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"Down with the Monarchy": Iran's Republican Moment of August 1953

Abstract

The purpose of this article is to explore and analyze Iran's "Republican Moment" of 16-19 August 1953, arguably the last concerted effort to abolish the monarchy and establish a republican order in the county prior to the Revolution of 1978-79. By drawing on a broad range of primary source material that have thus far remained relatively understudied by existing scholarship, such as the political press of those crucial days, the essay will attempt to shed light on a number of significant domestic developments which impacted the outcome of the actual coup of 19 August 1953. Further attempt will be made to explain the importance of calls in favor of the Republic and the Premier Mosaddeq refusal to take heed of them. The paper will also explore the diverse origins of the Republican platform and its impact on both the urban crowd as well as on the political elite.

Keywords: Republican movement, Mosaddeq, 19 August 1953 Coup, Tudeh Party, Republicanism, National Front of Iran, Cold War

Introduction

The *coup d'état* of 19 August 1953 against Mohammad Mosaddeq is almost universally considered as a watershed moment in the contemporary political history of Iran. The sudden removal from power of the prime minister of the time has been etched into the collective memory of successive generations of Iranians and has been the subject of considerable attention by scholarly and popular writers alike. Following the publication in 2000 by the *New York Times* of an internal account of the coup produced by the Central Intelligence Agency's main planner Donald Wilber, the attention has mainly shifted to the onerous topic of the extent to which the successful ejection from power of Mosaddeq was due to the intervention of the CIA and British intelligence.[1]

Notwithstanding the importance of ongoing research on such dimensions of the coup, this redirection has also been conducive to lesser focus on the internal developments which immediately predated that fateful day. As noted recently by Rahnema, "The historiography of the Mosaddeq era, let alone the overthrow of Mosaddeq, is in its infancy, as is our knowledge of this period."[2] One such instance which deserves further analysis consists of a disjoined set of initiatives which took place between 16 and 19 August 1953 which had at its core the dissolution of the monarchical state system and its replacement with a republican one. As this study will show, these initiatives, which are here collectively referred to as the "Republican Moment", were brought about by a significant segment of the political spectrum in the heady period following the Shāh's departure abroad on 16 August and the second successful attempt to unseat Mosaddeq three days later. Seen within the context of longer term political development, the Moment marked the last overt and popularly-participated domestic attempt to bring about the creation of a republic prior to the Revolution of 1978-79.

The republican initiatives which are at the heart of the present study have been variously depicted in the contemporary press, the memoirs of political figures and actors of the time and have also formed part of the prosecution's argument in the trial proceedings against Mosaddeq

and his allies and supporters.[3] The aim of this article is to bring together this disparate sources, assess the validity of oft-mentioned claims regarding the posture of key figures with regards to the republican initiatives and provide a focused study of the Moment. It will also assess its importance in the broader evolution of those complex and event-ridden days, particularly with regards to principal actors such as the Tudeh Party's leadership and Mosaddeq himself. It will argue in particular that the calls to establish a republic had a decisive impact on the prime minister's decision to order his supporters off the streets on the afternoon of 18 August, which in turn greatly favoured the second, successful coup attempt of the following day.

The Republican Moment of 16-19 August 1953 also marks the culmination of a complex process of institutional confrontation which had been ongoing, as will be discussed briefly below, for most of Mosaddeq's prime ministerial tenure. The concluding part of this process was marked by the unique power vacuum which came about on the morning of 16 August 1953, when both government and society had to contend with the absence of the Shāh and the lack of clear legal provisions to deal with the unprecedented situation. These factors favoured the emergence of proposals which had been rarely, if ever, floated during Mosaddeq's premiership and which extended beyond the institutional boundaries of the constitutional (*mashruteh*) state order. Similarly to the more extended episode of 1924, the Republican initiatives of 1953 came about at a time of severe weakness of the monarchical institution and emerged on the cusp of societal incitement for a transition to a new state system.[4]

The Republican Moment has been subject to little in-depth academic scrutiny. It is largely missing from major accounts of the coup, such as Gasiorowski's seminal 1987 account of the CIA's involvement, Ervand Abrahamian's *Iran Between Two Revolutions* and the more recent *The Coup* and Katouzian's *Musadiq and the Struggle for Power in Iran.* Fakhreddin Azimi's profound analyses of the process to remove Mosaddeq from power mention only in passing the attitude of several key advisors of the prime minister regarding the republican issue and states that the Tudeh's raucous calls for the establishment of a "Democratic Republic" had the effect of dissuading many Mosaddeq supporters from pursuing the republican option.[5] Drawing on interviews with surviving members of the executive bodies of the Tudeh, Maziar Behrooz points out the party's open support for the republic immediately prior to August 19 but makes no mention of the content of the communiqués through which such a support was distributed to the Tudeh's large rank and file.[6] In his in-depth analysis of the role and agency of clerical figures in the pre-coup period, Rahnema touches upon the attitude of religious leaders and Mosaddeq advisers regarding the efforts to create a republic in the final days but does not delve into the details of the initiative.[7] In a little-cited journal article, Shākeri provides deeper insight on the Republican Moment, but is hampered by limited access to the relevant sources.[8] Furthermore, none of the works referred to above make detailed reference to the other political movements which openly called for the establishment of the republic, nor provide a thorough account of the debates on the theme within the upper echelons of the main formation supportive of the Prime Minister, the National Front.

The aim to redress these partial accounts of the republican initiative and its influence within decision-making at the highest political level, informs the present study, which is grounded on a close analysis of the political press of the time and the memoirs of both leaders and and rank and file members of the multitude of groups then active on the political scene.

The Commemoration of 30 Tir: Mosaddeq at a Critical Institutional Crossroad. The first anniversary of the Qiyām-e 30 Tir, or July uprising of 1952, when for the first time politically-motivated crowds successfully sought to retain an outgoing prime minister, had significant consequences in the contention between Mosaddeq and his opponents. By that point in time, attempts to bring about a negotiated settlement of the dispute between the prime minister and the growing number of his influential political antagonists had failed and the crisis-ridden Seventeenth legislature had entered into a stalemate after the mass resignation of the allies of

the prime minister, whom had congregated under the Nahzat-e Melli, or National Movement, banner. The oil crisis had further been accentuated by the ongoing British embargo. The commemoration of the 30 Tir incident would therefore represent a valuable barometer to gauge the extent to which Mosaddeq still carried the support of the populace despite prominent defections, such as those of Āyatollāh Kāshāni and Mozaffar Baqāʾi, from his own ranks.

