultural, landless labourers, drawn

received money "from the British", were Ağä Saiyid Ja'far Mazāra'i, Ağä Shaikh Ali Abulvardi, Hājjī Mīrzā Muhammad (son of Mīrzā Hidāyat Allāh), Ağä Shaikh Murtizā, and Ağä Shaikh Ja'far Mahhallātī, who had earlier joined Shaikh Abd al-Husain Lāri in the call for the jihād, and not known for having been bought, also remained silent. Most of the democrat leaders were imprisoned and this may also account for the fact that there was hardly any protest. Another reason may simply be that public executions coming on top of a continuous chain and variety of hard-pressed oppressions, were part of the everyday routine of life for the majority of the people of the country at the time.
from the surrounding agricultural villages. According to Fraser, they had "no fighting instincts [and were therefore] more in the hands of their Persian officers." Fraser also realized how "little hold British really had over the men and how little there was to which they could appeal." By 8 July, when Muhammad Ali Khan Qashqai (cousin of Saulat) and Amir-e Ashir Saulat al-Saltaneh (Saulat's eldest full brother) led the attack on the South Persian Rifles' garrison, some 26 men had already deserted. Of the five Persian officers left, three, considered by Fraser as being above suspicion, were murdered and there were more desertions to the "enemy".

In their attack the Qashqais were assisted by some Bakhtiari from Isfahan. The democrats in Abadeh had been particularly active, conducting a vigorous campaign against the British and the South Persian Rifles, as well as against some local government officials, through their committee. Among the most active agitators were important Iqlidi men, such as Shaikh al-Islam Iqlidi. Others included Muhammad Ali Khan Abbarki, Mirza Abd al-Karim Khan (deputy officer of finance), Mirza Muhammad Khan (head of the Abadeh telegraph office) who kept publishing false reports against the British, Mirza Hasan Khan (member of the Imperial Bank), Shaikh Muhammad Rahim Attar, and Abd-Allah Idrisabd. These men were in league with the Qashqai chiefs and also some senior South Persian Rifles men such as Sultan Muhammad Kizim Shamlu Dabbarzadeh, Latif Khan, Akbar Khan Sauqati, and altogether, they had formed a committee, calling itself the Kumitech-ye

2 Ibid. See also Fraser's diary entries for this period, MECL, D.S. 255.
Nādirī which took over virtual control of Ābādeh. The deputy governor, Attā al-Dauleh, a follower of Farmān Farmā, fled the town but some anglophils like Ibrahim Khan Sūrmaqī Bahādur Dīvān were able to stay on. The Nādirī committee issued orders and proclamations, levied fines on all those suspected of having made a profit out of the South Persian Rifles, collected taxes, and commandeered supplies. The rebel South Persian Rifles men of Ābādeh also organised themselves into a unit calling themselves the 3rd Regiment of the "Gendarmerie Gouvernmentale" and reverted back to Swedish methods of organisation and drill, even using the Swedish trumpet call.¹

The situation was critical since there was not adequate troops to properly deal with the siege of the garrison. They had enough food to keep them going for a month. On 10 July, a relief column under Williams started out from Shiraz to Ābādeh while the consul at Isfahan was asked to assist with any available troops from among government gendarmerie troops and Persian Cossacks. Though some troops were despatched from this place, they arrived after Williams's column which reached Ābādeh through a forced march of 180 miles covered in 169 hours on 17 July and after some fighting with the "enemy", saved the men in the post. About 100 Qashqā'ī and others were reported to have died, including Muhammad Ali who died of cholera. About 50 rebel South Persian Rifles were killed. Prominent members of the Nādirī committee were arrested and taken to Bandar Abbas.

Not least among the factors which weakened the cause of the Qashqā'īs at Ābādeh, creating further desertions

¹ Fraser, Report of the Action at Ābādeh, op. cit.
from their force and quarrels, were the intrigues of the consul, Haig, from Isfahan. He played a trick which, according to himself, is "a stratagem well-known to readers of Oriental history,"\(^1\) by writing a letter to Saulat al-Saltaneh, in which he falsely acknowledged the latter's letter, thanking him for his services in drawing the Qashqai into the trap prepared for them and promised him support for his claims to be Ḥūl-Khān. The letter was made to fall into the hands of Saulat's allies causing quarrels and Saulat al-Saltaneh finally fled from Ābādeh.\(^2\)

The last phases of the war against Saulat al-Dauleh were fought mainly in Fīrūzābād and its surrounding countryside. On 23 July, with about 500 men left with him, he engaged in a long drawn out fight with Persian forces sent against him and lost, fleeing from Fīrūzābād toward the west. His house was looted. The South Persian Rifles sent reinforcements to Fīrūzābād and set up a post there. Anxiety continued to be felt by the British until Saulat was finally defeated by a force of South Persian Rifles (Williams, Orton, and Dyer

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\(^1\) Haig, Papers, ch. IX, 16, MECL.

\(^2\) Haig, on examining some of the Ābādeh SPR mutineers, one of whom said, "I am not guilty. I am not a gendarme," states that though he was convinced that the mutiny was the work of the ex-gendarmes, he was "equally convinced that it was instigated by the Persian government of the day and was but part of a larger scheme for our humiliation" (p. 20). He recounts how he managed to frustrate the intrigues and plans of the younger Bakhtīārī khāns, namely, Murtizā Quli Khān (son of Samsān al-Saltaneh Bakhtīārī) and Shihāb al-Saltaneh (one of the adopted sons of Sardār Muhtasham Bakhtīārī), under instruction from their relatives in Tehran, to drive the English out of Shiraz. Haig succeeded in removing Isfahan from danger before help reached Ābādeh. He corrects Sykes who in his book, "has unfortunately conveyed a wrong impression of the course of events at Isfahan by suggesting that his relief of Ābādeh relieved, also, the situation at Isfahan," and points out that the situation in Isfahan was changed some time before Ābādeh and the detachment of Cossacks under Capt. Balakin arrived a day after this place passed out of danger. Haig, Papers, ch. IX, pp. 16-20, MECL.
commanding) in the Firūzābād valley between 23 and 24 October, after which he gathered his men and made his way to southern Fars to join his tribe.

Thus, influenza among the tribes, the betrayal of his brothers and some of his kalāntars, demoralisation, and humiliation, ensured Saulat's final defeat in the face of superior arms and the accession of a cabinet in Tehran friendly to the British.

The fate of the khāns of southern Fars, who supported the Qashqā'Is to the last, was no better, if not worse. The expedition to Kāzirūn by the Bushihr Expeditionary Force brought their power and resistance to an end.

Preparations for the expedition began in August and during September, British authorities in Bushihr, with the concurrence of the Central Government, opened negotiations with the khāns, giving them assurances of their personal safety and declared that no punitive expedition was contemplated against them provided they allowed the peaceful extension and construction of a light railway through their territory. One of the terms imposed on them was the surrender or expulsion of Wassmuss. The senior khāns refused to co-operate while minor ones made tentative negotiations. The period of active military operations opened on 20 September. General Douglas assumed temporary military and political

1 Wassmuss, who refused to surrender even when the Armistice was proclaimed in November 1918, was finally captured by the British on 25 March with his companion, Oertel, and two Persian servants. They were brought to the British Legation after Cox had asked the Persian authorities for their surrender, were bound and taken to Qazvin by car. Wassmuss escaped again and managed to reach the German Legation at Tehran. He was finally allowed to return to Germany via Baku as a free man, though he encountered numerous difficulties on the way out of Persia and elsewhere. For correspondence on Wassmuss's arrest and departure from Iran, including letters on the subject written by himself to the Spanish Minister in Tehran, who looked after German interests and the Chancellor of the German Legation, see IFOA, serial no. 2475/2477, 66/34, 1337/1919-20. Christopher Sykes, Wassmuss, pp. 229-272.
control of the sphere of operations and the Bushihr Political Resident acted as the political staff. The striking column, under the command of Brigadier General A.M.S. Elsmie, attacked and succeeded in occupying the tribal strongholds of Chughâdak and Ali Changî (about 12 miles from Bushihr) and Lärdeh (8 miles north-east of Burâzjân), where the khâns resisted with some thousand or so followers. Next Châhkütâh and Dâlakî were occupied and by the end of October or the beginning of November, most of the khâns had either died during the attacks, or of influenza, or were arrested and exiled to Najaf and Karbälâ. Their positions as khâns, kadkhûdas, hâkims, etc. were promptly bestowed on "friendly" members of their families or others. These appointments were made by the governor of the Gulf ports and confirmed where necessary by the governor-general of Fars. The light railway reached Burâzjân (28 miles north-east of Bushihr) by 26 November and thence, in rough fashion, it was extended to Dâlakî.

The drive through the formidable Kamârij pass was effected with but little resistance from the Kâzirûnis throughout the winter and Kâzirûn was finally entered on 27 January 1919. On the very same day, a South Persian Rifles column under Lt. Col. Orton, which had started out from Shiraz crossing the Kutal-e Pîr-e Zan, succeeded in occupying Miyân Kutal and moving onto Kâzirûn some time later. By March, before the Bushihr Expeditionary Force withdrew to the coast and then to India (by early summer), the South Persian Rifles assumed control of the road down to Burâzjân while the Gulf garrison protected the remainder of the route to Bushihr.¹

¹ J.A. Douglas to Hamilton-Grant, no. 61-S, 25 Oct. 1918 (copy), P. 30240, FO 371/3658; Viceroy to I.O., no. 13272
Following the successful operations of British troops in Kāzirūn, the South Persian Rifles directed its attention, for the next two years, against powerful bandits and robber-bands in Fars and Isfahan provinces especially. In these operations, notably those carried out in the province of Isfahan and the border regions of the Fars-Isfahan provinces, the South Persian Rifles acted independently or in support of the Persian Gendarmerie force of Isfahan commanded by Major Fazl-Allāh Khān and Sardār-e Jang, and to the expedition of Qavām al-Mulk in eastern Fars for the same purpose. By 1921, when the force was in process of disbandment, the power of the more notorious ringleaders had been considerably reduced or practically eliminated, many of them and their followers being handed over to the Persian local authorities to meet their death or imprisonment.