On 21 July 1953, the main squares of Tehran were filled by the participants to two distinct gatherings. In the morning of that day, an organised crowd of Tudeh members and sympathisers thronged through the central Sepah square, compelling the *New York Times* correspondent to claim, exaggeratedly, that "Communist partisans, numbering at least 100,000 persons, were massed in Bahārestān and in the approaching streets as far as the eye could see".[9]

In the days following the anniversary, the prime minister finalised details for a referendum to dissolve the Seventeenth legislature, with which he had progressively developed an unworkable relationship. Such an initiative had gained traction in the aftermath of the events surrounding the attempt, on 9 Esfand 1331 (28 February 1953), to oust Mosaddeq from the scene. Following a dramatic appearance in the Majles floor that day, in which the prime minister proceeded to announce that he owed his post to the "people alone, and not to the Parliament or the Shāh", an influential radical weekly close to government circles reported that a referendum was being considered to break the impasse.[10] In a radio address on 27 July, Mosaddeq finally proceeded to state that in any "democratic and constitutional" political system, there could be no law or prescription above the "will of the people". He then proceeded to lambast his adversaries as "opponents of the National Movement" who were mainly motivated by their personal interests. He then urged the people to vote in favour of the dissolution of the Majles and pledged to end his government's activities if they would express their opposition to the move.[11]

The backers of the referendum: From Nahzat-e Melli to Tudeh. The reactions to the prime minister's radio address were indicative of the profound effects that the opposing sides of the political spectrum were envisaging for the referendum itself. The widely-read weekly *Shuresh,* which was edited by a zealot supporter of Mosaddeq, proclaimed that the nation was now at the threshold of a "great historical test" and stated that the aim of the referendum should extend beyond the dissolution of the Majles, to reach the "eradication of the foreigner-worshipping monarchy".[12] This view was not dissimilar from the one espoused by the organisations aligned to the Tudeh Party, which considered the referendum as a stepping stone towards the creation of a Majles-e Moʾassesān, or Constituent Assembly, in order to change the constitution in a "completely free and democratic" atmosphere with the aim of "neutralising forever the royal court's capacity to plot against and weaken the progressive *nahzat".*[13] In a detailed analysis of the constitutional powers accorded to the monarch produced on the occasion of the anniversary of the Constitutional Revolution, the communist party noted the excessive powers accorded to the Shāh by the existing charter and called for limitations to be placed on his ability to interfere in both military and civilian affairs through extensive modifications of the same. Amongst other requests, the analysis presciently called for the removal of the monarch's right to dissolve parliament, calling it an "insult" to the people.[14] Despite pointing out at what it considered to be the inadequacies of the existing constitutional charter, the Tudeh did not make an overt call, in this instance, for the replacement *tout court* of the constitutional (*mashruteh*) state order with a republican one. In a sign of wavering postures, the same special issue also approvingly reproduced the renowned poet ʿĀref Qazvini's *Ghazal-e Jomhuri*, a composition in favour of the establishment of a republic composed during the Republican initiative of 1924.

The opposition to the referendum. The anti-Mosaddeq axis spared no rhetorical effort to attack the prime minister's decision, which they immediately considered antithetical to their own key interests. The fiercest opposition to the referendum came from Āyatollāh Kāshāni, who produced a strongly worded declaration on 29 July which began by claiming that referendums

were instruments that applied to "political systems which were bereft of a clear structure and constitution […] in our *mashruteh* system, there are clear rules and regulations governing the prime ministership: anyone trespassing these is guilty of treason and may be charged according to the law […] the use of the public purse to fund the costs of the referendum is to be considered illegal".[15] On the day prior to the first leg of the vote, Kāshāni produced another proclamation in which he overtly called for the boycott of the referendum and termed participation in the same as *harām.*[16] In a strongly-worded editorial, Baqāʾi made a last appeal to the "people of Tehran" whom he termed as "holding the destiny of the country" in their hands, and explained that there was the risk of the "destruction of the 6000-year old nation" if the referendum went according to the government's plan: "the danger does not consist in the 17th Majles being dissolved, or handpicked new legislature being created, or the organisation of a follow-up referendum, as desired in the Tudeh press, to change the regime through a Majles-e Moʾassesān", but rather, according to the head of the Toilers' Party, in the possibility that the referendum and the mechanism through which it was to be organised - the erection of separate polling stations for the "Yes" and "No" votes in different areas of the city - would be institutionalised and repeated in the future. Baqāʾi concluded by urging the population of the capital to "use any means" to disrupt the referendum. [17]

Besides witnessing a substantial refusal by public opinion to heed to their calls, the opposition leaders also fell short of convincing the leading *marjāʿ,* Āyatollāh Borujerdi, to accept their request to produce a *fatwā* calling for a boycott of the referendum. The supreme religious figure opted instead to reiterate his distance from the political field, thereby depriving the anti-Mosaddeq camp from strong backing to Kāshāni's rejection of the referendum on Shi'i jurisprudential grounds.[18]

The referendum was held over two separate days, 3 August in Tehran and a week later in the rest of the country, and accrued over a million votes in favour of Mosaddeq's proposal.[19] The negligible opposition to the government's plans manifested through the low number of "No" votes and the lack of any significant anti-referendum street-level activity during the polling considerably strengthened Mosaddeq's hand. The prime minister now decided to involve the Shāh in the ongoing political process, by proceeding to request the convening of elections for the new legislature, a prerogative that article 48 of the main text of the constitution accorded to the Shāh alone.[20]

The Republican Moment of 16-19 August 1953

The implications of the first overthrow attempt of 16 August. During the evening between 15 and 16 August, the head of the Imperial Guard, Colonel Neʿmatollāh Nasiri, appeared at Mosaddeq's residence to present the prime minister with the *farmān* or royal decree, through which Mohammad Rezā Pahlavi announced the appointment of Zāhedi as new prime minister. Forewarned of Nasiri's mission, Mosaddeq had him promptly arrested, thereby setting into motion the chain of events which would result in the Shāh and the Queen Soraya fleeing to Baghdad and Rome. Other officers, who were intent on arresting key members of Mosaddeq's administration, such as the foreign minister and editor of *Bākhtar-e Emruz*, Hosayn Fātemi, the chief of the army staff Taqi Riyāhi and the Iran Party leader Ahmad Zirakzādeh, were also held in custody, thereby signalling the failure of the initial effort to unseat the prime minister.

The legality of Mosaddeq's refusal to heed to the *farmān* has been subject to considerable scrutiny. While several commentators and scholars sympathetic to the Shāh's actions have noted that he was legally entitled to replace prime ministers during the *fetrat* (parliamentary recess) period, which they considered to have been started after the collective resignation of the Nahzat-e Melli deputies a month earlier, the decree had been delivered prior to either the Shāh or the prime minister formally declaring the end of the Seventeenth legislature.[21] During his

military trial in the autumn of 1953, Mosaddeq explained that he had refused to heed to the contents of the missive carried by Nasiri because of doubts on the authenticity of the same, which stemmed from handwriting irregularities and the fact that the date presented in the document was 22 Mordād, or 13 August.[22] Despite his deteriorating relationship with the Shāh in the aftermath of the 9 Esfand incident, Mosaddeq's first interpretation of the *farmān* appears to have ultimately been that of a forgery designed to propitiate a military takeover against both himself and Mohammad Rezā Pahlavi.

At 7am on 16 August, Tehran Radio broadcast a message in which details of Nasiri's initiative were provided but no mention was made of the Shāh's possible involvement in his attempts or the *farmān*.[23] At noon, Fātemi, who also served as the government spokesman, attended a press conference in which, when asked to comment on whether the government held the Shāh responsible for the attempted overthrow, claimed to be "unaware" of the government's position but had made his own clear through that day's leading article on *Bākhtar-e Emruz*. Fātemi's three famous editorials, published in this and the final two issues of the newspaper, accuse the Shāh and the royal court of having been in league with the British, plotting constantly against Mosaddeq, and having "depleted the wealth of the nation", but fall short of openly advocating the termination of the monarchical state system, a sign that Fātemi was caught between his strong animosity towards Mohammad Rezā Pahlavi and Mosaddeq's reluctance to sever all ties with the institutional *status quo*.

While the government formally refrained from engaging in the attribution of responsibility to the Shāh, Mosaddeq proceeded with emitting a brief decree - the sole one bearing his personal seal after 16 August - dissolving the Majles, which was printed in the evening newspapers of the same day. The prime minister attributed such decision to the "will of the people, as manifested through the popular vote of the referendum".

The reaction to the overthrow attempt of 16 August. While the government figures were gradually reacting to Nasiri's coup attempt, the arc of pro-Mosaddeq parties and movements were organising at a faster pace at street level, where they could rely upon the experience gained in the constant stream series of protests and rallies since the 30 Tir uprising. After an initial small demonstration in front of the prime minister's residence on the morning of 16 August, the four main allied movements, the Iran Party, the Hezb-e Mardom-e Iran, the Pān-Irānist, Hezb-e Mellat-e Irān and the Third Force swiftly agreed to congregate in front of the parliamentary buildings at Bahārestān Square at 5pm. This meeting was to be the only organised gathering held by the pro-government forces prior to the second coup of 19 August. In front of what the press unanimously described as a completely full square and with large crowds overflowing into the nearby avenues and streets, the prominent former MPs Bāqer Jalāli Musavi, Ahmad Razavi, Ahmad Zirakzādeh, ʿAli Shāyegān and the Foreign minister Fātemi all delivered fiery speeches attacking the royal court and decrying the coup. The crowd frequently interjected with slogans such as "Death to the Treacherous Shāh!", "We don't want the Shāh!", "The Coup plotters must be tried and executed!".[24] Despite the agitation, none of the speakers proceeded to explicitly announce the end of the monarchy. Both Shāyegān and Fātemi stated that the government should now proceed to the creation of a *showrā-ye saltanat*, or Regency Council, and stepped on the borderlines of constitutional provisions, which accorded such a right solely to the reigning monarch prior to a trip abroad, as eventually became the case in early 1979.

The concluding statement of the meeting called upon Mosaddeq to "legally pursue" the coup plotters and the fleeing Shāh and to set up a temporary Regency Council in order to determine the future of the state system. The Tudeh sympathisers, which had gathered under the banners of their main front organisation, the Jamʿiyat-e Melli-ye Mobārezeh bā Esteʿmār (National Society Against Colonialism, henceforth known as National Society), congregated instead in the nearby Sepah Square, after walking from the congregation point of Kāfe Shahrdāri

(presently Tehran City Theatre) and bringing about a three-mile long rally which featured the leadership of the Society at its helm. Mobile loudspeakers hastily set up on taxis carried the main slogans of the protest, including possibly for the first time "Barchideh Bād Saltanat" (lit. the Monarchy must be removed).[25] The concluding resolution of the Tudeh gathering called for the immediate trial and execution of the coup plotters, the lack of any mercy for the Shāh, who was labelled as the "chief organiser" of the coup, and the immediate convening of the Majles-e Moʿassesān, which as seen above had been requested by the party prior to the referendum, and the dismantlement of the Pahlavi royal court, now considered the "centre of the conspiracy".

A mixed reaction. By the evening of 16 August, the initial reaction of the pro-Mosaddeq arc to the unfolding events was a varied one. The prime minister's overall pragmatic stance refrained from directly implicating Mohammad Rezā Pahlavi in the attempt to remove him from power but also brought an end to the Seventeenth Majles by his own initiative, a move which sidestepped the constitutional limitations of his post.

Caught between between the need to cater for the growing crowd antagonism to the Shāh and a residual attachment to the tenets of the *mashruteh* state system, the National Front leaders and the organs of the aforementioned parties engaged in at times tortuous rhetoric. While reporting the Bahārestān resolution to press for the creation of the Regency Council, the organ of the Hezb-e Mellat Iran bar Bonyād-e Pān-Iranism, dedicated its main title to what was ostensibly the party line: "Mosaddeq is the leader of our nation, which does not want either a royal court nor a Parliament".[26] The Hezb-e Mardom-e Iran, which espoused a syncretic fusion between socialism and egalitarian Shiism, broke ranks, however, and claimed, in its special issue on 17 August, that the meetings of the previous afternoon had a clear aim, that of transforming Iran into a republic.[27] This stance, which is the first public approbatory use of the term *jomhuri* following the Shāh's escape abroad, came as a confirmation of its previous explicit appreciation for republicanism, which had been made in an issue celebrating the formal establishment of the republican system in Egypt in the summer of 1953.[28] All of these views were, however, not endorsed by Mosaddeq, who had yet to pronounce himself on the future configuration of the state structure in the wake of the Shāh's absence.

The Assault on the Statues. Throughout 17 August, central Tehran was the theatre of a sustained effort for the removal of the most glaring public manifestation of Pahlavi rule, the imposing statues of Rezā Shāh and his son which stood in the main squares and thoroughfares where the crowds supportive of the government had gathered until the previous midnight. During his trial, Mosaddeq stated that he had ordered, during that afternoon, for the statues of Rezā Shāh to be brought down, after being warned, on the morning of the same day, that "left-wing extremist parties" were intent on doing so.[29]

Perhaps unbeknownst to the prime minister, the National Front parties had begun such operations from the early morning. The central press organ of the Iran Party explains that groups of youth members from all the aforementioned National Front parties and groups gathered at its headquarters during that morning to be assigned to groups which set out to haul the statues down in an orderly manner.[30] The Third Force sympathisers, who reached Bahārestān Square at 8am in order to start pulling the Rezā Shāh statues down, needed no less than four hours to bring down the imposing bronze monument of the founder of the Pahlavi dynasty in Sepah Square, the location of the separate Tudeh rally of the previous evening.[31]

Besides being a deeply symbolic gesture of rupture with the much disdained Rezā Shāh legacy, the removal of the statues also further confirmed the swiftly vanishing influence of the royal court over the fast-paced events which were occurring after the departure of the Shāh, whose flight to Baghdad was now well-documented by the Tehran press. After publishing one of the earliest press reproductions of the decree appointing Zāhedi, a pro-government afternoon

daily proclaimed that the unequivocal slogan emerging from the streets was "Mā Shāh Nemikhāhim", or "We don't want a Shāh".[32]

The Tudeh's Democratic Republic Proclamation. The evening of 17 August presented an atmosphere of intense and increasing radicalisation. The crowds which thronged the centre of Tehran had developed into an amorphous combination of sympathisers and rank and file members of various pro-Mosaddeq parties, the Tudeh and previously unaffiliated bystanders who had become increasingly active and were lauded by political organs of all stripes as "the heroic people of Tehran" due to their involvement in the impromptu activities against the monarchy. Additionally, reports were coming through of similar acts in other major cities, such as Isfahan, Tabriz and in the Khuzestān province.[33]