(copy), 30 Sept. 1918, p. 4251, L/P & S/10/728; see correspondence received with Army Dept. Memos nos. 13820 (11 Oct.), 13932 (14 Oct.), and 14651 (30 Oct. 1918), P. 13066, FO 371/3858; J.H.H. Bill (Deputy Political Resident, Persian Gulf), Administrative Report of the Persian Gulf Political Residency for 1918: Fars and Bushihr, printed, confidential, Bushire, 26 July 1919; J.A. Douglas, "The Bushire-Shiraz Road, 1918-1919", J.R.C.A.S., vol. 10, 1923, pp. 104-116. Nāṣir al-Dīvān and his family fled from Kāzirūn and after some time in prison and under house arrest in Shiraz, where Qavām al-Mulk bore his expenses, he was able to return to Kāzirūn in 1922, when British troops had all been withdrawn from Persia. Saulat al-Dauleh also regained his title as Ill-Khān shortly after the British had left but his power and position was not fated to improve under the new order established by Rizā Shāh. After a period of war and conciliation with the Central Government (after 1926) and one of imprisonment and release, he was finally rearrested in 1933 and died in prison in that year. P. Oberling, The Ashqāl Nomads of Fārs, pp. 153-165.

Mashāllāh Khān Kāshī and Nāyib Husain Khān escaped from Kāshān and surrendered themselves to the authorities in Tehran in August 1919. In September 1919, the former was executed with some 20 of his men. Rizā Juzdānī (or Jauzānī) and Ja'far Qull Khān were captured and met the same fate, and 200 of their supporters from the Qādarjān (Kādarjān) village were imprisoned during summer 1919. Najaf Qull Khān and Ghulām Ali Khān of Shahr-e Bābak and Pāy-Kalleh respectively, Sahām Ashā'īr (Kalāntar of the Labū Muhammadi, summer headquarters in Hirat-e Khurreh and winter near Dārāb), Nāyib Khān, Ali Āqā Khān Mīrzā,
It may be said in conclusion that Saulat's rising was brought about as much by complications in the balance of local power struggles and relationships, aggravated by the presence of the British and the South Persian Rifles, as by the intensification of anti-British feeling unleashed by the non-recognition of the force. Sykes's analysis in so far as it blames much of the trouble on the non-recognition issue, is plausible. But where it falters is in its failure to give a proper assessment and appreciation of the situation as a whole, i.e., how, and in what manner, the issue affected Bahrám Khān and Murād Khān, among other leaders of the robber community stronghold in Farāqeh (a narrow belt of Isfahan territory jutting into Fars province near Abādeh), were also captured or killed by September/October. Punishments were also meted out to, among others, the inhabitants of Faras Khān (the village, south of Kāzirān, was destroyed on 26 June and the kalāntar, Ismā'īl Beg captured), the Fārsī Madān under Masūd Khān; the Dār-e-Shaikhīs, Chinār Rāhdāris, Mamasanī (under Mullā Amir of the Bābār Salān section), the Arārājāni (near Marvast), the Māzinjānī (living in northern Fars, between Dīhbid and Marvast), and the Tītakīs (living in Marvast). E. F. Orton, Report on Minor Military Operations Undertaken from May 1919 to April 1920 by the S.P.R. in South Persia, enclosed in despatch by CGS, Delhi, printed and confidential, 28 June 1920, serial no. 6, WO 106/56 and appendices I-IV to Orton's desp. no. XII, ibid., 30 Oct. 1919, serial no. 16, WO 106/942. The recrudescence of petty raids and robberies in many directions of Fars were largely caused by grievances over the question of taxation and revenue collection. People complained that not only were reductions not allowed for the damage which the recent harvest had received from locusts (in the 27 and some upland valleys), but that officials were demanding ten per cent extra revenue in many instances. Officials in turn, complained that damage and losses were exaggerated but refused to send agents to verify the facts. Qavām al-Mulk collected all he could from his tribesmen but refused to pay in his own share of revenue dues, "alleging that this was more than covered by the cost of collection." This example was followed by some of the minor tribal kalāntars in Fars who were said to have made agreements between themselves to refuse to pay taxes and to share any "booty" they might obtain. The result were that tribesmen in the affected areas were more out of pocket than usual and robberies in many directions increased. During September and October, Qavām al-Mulk, supported by an escort of SPR with arms, succeeded in punishing some of the more troublesome kalāntars of Fasa, Dārāb, etc., and killed, captured, and disarmed, 154 robbers (12 of the ringleaders were hanged by him). This was the first time in three years, according to Orton, that "robbers in South Persia were punished seriously by Persian authorities."
local conditions and in what way it related to the outbreak of hostilities. He places too much emphasis on conspiracy, and the plot which was supposed to have been engineered and ordered by the Central Government. He then proceeds to explain away the raids and robberies of the tribes north of Nairiz, the Khân-e Zinyân episode, and all subsequent events, in the light of this idea. But evidence, inadequate and unsatisfactory as it may be, both from the British and Persian points of view, certainly casts doubt on the premeditated nature of the Khân-e Zinyân episode and events before or immediately after it. It suggests, on the other hand, that Sykes appeared to be bent on action far earlier than May 1918 and that the British military authorities in Shiraz contributed in no small degree, in promoting and provoking the risings. On his part, Saulat decided on war, probably by 22 May, knowing that as a result of dissatisfaction among his and other tribes, and the fact that the Central Government was not effectively trying to prevent anti-British risings and indeed may have wished it, he could defend his position. Once he embarked on the war, he appeared to think of it as very much his own war and strove, as hard as he could, to win Farmān Farmā and Qavām over to his side. He even offered, apparently, to make Farmān Farmā "King of Fars" or "Prince of Southern Iran" if the whole thing were to end successfully. But the unity of the other camp proved to be far more solid than the unity of the Qashqā'īs and the opposition as a whole.

1 See Marling to Balfour, no. 500, 4 June 1918, military EC. 481, Cab. 27/27.
2 Marling to Balfour, no. 512 (K), secret, 6 June 1918, EC 503, Cab. 27/27. The idea appeared to appeal a lot to Farmān Farmā, but naturally enough, could not be considered as a sound project to the British.
Sykes's account is narrow, partial and nebulous, tending to mislead, and failing to account adequately for the intricate complexities at play locally. His reasoning is that of a soldier, endowed with a strong sense of adventure and an imagination which ran wild sometimes. Never does he really present the Persian point of view which significantly at least Gough, among others, tried to give, in his analysis, which took note both of the hostility of the Central Government, of the fears of the Qashqā'ī in losing their freedom to continue their "predatory habits", of the dislike of the South Persian Rifles, and:

"A genuine desire on the part of large numbers of Persians to see their country free from all foreign interference. However much the Persian patriot may be derided, still it is a fact that patriotism does exist in Persia, and that such feelings animate some of our enemies."  

1 The idea of "conspiracy" on the part of the Persians, notably on the part of some of the ex-gendarmerie officers of the SFR had once before engaged Sykes's thoughts in the summer of 1917, when he told Marling that he believed there was a plot to murder him and Col. Frazer-Hunter, when they had come up to Tehran in June. Marling investigated the evidence which Sykes produced but decided against taking any action on account of the evidence being too thin. He believed that "imagination" had had a part in forming Sykes's notion, since at the time, with the activities of the Kumleh-ye Mujāzāt, talk of murder and assassination were everywhere in the air. Marling to F.O., no. 130 (copy), 29 Oct. 1917, enclosed in Branch Memo. doc. no. 203, WO 106/935. The military secretary believed that the "rigmarole" was a "sufficient commentary on his [i.e., Sykes's] methods to make it more desirable than ever to find a good officer to command the S.P.R." Ibid. Saulat's rising, as seen by Chelmsford and the Indian Government, was a "definite expression of general national resentment of our interference in Central Persia." Viceroy to I.O., tel. (copy), 6 June 1918, secret, P. 2199, L/P & S/10/727, 299, 1918 and War Cabinet's Eastern Committee Meeting of 6 June, B.C. 487, Cab. 27/27.

2 Gough to Hamilton-Grant, despatch no. 9, 22 July 1918, printed copy, received with Army Dept. Memo no. 11088, 17 Aug. 1918, doc. no. 4775, WO 106/55. To substantiate this point, Gough cited as example, the rather gentle, loyal kalāntar of the Darrīshūrī who, in his occasional correspondence with the British Resident at Bushihr exchanging war news, displayed a strong sense of loyalty toward his country and its welfare. See "Extract of a letter from [Nāsr-Allāh Khān] Āyāz Kikkā Kalāntar of Darashurīs (Kashgāis) Zabit of Lirawi, dated 8 Rabī‘-us-Sānī 1336 (22 Jan. 1918), received Bushire 3 Feb. 1918, Gough, ibid."
In the last analysis, therefore, the contribution of the South Persian Rifles to advance disunity, the breakdown of relations between leading local power factions, the external course of the World War influencing the Central Government and in turn the situation in Shiraz, and finally some degree of patriotism and nationalism, all played their part in the making of the risings.