After sensing the crowd's mood, several political groupings decided to break with the frail allegiance and re-interpretations of the prescriptions of the Mashruteh constitution and proposed instead the termination *tout court* of the monarchy, in the form of varied proclamations in favour of a republican state system. The Tudeh engaged in the most well-known of these initiatives. Mahmud Zhandi, the editor of the main morning daily of the party, recalled that he was part of a three-person group which visited ʿAli Akbar Dehkhodā, the celebrated lexicographer who had occasionally voiced support for republicanism in the *Sur Esrāfil* journal he had edited in Switzerland in the early part of the 20th century. Appearing at Dehkhodā's doorstep at dusk on 17 August, the group informed him that Mosaddeq could be moving towards the declaration of a republic in the next few days, and urged him to accept their invitation to feature as the president of this state system in the making.[34] The initiative failed, however, as Dekhodā, who had spread out the *fiches* of his famed encyclopaedic dictionary before them, replied that he was immersed in the compilation his lifetime achievement and suggested Mosaddeq for the post instead.[35]

At dawn on 18 August, the morning daily affiliated to the Tudeh and the clandestine central organ of the party carried an extensive declaration from its Central Committee containing the fateful call for the establishment of a "Democratic Republic", thereby marking the first instance of the term *jomhuri* appearing on the party press.[36] The long communiqué, which was the Committee's first formal proclamation since the Shāh's flight, started by providing an overview of the five "coup attempts" which had occurred during the previous twelve months, prior to depicting the Shāh as the ringleader of a group of "feudals, landowners and major industrialists" who were beholden to the foreign imperialists. It then criticised Mosaddeq for possessing too recalcitrant an attitude towards the foreign powers and their domestic agents before forcefully claiming that the "removal of the structure of the monarchy" was the only option for a conclusive defeat of the current conspiracy and warding off its reoccurrence. It then proceeded with the main demand: "The issue of removing the monarchy and creating the Democratic Republic must be put to a referendum, and a Majles-e Moʿassesān, convened through a free and fair election, should have the goal of modifying and completing the constitution".[37] It then ominously warned that anyone who opposed this resolution was to be considered an "enemy of the people" and decried any attempt to replace the Shāh with a Regency Council or similar as treachery towards national independence. The Tudeh communiqué concluded by demanding once again, as it had done on the occasion of the 30 Tir and 9 Esfand incidents, the creation of the United Front against Colonialism, and stated that there was no requirement for groups and parties to relinquish their existing views and ideologies in order to be part of the same.

At 11am on 18 August, the central council of the National Society met to prepare and approve its own declaration for the republic.[38] While reiterating the Tudeh Central Committee's request for the creation of a Democratic Republic through a referendum and the election of a constituent assembly, the Society adopted a decidedly more moderate line regarding the possible reaction of the government. While noting that Mosaddeq and his ministers would not

have immediately accepted such a proclamation, one of the council members noted that it was necessary to "convince the government through resistance and perseverance" and pointed out that "some of the supporters of the government had been uttering this slogan [the republic] from this morning".[39]

The Society's communiqué, which was published later that day, reflected this assessment of the government's possible reaction and refrained from containing a directly confrontational discourse towards it, as was seen instead in the Central Committee's declaration.[40] It may be therefore inferred that the active public presence of the Society leadership, which as seen before had taken to the streets from the afternoon of 16 August, contributed to its less rigid view, which was different from the Central Committee's more uncompromising analysis.[41] Both declarations made the establishment of a republic conditional upon approval via referendum. Nevertheless, the party began actively engaging in republican slogans and presented charts in which the monarchical names of the main avenues and squares of the capital were replaced by alternatives in tune with the proposed new state system. The central Shahrezā Avenue was renamed Jomhuri, Pahlavi became Mellat, while the Sevvom Esfand (named after the date of Rezā Khān's march on Tehran) was to be known as 30 Tir.[42] The sudden acceleration of such public manifestations of republicanism by the Tudeh Party was to have, as seen below, a significant effect in Mosaddeq's final deliberations on the issue of the republic.

Republican Sentiment within the Nahzat-e Melli. Simultaneously to the Tudeh Central Committee's appeal for the establishment of a Democratic Republic, the Third Force party newspaper joined *Mardom-e Iran* in pressing for the transition away from monarchy from within the ranks of the Nahzat-e Melli, by claiming that, on the previous evening, the people had chanted the following slogan: "Referendum, Republic, Mosaddeq is Victorious".[43] The editorial stated that the people of Tehran had exhibited their revulsion to the Pahlavi dynasty's rule through the removal of the statues and that it was now imperative for the government to arrange a referendum to modify the state system. The publication confirmed its position the following morning. Alongside Mosaddeq's decree banning any street demonstration, it published a long editorial which stated that the proclamation of the Republic, the removal from the throne of Mohammad Rezā Pahlavi and the change of the constitution were "unavoidable and immediate choices".[44]

The Third Force appears, however, to have lacked consensus in this decision. According to the reminiscences of Amir Pishdād, a high-ranking member, and the court testimony, over a decade later, of the party leader Khalil Maleki, the latter had distanced himself from the republican initiative, which he deemed too radical and detached from the prime minister's position, and effectively surrendered control over key party instruments, such as its eponymous widely read morning daily, to a younger radical flank led by Mohammad ʿAli Khonji and Masoud Hejāzi.[45] These internal divisions were not apparent to outside observers, who could only note the championing of the republican cause on 18 and 19 August.

The other parties of the pro-Mosaddeq arc presented a more varied support for the republic. On its last issue, which was published on the afternoon of August 18, *Bākhtar-e Emruz* reported that youths affiliated to the National Front parties were taking part in the scattered street demonstrations by shouting slogans in favour of *jomhuriyat,* or republicanism, and insisted on the establishment of a republican state system during impromptu speeches. The central organ of the Iran Party proclaimed the end of the Pahlavi dynasty on 19 August, without however venturing into republican lexicon.[46] A periodical produced by a more radical faction of the Iran Party devoted considerable attention to the republican moment on its last issue. It claimed that "the Tudeh, Third Force and 2-3 other parties" had made definitive decisions in support of a shift towards a republic, that the same enjoyed "strong support within different social classes" but that the prime minister and the Iran Party had yet to become proponents of the change in the political system.[47]

It is therefore clear that on the eve of the successful attempt at removing Mosaddeq from power, republicanism had gained support within the arc of his supporters and was not limited to the ranks of the Tudeh. A further clear indicator of this may be found in the last issue of *Hajjār,* the periodical of an organisation of former Tudeh members led by Anvar Khāmeiʾ and now turned into radical opponents of the party. While underscoring the need to adopt the referendum as the means to achieve any significant political decision, the publication called for a referendum to confirm both the establishment of a republic and Mosaddeq as the *raiʾs-e qovā-ye mamlekat*, or "Head of the Branches of State".[48]