The Aftermath of War

By October 1918, British troops and the South Persian Rifles succeeded in achieving victory in the various corners of Fars but only at the cost of intensifying resentment against their presence, notwithstanding the expenditures incurred,¹ the wastage and the loss of life on both sides.²

¹ According to the Treasury, the expenditure being incurred in Persia was at the rate of about £30,000,000 per annum (S.S. to Viceroy, tel. (copy), R.9272,14 Jan. 1919, P. 5863, FO 371/3858). The SFR alone was running at a cost of over £1 million per annum and the Cossack Brigade was being assisted by the British Government from the end of 1918 onwards with a sum of about £100,000 per month. Besides the cost of the troops at Bushihr (ended with their withdrawal by summer 1919), there were the expenses of the Gulf garrisons, the East Persia forces, and troops in northern Persia. Between 22 May and 21 August alone, 153,000 tumans was handed over to Qavām and other friendly Qashqā'is while another 205,000 tumans was sent to Gough before the end of the hostilities for the same purposes. Between Sept. and Dec. 1918, Qavām al-Mulk received £6,666.13.4. while "Qavām and the Qashqais" received £66,666.13.4; Fārmān Fārmā received about £5,000 during November 1918 and a further £14,666.13.4. between January and March 1919. Advances to the Persian cabinet between September 18 and 16 Dec. 1918 amounted to no less than £433,333.6.8 inclusive of a subsidy of 350,000 tumans a month which the Government began to receive from Sept. 1918. F.O. to Secretary Treasury, letter (copy) 16425/W/34, 9 Oct. 1918, doc. no. 243, WO 106/55; F.O., "Advances to Persia", Statement of Accounts prepared by the Foreign Office, March 1918-March 1919, P.18244, FO 371/3883.

² Estimates of the dead and wounded during the fighting, as given in British sources are largely apocryphal, since according to Gough and other SFR officers, the Qashqā'is and tribes generally were in the habit of carrying away as many of their dead and wounded as they could from the battlefield. Judging from the figures which are available, casualties on the side
Perspectives had clearly got out of focus. In the heat of the revolts in June, the viceroy drew attention to the hopelessness of a situation whereby the British were conducting a continuous "guerilla war against elusive tribesmen" in which they could not damage the Turks or Germans who were their real enemies. He continued:

"... we should be prepared to give up SPR ... we do not wish to shed further Persian blood or drift into a rupture with Persia with whom we have no quarrel ... by relaxing hold in South and Central Persia we shall lose nothing."¹

Montagu took up the argument, declaring that the Home Government's policy was out of harmony with Britain's general professions in the war, "... had always been opposed by the Government of India and appeared to have led to the unhappy events."²

Of the tribes, from early May to the end of October amounted to well over 2,000 with perhaps over 1,000 killed. This is not to include the casualty list of the Bushihr-Kázírûn operations and subsequent operations against robber bands, which included at least about 500 dead. On top of all this came the devastation and deaths caused by famine, cholera, and influenza, which reduced the population of the land by some 2 million out of a population of approximately 12 million. The SPR medical officer at Abâdeh recalled that when the relief of Abâdeh was over and men were brought into Shiraz to rest and refit, "they had leisure to contemplate the ruin of our hopes and the destruction of our work ..." Capt. J.H. Grove-White, "Some opinion on Persia and the Persians", The PersiMagazine, vol. 1, no. 1, March 1921, p. 25.

Some 15,000 out of Shiraz's population of approximately 60,000 perished within a fortnight, "... jackals and wild dogs were not slow to take advantage since cemeteries were inadequate and survivors demoralized," Grove-White, op. cit., p. 25; see also War Diaries of Senior Medical Officer, Bushihr, 1915-1918, MS., doc. no. 5009, WO 106/95. The staff of the Christian Missionary Society in Isfahan, Kirman, and elsewhere, did a lot to relieve famine and epidemic sufferers throughout 1917-9. The estimate of the death toll from cholera alone, in Kirman, was 2,000 (in the city), by the end of Aug. 1918. In Isfahan and its surroundings, death and distress was even worse. It was reported that no posts were reaching or leaving the city because the villagers had eaten the post horses. See various letters from Rev. W.A.Rice and others, Isfahan, 1918, nos. 19, 30, 33, 39, 40, 42, 56, Archives of the Christian Missionary Society, G2, PE/P3, 1905-1924.

¹ Viceroy to S.S.I., tel. 6 June 1918, EC 487, Cab 27/27.
² Montagu, Memo presented to the Eastern Cttee Meeting of 6 June (dated 5 June 1918), "Our Policy in Persia, EC 465, Cab 27/27."
The question continued to be debated, while in Tehran during June and July the Legation succeeded, after some hard work, promises, and expenditure, in installing Hasan Khan Vusūgh al-Dauleh in power in place of Samsām al-Saltāneh. The new cabinet, formed on 3 August 1918, was on the whole very favourably disposed toward Great Britain (with the exception of Mushāvir al-Mamālik, considered as a progressive nationalist though not affiliated, or overtly tied to any of the hizbs. He, however, was removed temporarily from the politics of the capital by leaving for Paris in December as head of the Persian delegation to the Peace Conference). Vusūgh al-Dauleh, however, found himself and his cabinet in no position to settle the question of the South Persian Rifles on the basis of an immediate, if temporary, recognition, a thing which the Legation had expected of him when backing his promotion to power. The cabinet had to strengthen his position first by coping with the difficulties of grain shortage, high prices, and arrears in salaries, among other affairs. Vusūgh suggested instead that for the good of all and in return for the Persian Government's friendly co-operation with the British, the latter should be prepared to withdraw their troops from the south and hand over the South Persian Rifles to the Persian Government, who, with British assistance and that of officers from a neutral country (possibly Sweden), could then organise Persia's armed forces.

1 The Shah resisted the appointment at first but later accepted the offer of 15,000 tumans a month for as long as Vusūgh's cabinet lasted. Marling to Balfour, telec. no. 494, 2 June 1918, secret, EC 459, Cab. 27/27. For copies of letters exchanged on this subject in October see P. 4300 FO 371/3858.

2 Marling to Balfour, telec. no. 512 (K), secret, 7 June 1918, EC 497, Cab 27/27 and Marling to Balfour, no. 731, military, 22 Aug. 1918, L/P & S/10/728(111).
Marling thought this a reasonable and good idea. There was no benefit in pressing for the recognition of the force, especially now that the prestige of the force was badly damaged.¹ Gough supported this view and let it be known that the force, in his opinion, was an "unmitigated failure."² Its morale was low, the residue of its remaining units was of poor quality (the best ones having deserted), and "by itself it is not able to carry out the idea for which it was originally intended."³ He begrudged every penny which had thus far been spent on the force and recommended its immediate disbandment. The General Staff were inclined to agree. In March 1919, Sir Percy Cox, had arrived in Tehran on 15 September to replace Marling as Minister (Marling was recalled for consultation purposes). The force was making little progress with recruitment and recovery partly because of mortality from influenza, but also because almost all the British officers wanted to go home and the general uncertainty about the future. The whole population, Cox wrote, was "waiting and watchful."⁴

Thus, once the world war came to an end, the critical question as regards the South Persian Rifles was whether it should be reduced in strength, handed over to the Persian Government to form the first unit of their proposed uniform army, or be simply disbanded altogether. Discussions revolving around this subject were an integral part of the more

¹ Ibid.
³ Ibid.
⁴ Cox to Curzon (Acting Foreign Secretary), tel. no. 1918, 14 March 1919, military, L/P & S310/728(III).
general and all important question of Britain's future relations with Persia as a whole. Two broad options, which could roughly and in their extreme, be described as Indian versus the Foreign Office points of view, with a range of vacillating and shifting body of opinion in between, were open to the British Government. She could, on the one hand, withdraw her troops from Persia, revert to her traditional rôle of "peace-maker", in the words of the viceroy, while reserving to herself the right to maintain the status quo on the Gulf, i.e., rely chiefly on her separate deals with, for instance, the Bakhtiāris and the Shaikh of Muhammarah to protect her interests. Alternatively, Britain could take upon herself the task and responsibility of rejuvenating and strengthening Persia under her own auspices. Persia remained to be of importance to Britain if not strategically in terms of Mesopotamia and India, then certainly economically in view of her oil-fields, trade routes, and the opportunity at last to capture her northern markets, for years monopolised by Tsarist Russia.

If the underlying motives of these two standpoints were for all or part of the above reasons, the assumptions behind them differed in some degree. It was partly the exclusiveness of British interest in Persia which was at stake, partly the methods applied to protect that portion of it which mattered most. Thus, the Indian point of view advocated a form of circumscribed sphere of influence, looked back to the restoration of pre-war conditions and so implied though not specified, the accommodation of other powers' involvement in northern Persia. The other viewpoint, associated chiefly

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1 Viceroy, Foreign Dept, secret, 7 March 1919, copy attached to minute paper no. 1485, L/P & S/10/728 (III).
with Curzon who now dominated the Foreign Office, strove to maximise British influence, tending to regard with equanimity and intolerance the interests of any other power in Persia. The chief contestor in this respect remained, much as always, Russia—a new Bolshevist Russia at that. It was all too hastily presumed that Bolshevist ambitions in Persia would not be different from those of Imperial Russia. That there was some sympathy among the Persians towards the Bolsheviks and that the national liberation and revolutionary movements were fighting while Russian and British forces in Mazindaran, Gilân, and Azarbaijan, helped to strengthen this attitude. The Foreign Office thus opted for an ambitious policy of attempting to be in effective control of all the affairs of Persia. Favourable opportunities were there to be exploited. The fact that British prestige throughout the middle-east was very high, that her position in Persia was stronger than at any other time before, and above all, that Persia was in dire need of attention and urgent financial assistance, made it easier to move toward this objective. The fact that negotiations on the subject of military and financial reforms had been going on during the previous two years and that the Persian Government had been in receipt of loans from the British Government, facilitated the articulation and formulation of this policy. This found expression in an agreement arrived at between the two countries during the second half of 1919, presented to the public in its signed and complete form in August 1919.

Curzon became Acting Foreign Secretary in January 1919 when Balfour went to Paris, and became Foreign Secretary in October 1919.
The agreement of 1919, set against its proper background, was not simply the brain-child of Curzon, though he himself liked to believe it was and advertised it as his own, called it a "diplomatic masterpiece" and said, "I have done it all alone ..." Curzon's rôle was important in so far as he decided to exploit favourable conditions while they lasted and led His Majesty's Government to adopt this, rather than other instruments as the best means of solving the Persian question. Cox played no mean part in leading Curzon onward, paving the way in Tehran and doing all the hard work to arrive at a definitive settlement. Through this settlement, Curzon was also doubtless fulfilling his oft quoted dream or ambition of creating a chain of vassal states running from the Mediterranean to south-east Asia. The policy also aimed at developing east-west communications in Persia, rather than north-south, which would be to Russia's advantage. But what was important in so far as the Persian agreement was concerned, was that he tried to push on the Persians the one thing to which successive cabinets since that of Sipahdär-e A'zam (ended August 1916) could not or would not accept, viz. the employment of British officers to the exclusion of other nationals, in matters military, financial, and now administrative.

3 Nicolson, op. cit., p. 121; Ronaldshay, op. cit., pp. 208-209, 212.
4 Sir George Rendel, Memorandum on Bushire and Bahrain (Section 1 - Sphere of influence and the abortive Anglo-Persian Agreement of 1919), confidential, 13 July, 1966, G. Rendel Papers, MECL, DS 316--Ds 42.4.
5 Curzon's policy was steadfastly being opposed by Cholmsford.
The agreement of August 1919 reiterated British assurances on the independence and integrity of Persia, and provided for the employment of British personnel in an advisory capacity to supervise and engage in the reform of Persia's financial and administrative affairs and to assist in the improvement of communications and the construction of railways. The clause referring to military reforms agreed to supply, at the expense of the Persian Government, "such officers and such munitions and equipment of modern type as may be adjudged necessary by a joint commission of military experts, British and Persian, which shall assemble forthwith for the purpose of estimating the needs of Persia, in respect of the formation of a uniform force . . ." Provision was also made in a separate loan agreement, lending Persia a sum of £2,000,000 for twenty years at an interest rate of seven per cent.¹

Theoretically, the agreement set the seal on the

and Montagu, whom Curzon accused of wanting to abandon Persia. In a private letter to Curzon, Montagu pointed out that it was not a question of abandoning Persia, but that Britain should try and mitigate the conditions attached to Britain's offers of help. Little good had been achieved by remaining in Persia on the present basis, "with no mandate from them or from anybody else." The Persians, he noted further, had never had British policy explained to them properly and to ask for a British Commander-in-Chief for the new Persian force was a "startling" suggestion if nothing else and "unnecessarily offensive to the Persian Government and national feeling." Why not, he asked, a Persian Commander with a British assistant in an advisory capacity? Were not most of the difficulties which arose with Sykes due to the fact that there were Indian troops in the land? Montagu to Curzon, letter, 6 Jan. 1919, Curzon Papers (India Office), MSS Eur F112/253.

¹ Copy of the text of the general agreement, a Loan Agreement and separate letters nos. 1 and 2, L/P & S/10/859, 5257/1919. The 2 letters gave assurances that Iran would not be held to pay for the maintenance of British troops in return for Iran not claiming compensation or indemnity for any damage which may have been caused by the presence of British forces in Persia's territory. Britain also promised to support Persian claims for reasonable territorial requisitions and the revision of treaties and compensation for material damage at the hands of other belligerents.
future of the South Persian Rifles. In essence, its roots may be traced back to the negotiations which surrounded the Sipahdar agreement and the controversial question of the recognition of the South Persian Rifles. The idea of handing over the force to the Persians, of creating a uniform force for the whole country, of revising customs tariffs, and of abrogating the convention of 1907, were part of the demands made on the British previously, notably by the cabinets of Alā al-Saltaneh, Mustauffī al-Mamālik, and Samsām al-Saltanch. When the demands were raised again with the resumption of negotiations with the cabinet of Vusūgh al-Dauleh, the Foreign Office agreed to give in to them as a quid pro quo for Persian acceptance that Britain would become her sole guardian. Otherwise, Britain would withdraw her support from Persia altogether and leave her alone.1

1 Curzon to Cox, teleg. no. 20, Jan. 1919, FO 371/3858. Sir Percy Cox, who tended to see Persia as a psychologically disturbed or mentally handicapped patient who "must be made to submit to treatment", wrote in January 1919 that Vusūgh and two of his ministers, Firūz Mirzā Nusrat al-Dauleh and Akbar Mirzā Sārīn al-Dauleh, were anxious to "place Persia in our hands provided genuine reforms were meant," and urged that formal negotiations should begin as soon as possible. Cox to Curzon, tel. no. 24, military, 23 Jan. 1919, P. 8985, FO 371/3858. Cox communicated the draft of the agreement to the "triumvirate" with whom Cox was in touch (to the exclusion of the rest of the cabinet) some time before April 1919. He was visited on the night of 6 April by the three ministers, who let him know that the Shah finally intended to "fall in" with their views and that it was better to clinch the matter at once, lest he would be influenced by others to change his mind. They asked for assurances for him and for themselves. As regards the likely opposition to be encountered, they suggested that if the policy to be pursued, as regards the agreement, was to be one of "persuasion rather than coercion", then it was necessary to "expend a good deal of secret service money in order to square rest of cabinet, newspapers, members of the Majlis, etc., for this purpose." 500,000 tumans was asked for, "paid down and no questions asked." (Cox to Viceroy, tel. (copy), P. 2634, 11 Apr. 1919, FO 371/3866). They also asked for personal guarantees for themselves if things went wrong, i.e., that if they had to leave the country, they would be able to realize income on their property (Cox, ibid.). The assurances were given to them and the Shah in separate letters before August 1919 (Cox to Curzon, tel. no. 356, 13
It was chiefly this aspect of the agreement which turned it into such a controversial document, both at home and abroad, not to speak of the harsh criticisms directed at its authors and the methods employed to formulate and implement it. International opinion, chiefly that of U.S.A., Russia, and France, criticised it, each for their own involved reasons. In Persia it came, paradoxically, to offend and potentially threaten a wide range of majority and minority interest groups and power factions. On the part of everyone, there was the dread of annexation. Objectively, there was nothing to prevent Britain from inviting or welcoming the assistance of other powers in Persia. By not doing so it aroused the worst suspicions and fears. The nationalists and that volume of public opinion which had effectively prevented and resisted granting recognition to the Sipahdār agreement of August 1916 (and therefore of the South Persian Rifles as a Persian Force) and all that this implied, were strengthened now that Russia was backing rather than suppressing it. Critics took note of the secrecy of the negotiations, the bribes and assurances involved, the freezing of the Persian case at the Peace Conference, the suppression of the opposition's voice in September and efforts to call the National Consultative Assembly together through rigged

May, 1919, FO 371/3866). The sum which was paid over by the Legation to the triumvirate in the end was £131,000, to be considered officially, if need be, as the first advance on the loan arranged through the agreement. But this sum never reached the Treasury. It was apparently not Vusūgh but the other two ministers who had insisted on a douceur, threatening Vusūgh that they would not go through the deal without receiving something. For Vusūgh's own version of the event, as recounted to Lancelot Oliphant, see Oliphant's memorandum, of 30 November 1920, P. 3397, FO 371/4909.
elections, in order to ratify the agreement. On their part, the moderate reformists who still believed in the good intentions of British policy toward Persia and were afraid of Russia, were also afraid to throw in their lot whole heartedly with the British because they doubted whether Britain could and would continue her support in Persia until the necessary reforms were carried out. The reactionary J. M. Balfour (a member of the Financial Mission headed by Armitage-Smith, which began work in Tehran some time before August 1920) was one of the first critics to bring the charge of bribery in his work, Recent Happenings in Persia (London, 1922 ed.), pp. 127-129; see also, Armitage-Smith, Memorandum on the Financial, Political and Military situation in Persia", 22 Nov. 1920, P. 3397, FO 371/4909; H. Filmer (pseud.), The Pageant of Persia (Indianapolis, N.Y., 1936), pp. 340-341; V. Sheean, The New Persia (New York, 1927), pp. 23-24; for American reaction generally, see L. Novar, "The Great Powers and Iran 1914-1921" (unpublished PhD. thesis, Chicago, 1958); P. Avery, Modern Iran (London, 1967) (2nd imp.), pp. 202-209; the British members of the Anglo-Persian Military Commission, which, according to the terms of the agreement, was set up in January 1920, gave a fair assessment of general Persian reaction, in their unofficial report of April 1920 to the home authorities, "All Classes," they noted feared annexation—"Confidential Supplement to the Report of the Anglo-Persian Military Commission By the British Members" [among them E. W. Dickson, H. Huddleston, A. Irvine Fortescue], 4 April 1920, L/P & S/10/859, 5257, 1919; Stanley Reed to Wilson, Bombay, 16 Sept. 1920, Wilson Papers (B.M.) ADD. 52457; Ayandeh, year 1, no. 12 (Rabî' al-Sânî 1345/Oct. 1926), pp. 702-717; speeches by Musadiq al-Saltaneh, Mudarris and others against the agreement and Vusügh's own defence, National Consultative Assembly, session of 29 Shahrivar 1305/20 Sep. 1926; H. Hallâj, Târikh-e Tahavvulât-e Siâsi-ye Iran, pp. 70-71; H. Arfa', Under Five Shahs (Edinburgh, 1964), pp. 75, 88-89; S. Fatemi, Diplomatic History of Persia 1917-1923 (New York, 1952), pp. 73-77, 88-93, and quoting Saiyid Hassan-e Muddariss comments, pp. 76-77; H. Makkâ, Târikh-e Bist Sâleh-ye Iran (Tehran, 1323/1944-6), pp. 7, 26, defends Ahmad Shah and Bahâr, Târikh-e Mukhtasar-e Ahzâb-e Siâsi-ye Iran, blames Ahmad Shah in an indirect effort to defend Vusügh, whom he supported at the time along with Saiyid Zîā' al-Dîn whose newspaper Ra'd (apart from the cautious support of Bahâr's editing the papers Nau-Bahâr and Irân) was, except from those papers controlled by the British directly, e.g., Ahan, published in Isfahan, practically the only newspaper out of some 26 well known national dailies and weeklies, which gave staunch support to the agreement. 2 Vusügh al-Dauleh, judging from his correspondence with Mushâvir al-Mamâlik in Paris, was overwhelmed by the strength of British power in Persia and was convinced that there was no choice but to co-operate fully with them. His Foreign
elite, who preferred to sustain and prolong the life on an inefficient and corrupt system from which they had benefitted so well for so long, apparently went so far as to threaten Vusügh with assassination. There were signs too that the tribes, especially the Bakhtiārī, also felt threatened. Thus, the veiled mandate policy, or that of "spread-eagle Imperialism" over the wastes of central Asia, beneficial or not, in the long run, to the Persians, failed to get the ratification of the Persian Majlis and was to be rejected altogether at the end of February 1921.