The anti-Mosaddeq front's reaction. The growing calls for the establishment of the republic also caused the consternation of the anti-government figures, but did not seemingly elicit a formal response from the foremost clerical leaders. Mehdi Haeʾri Yazdi, the son of the founder of the Qom seminary system, recalled being summoned to a meeting with Āyatollāh Behbahāni, a key leading clerical opposition figure to Mosaddeq, on the morning of 19 August. Behbahāni stated then that the flight of the Shāh had led the nation to the brink of destruction and the calls for the republic would lead to Iran "falling behind the Iron Curtain" in the near future and the *marjaʿiyat* and all other aspects of the Shi'i religion being under risk of dissolution.[49] He then pleaded with Haeʾri Yazdi to travel to Qom to "obtain a decree or handwritten statement" from Grand Āyatollāh Borujerdi, in order to raise awareness amongst the people of the impending communist threat. While expressing readiness to do so, Haeʾri Yazdi retorted that, if asked by Borujerdi to provide his own opinion, he would state that he believed that the society was not on the brink of being taken over by communism and that "at most" Iran would turn into a republic, but did not equate the latter with communism, and reminded Behbahāni that even Rezā Shāh had once mulled over the same option. The pleadings contained within the newspaper of another religious figure opposed to Mosaddeq, Shams Qanātābādi on the morning of 19 August give the impression that Borujerdi was once again reticent to intervene on behalf of Kāshāni, Behbahāni and other clerical figures opposed to Mosaddeq, and chose instead to await the outcome of this political battle from the sideline.[50] In an interview with an Egyptian periodical a fortnight after the coup, Kāshāni, who remained conspicuously absent from the main political press during the fateful last week of Mordād, claimed that Mosaddeq was plotting to establish a republic "from 4 months prior" and that a republican state system was not "adequate" for Iran.[51] Kāshāni therefore implies that the calls for a republic constituted an additional point of rupture between himself and Mosaddeq which may have contributed to his lack of support for pro-government forces in the heady mid-August period.

Another political force long considered to have been part of the CIA's efforts to overthrow Mosaddeq, the Nazi-inspired Sumkā party, also gave consideration to the future structure of the state system on 19 August. In a quixotic editorial, after writing off Nasiri's attempt as a "ridiculous coup", the party organ stated that, just as constitutional monarchy had replaced the ancient absolutism fifty years earlier, republicanism was now emerging to supersede the existing political order. It then referred positively to the near future, in which the "first authority of state" and the "political leader of the nation" would be one and the same.[52]

After initially accusing the prime minister of having engineered the "farcical" coup of 16 August for the purpose of changing the state system, *Shāhed* compared Mosaddeq's decisions in the past few days with "Hitler's burning of the Reichstag" in 1933, implying that both had resorted to distracting public opinion in order to achieve covert aims.[53] On the morning of 19 August, the daily's editorial explained, in its usual lachrymose prose, that Mussolini had a crowd "one hundred times the size of those at Mosaddeq's disposal" when delivering his famous speeches from the Medici [sic] square in Rome, and had an "understandable and well-structured" ideology to present to the masses, prior to accusing the Iranian prime minister of

"bandying about an illegal government which fooled the nation" into believing it was the legitimate one.[54]

According to Wilber's account, the republican declarations were also seized upon by the plotters of the second coup, who masqueraded themselves as Tudeh activists, intent on distributing the proclamations to the clergy and other segments of society averse to such a development. The assault of these "black crowds" on the headquarters of some of the National Front parties,[55] damaged the republican cause, for it led to be interpreted, as shall be seen below, by Mosaddeq as an intrinsically Tudeh initiative. Such a view was particularly heralded by some of the Shāh's most ardent supporters, who triumphantly proclaimed that the events of 19 August decisively blocked the possible rise of a republic planned and masterminded by the Soviet Ambassador to Tehran, Lavrentiev.[56] Nevertheless, anti-republican sentiment did not feature explicitly and prominently in the slogans of the groups which took to the streets of Tehran and other cities on the day of the coup. As noted in several accounts sympathetic to the overthrow of Mosaddeq, the chants which were uttered on that decisive day mostly revolved along the pro-Shāh, anti-Mosaddeq axis, therefore only obliquely equating support for the retention of Mohammad Rezā Pahlavi's reign with rejection of the republican commotion which had emerged after 16 August.[57]

Mosaddeq and the Republic

The events of the summer of 1953 occurred at a time when Mosaddeq had progressively distanced himself from the Shāh,[58] despite never detaching himself from loyalty towards the constitutional (*mashruteh*) state order. In the immediate aftermath of the July 1952 uprising, during which societal emotions against the royal family had risen considerably, he attempted to assuage the monarch by inscribing a copy of the Quran with the following statement: "I am to be considered an enemy of the Quran if I act against the constitution and if I were to accept the post of president should the political system be changed into a republic".[59] During an important radio address to the nation the prime minister stated however, on 6 April, that the monarch, in a constitutional (*mashruteh*) state order, should "reign, and not rule", noting that the Shāh did not have political duties.[60]

The mid-August commotion in the streets and squares of Tehran and other Iranian cities occurred at a time when Mosaddeq never left his residence to venture into the public arena. Between Nasiri's visit and the escape from the smoldering ruins of his house in the afternoon of 19 August, the prime minister chaired a continuous set of meetings and National Front summits with advisors and political allies. The diaries and reminiscences of this group provide a valuable source for the assessment of the many issues which were on Mosaddeq's agenda in those fateful days, including the future structure of the state system in the wake of the Shāh's departure abroad.

Mosaddeq's first declaration following Nasiri's initiative consisted in announcing the dissolution of the Seventeenth Majles, thereby taking on a prerogative which the constitution, and himself, had previously unequivocally assigned to the Shāh. Nevertheless, as the personal diaries of Kāzem Hasibi make clear, the issue of the republic took centre stage in the discussions at the prime minister's residence throughout the day on 18 August. An initial debate featured three National Front figures (the Iran Party chairman Ahmad Zirakzādeh, the foreign minister Fātemi and the prominent former MP Ahmad Razavi) arguing in favour of republicanism. Others, who according to Hasibi's notes included the former minister of education and now an ex-MP Karim Sanjābi, the prominent ex-MP ʿAli Shāyegān, presented a more moderate stance, which was in tune with Mosaddeq's own position, but partially converged with the first group on the need to consider the Shāh as having resigned from his throne, proclaim the eclipse of the Pahlavi dynasty and create a Regency Council.[61] At 10am, these advisers met with Mosaddeq, who was of the belief that the sole necessary step was the

creation of the Regency Council and once again reiterated his opposition to the republic, this time on the grounds that "the West and the United States still supported this [monarchical] regime", and such a transformation could therefore result in the interruption of their assistance and an indication of alignment with the Soviet Union, especially in the wake of the Tudeh proclamation for the Democratic Republic. Shortly after this deliberation, Mosaddeq ordered the military governor of Tehran to prepare and publish a declaration banning any street demonstration until further notice, a development which ensured that the main thoroughfares of the capital were bereft of any major pro-government presence on the morning of 19 August.[62] In his memoirs, Mosaddeq specifically refers to the need of quashing the republican fervour as the main reason for issuing this order and claimed that he was "against any type of republic, democratic or otherwise".[63]

Besides his previous attachment to the constitution and the monarch, Mosaddeq was therefore also swayed by considerations related to Cold War equilibria and his belief that the oil issue could not be settled without a continued relationship with the United States. This attitude was, however, muted following Mosaddeq's much-discussed meeting with Loy Henderson, which occurred on the afternoon of 18 August.[64] The same group of advisors congregated in the meantime at Shāyegān's residence, where a plan for the election of the Regency Council was drawn. Mosaddeq conferred with them after meeting Henderson, and according to Hasibi was "tired and consternated" by the US Ambassador, who had insisted on declaring Zāhedi as the legitimate prime minister and maintained a strenuous support for the Shāh.[65] The largely negative outcome of this meeting compelled Mosaddeq to agree to organising a referendum on the termination of the Pahlavi dynasty and the subsequent creation of a Regency Council via a nationwide election.[66] The prime minister remained, however, firmly opposed to the proclamation of a republic, despite the lingering support from Fātemi and Zirakzādeh.