By then, other factors militated against the British being too extravagantly, deeply, and officially, involved in Persia. Economic stringency and the war weariness of troops, among other things, prompted the British Government Minister appeared to have held the view that circumstances had changed and that Britain was no longer in a position to effectively hold her ground and employ her former powers over Persia. Vusügh disagreed: "Britain does not need to resort merely to physical force . . . to achieve her aims." He argued that if Britain were to withdraw her financial assistance and her troops, under existing circumstances, not only would disaster and disorder on a full scale increase but the capital would find it impossible to feed itself. Moreover, were it not for British finance, did Mushāvir not realize that "the government would not even have found it possible to send a delegation to the Peace Conference . . . so why are you blinding yourself to these facts?" Mushāvir al-Namālik reiterated his doubts about the altruistic interests of Britain in Persia and believed that if the opportunity was not taken now to change circumstances in Persia's favour, perhaps with the assistance of the Americans, then "what was the purpose of our coming to Paris at all?" The newspaper Ra'd, edited by Saiyid Zīā' al-Dīn Tabātabā'ī, supporting Vusügh al-Daulah's cabinet to the last, did not help to clear misunderstandings between Tehran and Paris by advertising the point that the cabinet did not see eye-to-eye with her representatives in Paris. See Vusügh al-Daulah to Mushāvir al-Namālik, telegraphic letter no. 15, 22 Feb. 1919, (21 Jamādi al-Avval, 1337), Cabinet Office, IFOA 66/7(V), 1337/1919, Mushāvir to Vusügh, desp. no. 14, 29 April 1919, Paris, IFOA, 66/7(IV), 1337/1919; Ra'd, 20 Feb. 1919 (19 Jamādi al-Sānī, 1337), IFOA, 66/7(V), 1337/1919.

1 Curzon, quoting the charges of some critics, House of Lords Speech, 16 Nov. 1920 (copy), reproduced in P. 3397, FO 371/4909.
increasingly to call for the withdrawal of troops from Caucasus, Persia, and other eastern enclaves. Moreover, relations with Russia were undergoing some change. By the end of 1920, Russia had succeeded in defeating the counter-revolutionary volunteer army of Denikin and was able to gain control of the Centro-Caspian Fleet and Bolshevise Transcaucasia. At the end of spring 1920, she had even landed some troops at Enzeli, causing the ignominious retreat of a British garrison there to Rasht and then Qazvin. Her troops remained at Enzeli and some of the men infiltrated into the Caspian provinces to give moral and material support to the various revolutionary pocket strongholds. The cabinet of Mushür al-Dauleh protested to the newly formed League of Nations but nothing came of it, while on her part, the British Government, in view of international and the home situations, was not in a position to do much either. The Foreign Office declared that the Government was in no way bound under the agreement of 1919 to defend Persia against invaders.

The episode contributed to make it necessary for both the British and the Persian Governments to come to some terms with the Russians. But Russia was already moving toward a policy of moderation and bettering relations with other states. The failures of the Polish War in May 1920, the need to concentrate on internal stability and ideologically, to preserve and prolong the Soviet state in order to promote World Revolution (rather than vice-versa), made her ready to bargain with capitalist Governments either on a collective or individual basis. A Russian trade delegation had arrived in London in early summer 1920 to negotiate a trade agreement with the British and the Persian Government despatched Mushāvir
al-Mamālik to Moscow in October 1920 to negotiate a treaty of friendship. These treaties were effected in March and February 1921, respectively.

But even before this, during October 1920, Russia declared that she was prepared to withdraw her troops from Persia if the British did likewise. This, together with the slow realization that the Persian Government would probably not ratify the agreement and the need for economy, made it more and more difficult to justify the retention of troops. The British Government at the request of the Persians, kept extending the time limits of their financial assistance for the upkeep of the South Persian Rifles, and the Cossack Brigade among other expenses. The Treasury was asked to sanction the payment of £350,000 monthly from June to October, then to the end of December 1920, and yet again until the end of March 1921. In December 1920, the British Government

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1 The strength of the Bolsheviks in northern Persia was estimated at various points to be, at its lowest, 1,500 and its highest, 4,000. The strength of the Gilan and Mazindaran insurgents, at its highest, was estimated to be in the region of 4-5,000. The mission of Dunsterville to open up and hold the line Hamadan-Qazvīn-Enzeli to Baku failed by the summer of 1918 and Dunsterforce was reinforced during winter 1918-9 with troops from Mesopotamia, transforming it into the force that came to be called the North Persian Force. After the retreat from Enzeli and Rasht, NPF concentrated its strength of 6,000 men in Qazvīn and General E. Ironside arrived in Persia in October to take command of it. Just before this, the Persian Government mobilised all the Persian Cossack Forces (about 3-4000) under Starosselsky, a White Russian general, against Gilan. By the end of 1921, thanks to the inability of the revolutionary forces to sink their differences and also to the withdrawal of Russian backing, the movement was crushed. The Cossack forces had by then been purged of their Russian contingent as a result of British intrigue, and left Persia in October, 1920, after failing to subjugate Gilan. British officers of the NPF then assumed control of Persian Cossack forces, in an unofficial capacity and began training and refitting and organising it at its headquarters, Qazvīn, with detachments in Hamadan and Tabriz. W.E. Ironside, High Road to Command: The Diaries of Major-General Sir Edmund Ironside, 1920-1922 (edited by Lord Ironside) (London, 1972), pp. 124-160.
declared that she had decided to withdraw her troops from north Persia as soon as the spring weather permitted it. Fear and panic, both at the threat of the termination of subsidies and the withdrawal of troops, overtook the capital.  

A running debate then ensued between British authorities themselves and between them and the Persian Government, on the question of what to do with the South Persian Rifles. The Military Commission, in their report of April 1920, had recommended that British troops in Fars should not be withdrawn until the reorganisation of the Persian Army had had a fair start. Now, with but slight hopes that the programme of the 1919 agreement would ever receive the official sanction of the Persian Government, it was a question of whether to push ahead with army reforms. A meeting of notables was convened on 27 November by Sardār Mansūr Sipahdār-e A'zam (who had succeeded Mushīr al-Daulah in early November 1920), to decide whether the Government should accept some British officers to reorganise the armed forces. No decision was reached.

The military situation appeared to dominate everything while the Government faced a cabinet crisis. Sardār Mansūr gave in his resignation on 19 January 1921 and Mustauffī al-Mamālik was called upon by Ahmad Shah to form a cabinet. But he was unable or unwilling to do so and the crisis continued until Sardār Mansūr was called upon once more on 16 February. However, during the night of 20-21 February, some 2,500-3,000 Persian Cossacks under the command of General Rizā Khan Mirpanj, having marched toward Tehran from their camp at Āqā Bābā (just to the north-west of Qazvīn) entered

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The fact that the Imperial Bank began calling in its loans, advances, and discounts, and gradually transferring the funds to London, India, and to its southern branches, did not help to abate fears.
the capital, occupied it, and ousted the cabinet. On 25
February, the Shah named Saiyid Zia' al-Din Tabataba'i the
head of a new cabinet, which was formed by 2 March.¹

¹ The motives, preparations and execution of the almost
bloodless coup of 1921 along with the dominant personalities
involved, gave rise to a variety of interpretations and de-
bates which continue to the present day. Whether the prin-
cipal motives were to install a cabinet in power to implement
the substance of the 1919 agreement or at least to protect
and further British interests in Persia, or whether it was
one of placing a strong, independent government in power in
the interest of the nation, the facts remain that British
troops were leaving, that there was a high degree of fear from
Bolshevism (encouraged, it appears, by the North Persian
Force command), and that the idea of a coup was in the air.
No satisfactory conclusion can be reached as to the nature
and extent of British involvement in the affair. The general
consensus of Persian opinion was that the British stage
managed it. Mr. H. Norman (British minister in Tehran after
Percy Cox) and after him, Sir Percy Loraine, judging by their
correspondence, had a hard job trying to counter or alter this
opinion at the time. Ahmad Shah, Saiyid Zia' as well as Riza
Khân, each in their turn, attributed the coup to themselves.
General Ironside, in his diaries, admits that he, "strictly
speaking", engineered it. It appears that the Foreign Office
in London was taken by surprise and J. Balfour claims, among
some other British observers, that the Tehran Legation was
also in the dark about the event. Whatever the true facts of
the case, one of the originalities of the event was the inter-
vention of the military in the process of cabinet making,
which up to now, at least since the start of war, had become
the exclusive responsibility of the British and Russian
Legations and then of the British Legation alone. Another
noteworthy point is the strong streak of patriotism and unity,
later developing into an emphatic theme of nationalism and
centralisation which rang through the manifesto issued shortly
after the coup and Riza Khân's proclamation at a later date
in 1921 when he became Minister for War. See Norman's report
on the coup, Norman to Curzon, telegraphic letter, no. 121,
confidential, 21 Feb. 1921 (E2379/2/34), FO 371/6401 and min-
utes by G.P. Churchill, Oliphant and Curzon, 22 Feb. 1921, no.
B. 2336, ibid.; some information on Riza Khân is provided in
Percy Loraine to Curzon, no. 62, 31 Jan. 1922 (E.3074/6/34),
FO 371/7804; on Zia's declaration and proposals, Norman to
Curzon, no. 125, 25 Feb. 1921, confidential (E.2605/2/34),
FO 371/6401; on various shades of opinion on the subject,
among other works: J. Balfour, Recent Happenings in Persia,
p. 228; Arfa', Under Five Shams, pp. 106-111; Avery,
Modern Iran, pp. 228, 210-231; Bahâr, Tarih-e Mukhtasar-e
Ahzâb-e Si'asi-ye Iran, pp. 61-62, 57-91; Hallaj, Tarih-e
Tahavvulat-e Si'asi-ye Iran, pp. 80-81; F. Forbes-Leith,
Checkmate: fighting traditions in Central Persia (London,
1928), pp. 78-79; Lord Ironside (ed.), High Road to Command:
The Diaries of Major-General Sir Edmund Ironside, 1920-1922,
pp. 117-118, 148-149, 160-161, 166-168. Robert Haig (son of
The policy of the new cabinet, in an official capacity at least, was the denunciation of the Anglo-Persian agreement and the declaration that the Persian Government proposed to introduce advisers from other European states into the country for the purposes of military and financial reforms.¹ Unofficially, however, Saiyid ZIA' adopted a more positive line toward the basic tenets of the 1919 agreement. He told Mr. Norman in private that the Government wished to take over the South Persian Rifles as soon as possible "on a reduced scale of expenditure and very few British officers, possible 10," and he considered employing a certain number of British officers and advisers on personal contracts in the military and financial departments of state.² Yet before there was time to do anything about these proposals, Saiyid ZIA' fell from power and on 29 May the Shah called on Qavām al-Saltanah to form a cabinet. This was inaugurated by 22 June. This proceeded to adopt a "sullen" attitude towards Great Britain. Rizā Khan, who had been given the title of Sardār-e Sipah and had become Minister of War in April, increasingly gained ground to emerge as the real power

¹ Norman to Curzon, no. 125, 25 Feb. 1921, political, urgent and most confidential, P. 1227, L/P & S/10/691, 2834, 1921 (also as no. E.2605/2/34, FO 371/6401).

² Norman to Curzon, no. 125, op. cit. Norman wrote to Curzon that the "pro-British character of new administration should be as far as possible disguised", so as not to raise Russian suspicions. Saiyid ZIA' was also very anxious that British troops should stay in Qazvin for a few months more. He even wrote to Lloyd George, begging him,"in the name of His Majesty the Shah," that the departure of British troops be postponed to September, "by which date I expect to organise sufficient forces the organisation of which had been neglected up to present date." ZIA' to Lloyd George, Tehran (KA 223/124), 9 March 1922, Lloyd George Papers (House of Lords Record Office), Series F/Box 57/folder 4.

behind the crown and government, was apparently opposed to the retention of British officers in the army. The dispute over the disbandment of the South Persian Rifles was resumed. The Persian Government proposed now that the force be handed over to them; that its British officers should leave in the space of some three to six months, and that arrangements should be made with the Imperial Bank of Persia to grant the Government credit to cover the present budget of the force, secured against the surplus customs receipts.¹

The stipulated time limit for budgeting the South Persian Rifles had ended on 31 March and there was not much that the Foreign Office could do save to prepare for disbandment or to comply with Persian demands.² Despite strong objections from the Admiralty, the Mesopotamian and Gulf authorities, and the Anglo-Persian Oil Company's directors, orders for the disbandment of one-third of the force were issued to Shiraz early in July.³ Disbandment was carried

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² Montagu, on being asked earlier and again by the F.O. whether India could agree to a further extension of the expenditure for the force, was quite uncompromising over the issue and wrote to Hirtzel saying that he was not prepared: "... no ... I am not prepared to spend a Rupee, an Anna or a pie after that date [i.e. 31 March 1921]." He had agreed, he said, to the 1919 agreement in the belief that payments to Persia should stop. "I have been cajoled, persuaded, urged to go on and on and on always for a few minutes or a few months longer ... the F.O. should be told that this is final." He believed that the position in Persia was now absolutely hopeless and every penny spent on Persia now was a waste. Montagu to Hirtzel, minute, 8896, 20 Dec. 1920, L/P & S/10/691, 2834/1920.

³ Charles Greenway, Lord Southborough, and Admiral Sir E. Slade, told the F.O. that they were prepared to grant Persia a loan of 300,000 for another six months or longer. There was apprehension, on the one hand, about disorder in the south, on the other, that American interests such as Standard Oil Co. or other local concessionaries, e.g. Khushtaria,
out in three stages, approximately one-third of the force being discharged at each stage. Between the first stage and second stage (17 July-31 July and mid-September to the end of September), proposals and counter-proposals were frantically exchanged between Tehran and London with Mr. Norman trying to prevent disbandment by a compromise settlement between the two governments. But no agreement was reached and the final stage of disbandment was carried out during October. By 16 December 1921, most of the British officers of the force had left for India from Bushihr, the headquarters offices of the force at Bushihr were closed and the remaining staff were ready to leave for India by the first ship available. All this was done amidst rumours creating more fear and panic that the British Government was making impossible conditions for the surrender of the force so as to ensure the dissolution of the Persian Government and produce disorder in the south with a view to the establishment of a Federation of Southern Chieftains (through the Bakhtiāris and other local elements), to ensure maintaining British predominance there. The Oil

might not step in and advance the money to the Persian Government (Memorandum by R.C. Lindsey, I.O., 8 Feb. 1921 (E.1799/76/34), P, 924, L/P & S/10/691, 2834/1921). The Admiralty felt they could not allow the disbandment of the SFR unless something else took its place to prevent disorder. The importance of the South Persian Oil Fields, as one of the "cheapest and most vital sources of supply for naval purposes," was impressed on the cabinet. The Admiralty, in formulating their proposals for the creation of strategic reserves of oil fuel, had based their calculations on the assumption that output from the South Persian Fields would be available to the full: "... should this supply be liable to interruption, it follows that larger reserve stocks will be required in Singapore and elsewhere than those at present contemplated and that correspondingly heavier expenditure will be incurred." Memorandum by the First Lord of the Admiralty, "South Persia Rifles", secret, CP 3165, 26 July 1921, Cab 24/125, 121. The Mesopotamian authorities felt they "cannot and will not permit disorder and riot to ensue in south Persia" and the SFR to continue through the APOC's loans. High Commissioner to S.S. for Colonies, no. 365, 5 Aug. 1921, L/P & S/10/692, 2834/1921.
Company, by arming, or intending to arm, about 300 Kashkulls to preserve their operations in the Qashqäí country and by advertising, through the Bushihr Residency, for the employment of ex-South Persian Rifles men to enter the services of the company, strengthened the suspicions. 1 Whether this may have been Bolshevik propaganda launched by the Russian Legation, as suggested by Sir Percy Loraine or whether, as seems likely, that some such project was entertained by the Gulf and Mesopotamian authorities, the project never materialised.

The principal considerations which led to the ultimate decision for its disbandment involved firstly, the desire not to arouse Russian susceptibilities now that the Russians, for much the same reasons vis-à-vis the British, had withdrawn their troops from the north and relinquised support to Küchik Khān the Gilan insurgents; secondly, the question of economy and the Government of India's and the Treasury's disinclination to sink more money into the maintenance of British troops in the various corners of Persia without good reason; and thirdly, the fact that the British Government could not yet feel confident enough to entrust the Persian Government with an organised, trained, and fully armed force of over 6,000 men, which, after all, could be put to use for a variety of purposes.

The Persians were even refused the demand to buy the arms and stores of the force, except for some 700 rifles.

1 Norman to Curzon, no. 490, political, 3 Sept. 1921, P. 43130, L/P & S/10/692, 2834, 1921. Bridgeman to Norman, Shiraz, no. 629 (R), 13 Nov. 1921, P. 5170, ibid. Lt. Col. Trevor to Secretary, Govt. India, Bushire, no. 3705, 10 Nov. 1921, P. 5445, ibid; on this issue see also IFOA, correspondence between the Bushihr Kargāzarate to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Tehran, between Sept. and Nov. 1921, IFOA, serial no. 10308, 1722/1318, 51/5, 1300(Shamsi)/1921.
and 200 boxes of .303 ammunition and 45 horses. About two-thirds of the equipment was withdrawn to India and some articles and arms, including five Maxim guns, estimated altogether to be worth 25,000 tumans, were destroyed in Shiraz and elsewhere. Those items of equipment, stores, and animals not withdrawn or destroyed were auctioned locally. The medical stores were given (some of it sold) to the American Christian Missionaries. As to the men, all officers and men received a gratuity equivalent to 2 month's pay, in addition to all pay and allowances due to them. They were also allowed to keep the greater part of their clothing. While some of the men made their way to Bushihr and then to Mesopotamia, apparently to join the British forces and continue their military careers, or find other employment. A large proportion dispersed to their homes and were absorbed into civil life. Others still, and it cannot be ascertained how many, were re-enlisted in other Persian forces, locally or in the north, either at the time or shortly afterwards, when military activity was revived in the south. This period coincided with the tour of Sardār Sipah, Minister for War, through Fars and the Bushihr hinterland, some time at the end of 1922. By then, Sardār Sipah was making rapid progress in raising and organising a new national force under his concentrated attention and leadership. In the southern provinces, the first signs of the gradual subordination of civil administration and authority to that of the military command, were becoming apparent. The governor-general's premises, e.g., the Arg-e Karīm Khān, was made

smaller and the rest were taken over by the military authorities. The barracks and drill squares of the South Persian Rifles were also taken over and extended with the intention of creating strong fortified positions or citadels in the city. The Qavâmis were ignored while orders were received by the Ministry of War that one thousand men from the peasantry and not the tribes, were to be enlisted into the army, a thing which made landowners raise objections because of the existing or potential shortage of agricultural labourers. 2