This decision was formally communicated to the Interior minister, Gholām-Hosayn Sadiqi at 8am on 19 August. Mosaddeq then informed Sadiqi that "since the Shāh had fled the country and it was necessary to clarify the legal status of the monarchical institution", his decision and that of a group of "informed figures" was that of a Regency Council be formed through general elections, and ordered Sadiqi to instruct the governors of the provinces to prepare for such polling.[67] When the Interior minister insisted on convening the council of ministers to approve the procedures for such an unusual and unprecedented poll, Mosaddeq noted that the group had yet to fully conclude its recommendations and exhorted Sadiqi to proceed without delay, only to be pre-empted by the events of the following fateful hours.

Conclusion

This article has attempted to provide a more thorough account of one of the less explored elements of the events of August 1953 in Iran, the brief but spirited republican initiatives which immediately preceded the fall of Mosaddeq's government. In the space of a few days, the latter was confronted with a set of challenges which were the product of the period of intra-institutional struggle inaugurated by his decision to suspend the elections for the Seventeenth Majles. His long and unfinished tussle with parliament ultimately resulted, however, in the Shāh deeming the chamber to be in a state of "incapacity", a circumstance which favoured the decreeing of the *farmān*s which set into motion the first failed attempt to unseat the prime minister.

The available evidence suggests that all the political movements which produced overt proclamations in favour of a transition to a republican state order did so after observing the initial reactions of the public to the first attempt to unseat Mosaddeq on 16 August. Politically assertive and experienced crowds had become an increasingly significant element of the political contention since their decisive role in restoring Mosaddeq to power during the July uprising of 1952 and readily flocked to the main theatres of street politics from the afternoon of

16 August onwards. By the evening of the following day, a distinct popular sentiment in favour of a transition towards a republic was acknowledged and reported by those political groups which had maintained a constant and prominent presence in the numerous rallies and demonstrations of that period. After first being reflected by the organ of the Khodāparastān-e Sosiālist movement, which had previously made its support for republicanism known, several political newspapers simultaneously reflected such a mood on the morning of 18 August, when they explicitly called for the final dissolution of the monarchy and distanced themselves from the prime minister's gradualist and cautious approach to the institutional quandary.

Despite making a clear and overt use of the term *jomhuri*, neither the Third Force nor the Tudeh proposed an institutional blueprint or structure for this new state system, thereby implying that their calls were deriving from a desire to assert themselves at the helm of a spontaneous republican tendency, rather than the resurfacing of structured republican thought conceived and developed over time. Much like the predecessor episode of 1924 and the successful move towards a republic in 1978-79, the Moment of 1953 did not present at its core a cogent thought-process, and was rather the consequence of the sudden weakening, within both public opinion and the political sphere, of the influence and appeal of the monarchy. It therefore did not contribute to uniting the anti-Shāh forces, but rather introduced a further element of contrast and dissonance within them.

With the streets of Tehran and other major cities under the sway of a varied and chaotic mix of sympathisers and rank and file members of various parties, bystanders and "black crowds", Mosaddeq was increasingly under pressure to resolve the latest chapter in his struggle to establish governmental authority either by siding with one of the crowds' emerging demands - the creation of a republic - or a continuation of the frail *mashruteh* edifice. His reluctance to offer clear judgement on the issue until the afternoon of 18 August, when he effectively acted against the republican initiatives by ordering the cessation of all street demonstrations, sent his supporters in further disarray, as it ran counter to his previous support for the defacement of the statues of Rezā Shāh. The attitude had led some of the forces loyal to him, such as the Third Force, and even elements within the Tudeh Party to believe that the prime minister was beginning to detach himself from loyalty to the monarchy. Mosaddeq became, however, wary of all calls for the establishment of a Republic after learning of the Tudeh's proclamation of the Democratic Republic. His reaction to the same highlighted the two sides' fragile and detrimental relationship, which was grounded on the party's caustic view of the prime minister and its wavering support for him at the apexes of his confrontation with the royal court. These factors would ultimately cause the complete dissolution of any possibility of trust and cooperation between them at a moment of maximum practical need for such a synergy.

Besides the impact of his previous anti-republican sentiment, the prime minister's order to clear the streets was brought about by his seemingly Cold War-motivated concern for the Western reaction to the creation of a republic, which he thought would have been interpreted as an alignment towards the Soviet Union and therefore scupper the possible cooperation of the West in the resolution of the oil issue. This conclusion also entailed a reversal of the attitude Mosaddeq had maintained during the July uprising of the previous year, when he refrained from thwarting or lessening the impact of the crowds' sustained agency and aims.

By the morning of 19 August, the disarray caused by the differing and widely contrasting views and rhetoric espoused by different sets of actors - Mosaddeq, the National Front rank and file, the Tudeh and the radicalised crowds - on this key institutional issue played into the hands of the royalist conspirators, who succeeded in setting forth in their new plan to take over the key government and political installations.

The pro-Shāh initiatives which led to the ousting of Mosaddeq put a sudden end to the Republican Moment of 1953. In its first reaction to the coup, the Central Committee of the Tudeh Party swiftly cast aside its support for the political system it had so prominently heralded two days earlier and called instead for all anti-court elements, including its most

ardent detractors, such as the Pan-Iranists and the Third Force, to form a joint front to oppose the coup regime.[68] Caught in the whirlwind of the rapidly-unfolding events, the calls for republicanism suddenly lost priority, replaced as they were by the exigency of swiftly mounting a reaction to the success on the ground of the monarchist forces and their foreign allies.

Notwithstanding their temporal brevity, the circumstances surrounding the calls for the republic in August 1953 are, as this study has striven to show, an important component in the narrative of one of the more momentous episodes of modern Iranian history, contributing, on a broader level, to a better understanding of the relationship between political leaders and crowds supportive of them, of decision-making in political circles which presented a strongly charismatic leadership, such as the one of Mohammad Mosaddeq, and of the elusive and mercurial nature of republicanism in the decades prior to the establishment of the Islamic Republic in 1979.