Another interesting point to note, in relation to recruitment, was the announcement that the settled, normally peaceful agricultural districts of the coast, were to be henceforth regarded as "tribes" directly subject to the Ministry of War. 3

This implied not only an extension of the War Ministry's direct control over this district but was a move in the direction of dividing the country into several military areas and changing the recruitment system to facilitate central control and the formation of the new army. These steps, incidentally, were among the principal recommendations made by the Anglo-Persian Military Commission Report of April 1920 toward the achievement of this objective. 4

The militant moves in the south and Sardâr Sipah's "interference" in southern affairs, which had up to now been dominated by the British, were viewed with some alarm and annoyance by British authorities in the south and were defined

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1 Mr. Chick (consul Shiraz) to H.M.'s Minister, Tehran, Memorandum, 27 Dec. 1922, desp. no. 95, P. 569, L/P & S/10/729, 299/1918
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.
as "anti-British" in motive. The systematic weakening of the position of those who in one way or another had been associated with, or had assisted, the British in the south, and the encouragement given to those who had resisted or rebelled against them, was seen in the same light. The Hayāt Dāvūdī and Shabānkāreh khāns, for instance, were ordered to pay more taxes while the relatives of dead, "rebel" khāns, such as Shaikh Husain Chāhkūtāhi and Ra'īs Ali Dilvārī, received robes of honour, decorations, and other such things. Furthermore, mourning processions, speeches in mosques, and other such events were encouraged in various places to commemorate the deaths or "martyrdom" of the dead khāns of the south, killed by "the enemies of Persia".

Thus, all the good work done in this direction by British troops and the South Persian Rifles, only one and a half years after withdrawal and disbandment, was being undone, but not in a negative sense. The men who served in the South Persian Rifles and the force itself can be said to have, in their own way, contributed both directly and indirectly to the making of a centrally controlled uniform force for the country and its unification under strong central control, thus facilitating the transition of the country into a new era of her history.

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1 Trevor (Political Resident, Persian Gulf) to India (Foreign and Political Dept.), Memorandum no. 939-S, Bushire, confidential (copy), 16 Dec. 1922, P. 407, L/P & S/10/729, 299/1918, part 3 (situation in the south, 1920-1924). See also Chick memorandum, op. cit.

2 Ibid.
Chapter VII

CONCLUSION

Thus, the British Government, through the agency of the South Persian Rifles meddled their way into southern Persia in 1916 and muddled out of it in 1921.

The force may be said to have been the product, on the one hand, of those considerations which had influenced the formulation and conduct of the British Government's policy towards Persia prior to the outbreak of World War I, and on the other, of the continuation of these considerations in the light of the advent of oil and the circumstances created by the war itself. Within the wide, general context of rivalry with Russia (which continued even after the rapprochement of 1907) and the lack of effective government in Persia, Britain's strategic and political interests and, after 1914, these and her real economic interests in the "neutral" zone especially, helped to transform a largely "inactive" defence policy, limited in scope, to a more "active" one. This resulted in an increasing usurpation of the authority of the Persian Government.

The Soviet historian, Lev Miroshnikov, studying the role of the Anglo-Indian troops in Persia in the years 1914-1920 in general, maintains that the German threat was a pretext and not a reason for British armed intervention in Persia. He concludes, broadly speaking, that Great Britain, in her urge to extend the frontiers of her eastern empire and
her expansionist drives as an imperial Power, attempted to turn Persia into a colony and use it as a spring-board to counter Bolshevism after the Russian Revolution.

This interpretation, tested against the evidence available for the period 1914-1920, lacks body and however contentious, it is a rather crude application of the conventional Marxist-Leninist theories of "Imperialism" in action and the analysis of this subject in its proper historical context. The study of the concept of a "semi-colony" from the works of Lenin and Mao, as Lucien Rey points out and attempts to demonstrate in his excellent, analytical, and comparative survey of the Persian case against, for instance, that of China or Thailand, has its limitations and demands closer scrutiny. ¹ Miroshnikov does not treat or devote adequate attention to this point, though both his and especially Rey's work, elucidate some of its facets.

Evidence suggests that British troop activity along the shores of the Gulf from 1914 onwards and the creation of the South Persian Rifles in itself, were the products of a variety of complex factors, which, when broken down and localised, demonstrate that the motivations and objectives were to advance protection rather than expansion. They were not in intent the outcome of any calculated plot to capture or seize territory but to occupy it with a view to affording security (from both internal and external threats) to interests already possessed and acquired. The establishment of the South Persian Rifles and the East Persia Cordon may be considered in this light. It may also be mentioned at this point that the "Malmis" and "Dunsterforce" missions of early 1918 in northern Persia, considering their size alone, were in their

initial formation and purpose a response to the vacuum left by the withdrawal of Imperial Russian forces from northern Persia at a time when practically the bulk of the Turkish army found itself in northern and north-eastern Anatolia, notwithstanding the fact that a very large number of Austro-German prisoners of war were interned in Russian Turkistan. Neither the dislocated Persian Cossack forces, nor the residue of Imperial Russian forces were thought to offer adequate protection to the unguarded Transcaspian route to Afghanistan. By the time, or even before, the war come to an end, however, and with the transformation of "Dunsterforce" into the North Persian Force, the transition from an anti-German to an anti-Bolshevik threat became more pronounced. Miroshnikov's interpretations may be examined in the light of these later events in the north but its extensive analysis is beyond the scope of this work.

In so far as the year 1916 is concerned, this study agrees with the proposition that the German threat, viewed in perspective, was largely magnified in contemporary and later official accounts, at the expense of other considerations. It does not preclude, however, that the power-vacuum left by the disintegration of the Gendarmerie force, the potentially volatile nature of other security arrangements, and above all the beginning of difficulties in Mesopotamia, made the British position precarious in south Persia. The Turco-German threat therefore contributed towards the creation of a situation whereby British prestige and influence in Persia weakened at the expense of what was seen, justifiably or not, to be the more dangerous threat of Russia's inflated prestige and strength, as well as the presence of her troops down to Isfahan and Kirmanshah.
British interference in Persia, military or otherwise, was inevitably a symptom of the behaviour of an imperial Power for the purpose of the protection of her interests both there and elsewhere. Special circumstances, both those associated with the war as well as the internal situation of the country, prompted her, albeit reluctantly, to attempt at controlling initially a part, and afterwards the whole, of Persia. In this respect, the principal idea, lying as a common factor, behind both the establishment of the South Persian Rifles and the 1919 agreement, can be said to have been the acquisition of real power camouflaged behind a facade of Persian authority. Whereas in the case of the South Persian Rifles in 1916 the attempt at this kind of control was only temporary (up to the end of the war), though more careful in its preparation and application, in 1919 the aims were more permanent but the diplomacy cruder in conception and formulation. Yet both the cautious approach of the early war years and the apparent militancy of the 1919 agreement, which was in fact seen in some influential British quarters as being "transparently so simple and innocuous that the more it is studied the less justification will there be for hostility to it," ¹ demonstrate that the desire at all times was to control an "independent", sovereign, but subservient Persia.

The South Persian Rifles, the brain-child of the Foreign Office from its formation to its disbandment, created acute differences of opinion between different departments of the Imperial and Indian Governments. These were reflected in the confusion which surrounded the objectives, organisation, functions, and command for the force. The

¹ P. Cox to Wilson, 23 Aug. 1919, Wilson Papers (20 ff), B.M., MS 52455.
Foreign Office, while emphasising the desirability of maintaining the civilian-police character of the force and regarding it as developing ultimately into an all-Persian force, did not at the same time do much towards preparing it for this goal. Suspicion and mistrust of the nationalists, especially after the risings of 1915, made the Foreign Office adopt an unbending attitude to Persian demands; she insisted on the official recognition of the South Persian Rifles at a time when Persian public opinion, due to internal and external factors, could not and did not accede to it. On the other hand, the Government of India, viewing the force initially and primarily as an extension of her frontier militia, came to consider it a burden once the immediate dangers of the Russian and German threats had been thwarted. She then began to advocate a policy of conciliation towards the nationalists and of limited British responsibility in Persia. In consequence of this, as well as the changed situation after the Russian Revolution, British policy fell between the two stools of complete control and open co-operation with the nationalist cause. The fundamental mistake in general was to confuse "pro-Persianism for anti-Britishism."¹ The South Persian Rifles, instead of bridging the gap between the dual tendencies in British policy, helped to accentuate the dichotomy, so that anybody who opposed, or even criticised, the activities of the force was automatically thought of as the "enemy".

In the last analysis, these circumstances prevented the South Persian Rifles from simultaneously serving both Persian and British interests. It managed to impose a limited

degree of security of communication and order in Fars and Kirman and besides its immediate political and strategic effects, it ensured a general, military control of the southern provinces with the co-operation of other British forces. For the benefit of Persia, it safeguarded trade routes, built roads, and reduced the strength of law-breaking elements such as bandits and brigands, therefore giving a measure of protection to the settled population; it was also a source of employment to a small percentage of the population during times of acute depression. But, if the intention was to extend the authority of the Central Government in the south, it faced the tremendous task of changing the traditional "order" of administrative and economic life. In effect it aggravated this complex pattern of alliances, inter-alliances, collusions, and cabals between " unofficial" and " official" robbers, both in the town and the country. It could only ameliorate in some cases the worst aspects of corruption and malpractice on a provincial level; more often, these were merely exacerbated by the presence of the South Persian Rifles.