Endnotes

[1]. See in this regard the contributions by Fakhreddin Azimi, Daryoush Bayandor, Mark Gasiorowski and ʿAli Rahnema in *Iranian Studies,* 45(2), 661-712.
[2]. Rahnema, *1953 Coup*, ix.
[3]. The military prosecutor formally accused Mosaddeq of "founding a republic […] and seeking to become its president". *Ibid*.
[4]. It is outside the scope of this article to discuss the republican episode of 1924. See in this regard, amongst other works, Martin, "Republicanism," Cronin, *Subalterns* and Rahmāniyān, *Jomhuri*.
[5]. Azimi, "Unseating Mosaddeq", 87-88 and Azimi, *Hākemiyat-e Melli*, 156 and 196.
[6]. Behrooz, "The 1953 Coup", 118-120.
[7]. See especially chapter 34 of Rahnema, *Niruhā-ye Mazhabi*. The same author's more recent monograph on the coup in English is similarly bereft of a systematic account of the republican episode and only contains brief mentions of the Tudeh calls for the establishment of a Democratic Republic.
[8]. Shākeri, "Jomhuri", 6-7.
[9]. *New York Times,* 22 July 1953. US government sources would redress the estimate to 50,000.
[10]. Mosaddeq's speech to the closed session of the Majles, in *Bākhtar-e Emruz,* 10 Esfand 1331 [1 March 1953] and rumours on the referendum in *Shuresh*, 16 Esfand 1331 [7 March 1953].
[11]. *Bākhtar-e Emruz,* 5 Mordād 1332 [27 July 1953].
[12]. *Shuresh,* 10 Mordād 1332 [1 August 1953].
[13]. Communique of the National Society against Colonialism as quoted in Jāmi, *Gozashteh*, 607. The Majles-e Moʾassesān was included in the provisions of the existing constitution and had been convened by Rezā Khan in 1925 to constitutionally allow for dynasties other than the Qājār one to ascend to the throne. It also met in the aftermath of an attempt on Mohammad Rezā Shāh's life in 1949 to bestow him with more powers, including that of dissolving both houses of Parliament. The modifications to the constitution brought about by these two assemblies are noted in the appendix to Rahimi, *Qānun-e Asāsi-ye Iran*.
[14]. *Shojāʿat,* 14 Mordād 1332 [5 August 1953].
[15]. Kāshāni declaration in *Shāhed*, 8 Mordād 1332 [30 July 1953].
[16]. *Shāhed,* 11 Mordād 1332 [2 August 1953].
[17]. Leading article in *ibid.*
[18]. See in this regard *Āpādānā,* 11 Mordād 1332 [2 August 1953] and *Shuresh*, 17 Mordād 1332 [8 August 1953] for pro-government appraisals of Borujerdi's refusal to back Kāshāni publicly

and the reproduction of a leaflet distributed across Tehran shortly before the vote, which urged Borujerdi and the Shāh to "break their silence" regarding the referendum in *Barkhi-ye Iran,* 12 Mordād 1332 [3 August 1953].

[19]. *Ettelāʿāt,* 24 Mordād 1332 [15 August 1953].

[20]. *Ibid.* The text of the article in Rahimi, *Qānun,* 220-222. This article further specifies that new elections must be convened within one month of the dissolution act by the Shāh and that the first session of the new legislature must occur within three calendar months.

[21]. Mosaddeq would produce a declaration to this effect on the afternoon of 16 August, several hours after the failed attempt by Nasiri. The Shāh would formally dissolve the Seventeenth Majles and the Senate in December 1953, several months after the coup. See *Ettelāʿāt,* 28 Āzar 1332 [19 December 1953] for his edict.

[22]. Mosaddeq raised this point during several sessions of the trial, whilst claiming that the original copy of the *farmān* bearing his dismissal was destroyed during the prolonged assault on his residence on 19 August. See Bozorgmehr, *Mohākemeh-ye Nezāmi*, 2,410 for an instance in which he describes this in detail. Later analyses on the *farmān* have raised similar doubts. Towfiq concludes a meticulous analysis, in Towfiq, "Qānuni", 120-121, by stating that the slanting handwriting and notation in which the date is presented point to the Shāh having signed an initially blank sheet.

[23]. Radio broadcast transcript in *Ettelāʿāt,* 25 Mordād 1332 [16 August 1953].

[24]. This description of the events at Bahārestān is taken from *Kayhān, Ettelāʿāt, Bākhtar-e Emruz, Jebheh-ye Āzādi* and *Niru-ye Sevvom* of 26 Mordād 1332 [17 August 1953] and the eyewitness testimony in Safari, *Qalam va Siyāsat*, (Tehran, 1995), 1,835-838.

[25]. This account of the Tudeh rally and meeting is derived from the party's overt morning daily, *Shojāʿat,* 26 Mordād 1332 [17 August 1953]. This slogan had been already present in anti-Shāh communiqués produced by the Tudeh from the autumn of 1951 and especially in the aftermath of the 9 Esfand episode. See for example the proclamation for the eradication of the monarchy, which appeared, as a supplement of *Mardom,* the organ of the Central Committee in late 1951, as reproduced in Shākeri, *Asnād-e Tārikhi,* 12,71-73.

[26]. *Āpādānā,* 26 Mordād 1332 [17 August 1953].

[27]. *Mardom-e Iran,* Special Issue, 26 Mordād 1332 [17 August 1953]. The republican state system was presented here as being the only one compatible with "Towhidi Islam". Hosayn Shāh Hosayni, a veteran Mossadeqist, also recalls that the republican sentiment originally spread spontaneously through these crowds. Tayerāni (Ed.), *Paydāri,* 189.

[28]. See in this regard "Zendebād Jomhuri!", or "Long Live the Republic!", the leading article on *Mardom-e Iran*, 1 Tir 1332 [22 June 1953].

[29]. Bozorgmehr, *Mohākemeh*, 1,38-39. When asked by the military prosecutor why he had distinguished between Rezā Shāh and his son, Mosaddeq replied that he had not sworn loyalty to the former, who was widely considered by society as a dictator imposed by the British.

[30]. *Jebheh-ye Āzādi,* 27 Mordād 1332 [18 August 1953]. No mention is made herein of the leaders who ordered the expedition against the statues. In his memoirs, Sanjābi states that he assembled the leaders of the National Front parties at the Iran Party headquarters after Mosaddeq ordered him to pull down the statues of Rezā Shāh, but is vague regarding the date and time of such a meeting and generically points to 18 August. Sanjābi, *Omid-hā*, 142.

[31]. *Bākhtar-e Emruz* and *Niru-ye Sevvom,* 27 Mordād 1332 [18 August 1953]. *Bākhtar* claimed that at least 10,000 "applauding bystanders" were present at Sepah Square.

[32]. *Khāvar Zamin*, 26 Mordād 1332 [17 August 1953].

[33]. For a useful overview of crowd activity in Esfahān, see *Parkhāsh*, 28 Mordād 1332 [19 August 1953].