The whole-hearted initiative of the Central Government was required to effect such a radical transformation of affairs in the south. That backing, in the form of the official recognition of the force was, for the most part, withheld. In consequence, the reaction of the tribes, a proportion of local government officials, and the urban population at large, followed the lead of the Government in its opposition to British interference. It demonstrated that the Central Government, despite the lack of effective means, still retained a potential authority over the provinces. The outstanding
result of the South Persian Rifles' rôle was the idea of a uniform force which emerged from the negotiations of 1916 onwards, and were central to the 1919 agreement. In the changed conditions of the post-war years, the events in the north and the coup d'État of 1921, the eventual implementation of this idea provided the Central Government with the means and opportunity which they had lacked to confront the real problems of national unity and development.
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Appendix I: Copy of the August 1916 Agreement (typed from unsigned typescript copy of text in IFCA, 66/4, 1334 sh.)

Téhéran le 19 Juillet
- 1 Août 1916

Les Gouvernements Britannique et Russe désireux de contribuer de concert avec le Gouvernement Persan au maintien de l'ordre et de la sécurité en Perse ainsi qu'à l'amélioration de son administration financière, ont autorisé leurs représentants soussignés de communiquer à Son Altesse le Président du Conseil des Ministres les propositions suivants:

Une force militaire, composée de 11,000 hommes approximativement, sera formée graduellement dans ce but dans les provinces méridionales.

Le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique mettra à la disposition du Gouvernement Persan, pour l'organisation et l'instruction de cette force, un nombre suffisant d'officiers, sous-officiers médecins etc., en prenant à sa charge son équipement et son entretien pendant la durée, au moins, de la guerre européenne.

Les forces nécessaires dans les provinces du Nord seront fournies par le renforcement graduel de l'effectif de la Brigade des Cosaques jusqu'à 11,000 hommes environ.

Le Gouvernement Impérial Russe mettra à la disposition du Gouvernement Persan le nombre d'officiers, sous-officiers, instructeurs, médecins etc. nécessaires à cet effet et se chargera des frais d'équipement et d'entretien de la Brigade jusqu'à la fin, au moins de la guerre actuelle.

Pour ce qui concerne le maintien ultérieur de ces deux forces, la Commission Mixte Financière aura à rechercher et à indiquer les ressources de l'Empire Persan devant servir à cet effet.

Tout en étant animée de prendre en amical et sympathique considération les voeux énoncés à ce sujet par le Gouvernement Persan, les deux Gouvernements sont pénétrés de la conviction qu'il est essential pour le relèvement financier de la Perse que les pouvoirs de la Commission financière mixte existante soient considérablement étendus.

L'examen approfondi de toutes les questions relatives à de nouveaux impôts, leur assiette, leur perception etc., devant forcément demander une étude prolongée, les deux Gouvernements croient le mieux répondre et aux exigences de la situation et au désir du Gouvernement Persan en se déclarant d'ores et déjà prêts à prendre en bienveillante considération les voeux formulés à ce sujet dans la lettre précitée de Son Altesse le Président du Conseil, à condition toutefois, que le Gouvernement Persan consente à accorder à la Commission Mixte Financière une extension de ses pouvoirs sur la base du projet de Décret Ministériel annexé à la présente Note.

Les deux Puissances, prévoyant en outre que certains obstacles à son bon fonctionnement pourraient surgir du fait de la composition de la dite Commission, croient devoir recommander au Gouvernement Persan l'utilité qu'il y aurait à pourvoir de commun accord entre les deux Puissances à la modification de sa constitution quand le besoin se ferait sentir. Les soussignés Ministres de Grande Bretagne et de Russie sont de plus autorisés à déclarer qu'aussitôt qu'un accord sera intervenu dans le sens susindiqué, leurs Gouvernements seront prêts, dans le but de faciliter la tâche de la Commission Mixte Financière, d'accorder au Trésor Persan un subside de mensuel Tomans 200,000 pour la durée de la guerre actuelle.

Art.1. - Apartir de la date du présent décret et par modification au décret du 24 Saur Louy-Il, les pouvoirs et obligations de la Commission Financière Mixte sont fixés comme suit:

1. - Vérification et approbation de toutes les dépenses
2. - Etablissement du budget général des recettes et des dépenses.

3. - Etude et établissement d'impôts nouveaux, réforme ou révision des impôts existants, tant directs qu'indirects, tout en observant et en respectant, dans la mesure du possible, les moeurs et coutumes du pays et de la religion musulmane, et en tenant compte des conventions et traités, et, en général, élaboration et mise à exécution de toutes mesures propres à assurer au Trésor les ressources nécessaires pour garantir les intérêts de ses créanciers et pour assurer la marche régulière des services publics.

4. - Liquidation des emprunts à court terme et des avances.

5. - Controle de toute les sources de revenus du pays, tant gouvernementales que provinciales ou municipales, y compris celles affectées à des établissements et institutions d'intérêts publics ou de bienfaisance. A cet effet la Commission pourra se faire présenter par les Administrations intéressées tous comptes, et se faire produire toutes justifications qu'elle jugera devoir connaître ou vérifier, et en cas de besoin elle pourra déléguer un ou plusieurs de ses membres, ou un ou plusieurs fonctionnaires nommés par elle, pour opérer sur place les vérifications nécessaires. Elle veillera spécialement à ce que les revenus affectés en garantie des intérêts et amortissement des emprunts ne soient pas détournés de leur destination et soient versés régulièrement à la Caisse centrale de l'État, sauf les exceptions prévues à cet égard par les conventions des emprunts en ce que concerne les revenus des Douanes et autres.

6. - Approbation et révision des décisions portant nomination ou révocation des fonctionnaires des services financiers.

Art. 2 - Les décisions de la Commission seront prises à la
majorité absolue de ses membres. En cas de parité de voix, la question fera l'objet d'une nouvelle délibération en séance plénière, à laquelle tous les commissaires devront obligatoirement assister. Dans le cas où un ou plusieurs membres s'absentent d'une séance plénière formellement convoquée, les membres qui y assisteront constitueront un quorum. Pourtant l'approbation de l'assemblée du budget ainsi que toute décision se rapportant à une dépense extraordinaire, à la prise de mesures extraordinaires de contrôle ou d'investigation, à l'établissement d'impôts nouveaux à une modification aux impôts existants, à la liquidation ou à l'émission d'un emprunt, doit, pour être valable, avoir reçu l'adhésion formelle des délégués Britannique et Russe.

Art. 3. - Le règlement des séances ainsi que l'ordre intérieur de la Commission sera dressé par la Commission elle-même et soumis à l'approbation des trois Gouvernements.

Art. 4 - La durée de la Commission Financière Mixte n'est pas fixée. Elle pourra être dissoute par suite d'un accord entre les trois Gouvernements.
 وزارت راه و شهرسازی

اداره جنوب شرق

دوره 1300

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کتابخانه معاصر خارجه تاسیس

تاریخ 19 شهر محرم 1339

بلقیس برگ

کتابداری معاصر خارجه تاسیس

دفترچه 1364
نام: خسرو بیات

فیصله: انجام داده شد که این پیام به مقامات فتحوی شیرازی، قزاق و ترکمنستان ارسال شود.

متن: به آنها گفته شد که بازنشستگان اقامتی به گروه‌هایی که به کمک ایرانیان در تاریخ همکاری کردند، پاسپورت به آنها صادر شود. همچنین، به آنها گفت که این پیام به مقامات ویژه ایالات متحده و اروپا نیز ارسال شود.

تاریخ: ۱۵ مهر ۱۳۲۹ به تاریخ ۱۰ مهر ۱۳۲۹ (۱۳ ماه) نسبت به نقشه‌ها.

کمیته: کمیته سیاسی ایرانیان واقع در ترکمنستان.

توجه: این پیام به مقامات خارجی ارسال شد تا بازنشستگان اقامتی به کمک ایرانیان در تاریخ همکاری کردند.
Appendix 3: British Officers of the South Persian Rifles, 1917

Brigadier General Percy M. Sykes

Lt. Col. M.C. Farran
Lt. Col. F. Hunter
Lt. Col. E.F. Orton

Major C.M. Bruce
Major C.R.L. Fitzgerald
Major G.P. Grant
Major F.A. Hamilton
Major A.S. Hay
Major F.W. Iles
Major J.A. King-Mason
Major J.A.P. Manson
Major H.C. Oakes
Major L.C. Wagstaff

Capt. G.T. Bond
Capt. O.A. Butters
Capt. D.N. Carr
Capt. T.M.O. Catterson-Smith
Capt. Christian
Capt. J.P. Coffey
Capt. H.F. Connolly
Capt. H.C. Dobbs
Capt. Donovan
Capt. Fowle
Capt. J.H. Grove-White
Capt. J.B. Hance
Capt. L. Harrison
Capt. C.R. Henning
Capt. F. Hill
Capt. H.M. Jelly
Capt. N. Kendle
Capt. Kernaran
Capt. A.N.J. Lilly
Capt. L. Livingstone
Capt. D.P. Machan
Capt. M. McMurray
Capt. J.N. Merril
Capt. A.J. O'Connor
Capt. N.T. Parson
Capt. R.C. Ruck
Capt. C.A. Swainson
Capt. H. Thorburn
Capt. G.H. Weldon
Capt. F. Weldon
Capt. J. Williams
Capt. N.M. Williams
Capt. (Dr.) Woollat

Lieut. G.D.M. Gwynne-Griffith
Lieut. Peters
Lieut. Wall
Lieut. J.W. Winter
APPENDIX 4

from John I. Clarke, The Iranian City of Shiraz (Durham, 1963), p. 14

from P. Oberling, The Qashqâ'î Nomads of Fars (The Hague/Paris, 1974)
(From P. Oberling, The Qashqâ'î Nomads of Pars (The Hague/Paris, 1972))