[34]. "Interview with Mahmud Zhandi", The Research Association for Iranian Oral History, Berlin, 1995. During interrogations following the coup, a member of the Tudeh's Officers Organisation, Nezām al-Din Madani, states that discussions were held within the Organisation for supporting Mosaddeq as the first President of the Republic and participating in the same, but plans were also drawn up to replace him with Rezā Rādmanesh, the first secretary of the party who was then in exile in Moscow, through an electoral process should Mosaddeq enact policies opposed to the Tudeh. Bakhtiyār, *Ketāb-e Siyāh*, 290.
[35]. Dekhodā had visited Mosaddeq at his residence on the same morning. Karim Sanjābi refutes the notion that the two discussed the possible presidency of the former. Sanjābi, *Omid-hā,* 149.
[36]. *Mardom* (Clandestine) and *Shojāʿat,* 27 Mordād 1332 [18 August 1953]. The previous evening's issue of the National Society's *Shahbāz* had reiterated the calls for the establishment of the Majles-e Moʾassesān.
[37]. *Ibid.* The internal decision-making through which the "Democratic" Republic was coined is unclear, other than the widespread use of the term within the Eastern bloc. A high ranking member of the party's Tehran committee interviewed in Behrooz, *Legacy* expressed his own surprise at the choice of the moniker. The memoirs of party leaders such as Nureddin Kiānuri and Maryam Firuz also shed little light on this issue.
[38]. The minutes of the meeting were reproduced in Atābaki and Bani Ahmad, *Rastākhiz-e Mellat*, 182-183, a semi-official account of the events of August 1953. A dissident member of the Tudeh party has ascertained the authenticity of the minutes in Babak Amir Khosravi, *Nazar*, 577-578.
[39]. *Ibid.*
[40]. The two proclamations were printed alongside each other on the front page of *Shahbāz,* 27 Mordād 1332 [17 August 1953].
[41]. According to a high-ranking member of the party, the Tudeh leadership congregated at the headquarters of the Tehran Provincial Committee in Nosrat Street, approximately seven kilometres from the epicentre of street activities and from the targets of the pro-Shāh forces which descended upon central Tehran on 19 August. Ansāri, *Zendegi*, 335.
[42]. For a full list, see *Shojāʿat,* 28 Mordād 1332 [19 August 1953]. Symbols of international communism, such as Lenin or Stalin, were curiously absent. The famed guerrilla fighters Sattār Khān and Bāqer Khān were also honoured, as was the island of Bahrain, which was to replace the Gomrok-e Shāhpur square.
[43]. *Niru-ye Sevvom,* 27 Mordād 1332 [18 August 1953]. The Third Force newspaper, similarly to *Mardom-e Iran,* attributed the agency of the republican initiative to the crowds.
[44]. *Niru-ye Sevvom,* 28 Mordād 1332 [19 August 1953].
[45]. See in this regard the interview of Hamid Ahmadi with Amir Pishdād, produced by The Research Association for Iranian Oral History, Berlin, and the proceedings of Maleki's trial, in *Ettelāʿāt,* 18 Esfand 1344 [9 March 1966]. Pishdād recalls in particular that Maleki had retreated to his private residence by 17 August and withdrew himself completely from the party's decision-making in the last two days. Sanjābi also notes, in *Omid-hā,* 147, that Maleki also expressed opposition at the destruction of the statues, to which his party contributed wholeheartedly.
[46]. *Jebheh-ye Āzādi,* 28 Mordād 1332 [19 August 1953].
[47]. *Parkhāsh*, 28 Mordād 1332 [19 August 1953].
[48]. *Sedā-ye Enqelāb* (*Hajjār*), 28 Mordād 1332 [19 August 1953].
[49]. "Interview with Mehdi Haeʾri-Yazdi", The Harvard Iranian Oral History Project, Tape Transcript No.2, 4. The Wilber report, as available on http://cryptome.org/cia-iran-all.htm, notes that Behbahāni had been enlisted to travel to Qom to obtain such an edict from Borujerdi, but refrains from claiming that he was successful.

[50]. Qanātābādi pleaded with Borujerdi to break his silence on 19 August, as he decried Tehran to be "in the hands of the Bolsheviks" and the statues of the Pahlavi monarchs as being due for replacement with those of Lenin, Stalin and Malenkov. See in this regard *Mellat-e Mā,* 28 Mordād 1332 [19 August 1953] and its leading article, "Jomhuri-ye Mosaddeq". As seen above, the Tudeh actively refrained from implementing such moves.
[51]. Interview with Al-Masri, as reproduced in Dehnavi [Ed], *Kāshāni*, 4, 27-29.
[52]. *Pāymardi,* 28 Mordād 1332 [19 August 1953]. The Sumkā was not wholly committed to the anti-Mosaddeq initiative until late that day, when its leader, Mahmud Monshizādeh, emerged from prison to rally his party members. See in this regard ʿAzizi, "Har Che", *Sharq,* 14 and Rahnema, *Coup,* 191.
[53]. *Shāhed* published the text of the *farmān* on 18 August and a photo static reproduction the following day.
[54]. *Shāhed*, 28 Mordād 1332 [19 August 1953]. Baqāʾi's daily dedicated much of its efforts in those days to re-asserting the illegality of Mosaddeq's decisions, rather than countering the growing republican demands.
[55]. See for example *Āpādānā,* 28 Mordād 1332 [19 August 1953] for the Hezb-e Mellat Bar Bonyād-e Pān-Iranism communiqué regarding the supposed Tudeh attack on its headquarters, which occurred "under the gaze of a truck full of soldiers". This latter detail, and the lack of any reference to such attacks in the Tudeh press indicates their likely occurrence without the knowledge of the party leadership.
[56]. Leading article in *Ātash*, 29 Mordād 1332 [20 August 1953], a newspaper edited by a firebrand royalist, Sayyed Mahdi Mir-Ashrāfi.
[57]. See in this regard *Dād,* 29 Mordād 1332 [20 August 1953], Atābaki and Bani-Ahmad, *Rastākhiz,* 188-195, *Tehran Mosavvar,* 30 Mordād 1332 [21 August 1953]. There is evidence, reproduced in Rahnema, *Coup,* 169-170, pointing to a direct nexus between the decision of at least a few downtown athletes and street toughs to enter the fray on 19 August and the republican initiatives of the previous days, but the extent to which this correlation was widespread is yet to be ascertained.
[58]. As noted in Rahnema, *Mazhabi*, 261, the prime minister had ceased visiting the Shāh in the aftermath of the 9 Esfand incident, despite attempts by both his son and the monarch to favour a reconciliation.
[59]. Mosaddeq, *Khāterāt*, 260. This act was first revealed in the radio broadcast discussed immediately below.
[60]. Text of radio broadcast in *Kayhān,* 17 Farvardin 1332 [6 April 1953].
[61]. Hasibi's notes as reproduced in Movahhed, *Naft*, 2,812.
[62]. The order was published on the same afternoon in the evening dailies, such as *Ettelāʿāt* and *Bākhtar-e Emruz.*
[63]. Mosaddeq, *Khāterāt,* 272. He also specifies that he was still attempting at this stage to convince the Shāh to return to the country, and that the Regency Council would be formed only if this would have failed.
[64]. Henderson's telegram to Washington describing this meeting, *Foreign Relations of the United States of America,* Vol. X, 748-752.
[65]. Hasibi's notes in Movahhed, *Khāb,* 2,813. His description closely matches the content of Henderson's telegram.
[66]. *Ibid.* The Tudeh supporters had increased their public support for republicanism considerably in the afternoon and evening of August 18. See *Kayhān,* 29 Mordād 1332 [20 August 1953] for a description of the tussles between the armed forces and Tudeh youths then celebrating the Democratic republic in Sepah Square.
[67]. Sadiqi, "28 va 29 Mordād", 120.

[68]. Tudeh Central Committee's Proclamation, 29 Mordād 1332 [20 August 1953], as reproduced in *Ettehād-e Mardom,* 10 Esfand 1360 [1 March 1982].

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