he did not always succeed, for British interests in the Bahhtiyārī country were real and could not be jeopardized by being identified with the wrong faction. Of course various Bakhtiyārī parties vied for British support too. As might be expected, the British were not above showing favoritism whenever their interests were involved.

In consequence of the conflict of interest between Shaykh Khaz^{c}al and the khāns, continued Bakhtiyārī factional strife, and her own participation in factional politics, Britain could not bring the Arabs and Bakhtiyārī together in an alliance. She could only use her influence to keep them from open conflict. As the political fabric of Persia was further tattered by the revolutionary struggle and by Western intervention, Britain's hope for an alliance between Khaz^{c}al and the khāns became increasingly forlorn.

SHAYKH KHAZ^{c}AL AND THE SITUATION IN PERSIA

At the end of 1907, the Persian Revolution had been going on for two years. It had begun in December 1905 in Tehran, when the bastinado of some merchants and sayyids (religious notables descended from the Prophet) touched off riots against the Government. The real issues behind the disturbances, however, were the inefficiency, corruption, favoritism, and oppression of the Central Government and of certain of its provincial governors as well as the threat posed to the traditional Islamic social order by Westernization--i.e. the emergence of an increasingly Europeanized

and impersonal bureaucracy. This was perhaps best exemplified by M. Naus, the coldly efficient and extremely unpopular Minister of Customs. Of course the whole process of Westernization was but the outcome of the deep inroads into Persian society as a result of the intervention of Russia and Britain in the internal affairs of Persia.

Although the demands of the protestors did not originally embody a constitution, constitutionalism soon became part of the movement. After further serious disturbances, Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh in the summer of 1906 acceded to demands for a constitution and a representative national assembly. In September an electoral law was promulgated. In October the Majlis (or National Assembly) opened. On December 30 the Shāh signed the Fundamental Law into effect. Eight days later he was dead. He was succeeded by his son, Muḥammad ʿAli Shāh, who immediately began a period of reaction.[71]

The original revolutionary ferment had been met with sympathy from and, to some extent, encouragement by the British Legation. The protestors were less anti-Western than they were anti-Russian (Russia was the dominant power in Tehran and in the north where the bulk of the revolutionary activity was taking place) and many looked for assistance against the common enemy. Others, who had been influenced by Western political thought, looked to the Mother of Parlia-

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[71] E. G. Browne, The Persian Revolution, 1905-1909 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910), 112-32; Peter Avery, Modern Iran (London: Ernest Benn, 1951), 124-32.

ments for aid on ideological grounds.

Unfortunately for the cause of liberalism and constitutionalism in Persia, the Liberal British Government was determined to reach a settlement with Russia. The Tsar's government was hostile to the constitutional movement, disliking its anti-Russian flavor and fearing that it would be less easy to dominate than the moribund regime of the Qajars. Thus, the British Legation, in order neither to offend Russian sensibilities nor imperil the projected agreement, was directed, over the impassioned protests of the Minister, Sir Cecil Spring-Rice, to disengage itself from the revolu*tionary movement and tie itself to Russian policy. When the* Anglo-Persian agreement was finally signed in August of 1907, the Nationalists were enraged by Britain's betrayal of their interests and her principles. They felt, with some justification, that the agreement was a partition of their country.[72]

The terms of the Persian portion of the entente divided Persia into three zones. The British area was southeast of a line from the Afghan frontier by way of Gazik, Birjand, Kirman, and ending at Bandar ʿAbbās at the mouth of the Persian Gulf. Britain's position in the Gulf was recognized by Grey's reiteration of the Lansdowne Declaration. The *Russian sphere was defined as north of a line starting from* Qasr-i-Shirin, passing through Isfahān, Yazd, Kakhk, and

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[72]Avery, Modern Iran, 124-132; Browne, Persian Revolution, 112-32; Gwynn, ed., Spring-Rice, II, 81-82.

ending at the intersection of the Persian, Afghan, and Russian frontiers. Between the British and Russian zones was a so-called neutral zone.

In its own zone, each country had the unrestricted right to develop its economic (and strategic) interests but could not seek for itself or a third power concessions in the other zone without the other power's permission. In the neutral zone, each power pledged not to oppose, without previous agreement, the attempts of citizens of the other country to gain any concession whatever.[73]

However, as has been shown in the context of the discussion of the Kārūn Irrigation Scheme, Britain was unwilling to give up her pre-eminent position on the Kārūn and in Muḥammarah. In the Bakhtiyārī country Britain continued to entrench herself against all rivals as if the Anglo-Russian Convention did not exist.

For all practical purposes in ᶜArabistān the agreement did not exist. Although Grey had toyed with the idea of surrendering the Persian shore of the Gulf, other counsels had prevailed. Khazᶜal by dint of his particular utility had found his way into Grey's diplomatic arsenal. Another reason for the continuity of British policy in the south--as opposed to the dramatic shift in Tehran--was institutional.

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[73] Monger, End of Isolation, passim., J. C. Hurewitz, Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East, A Documentary Record: 1535-1914 (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand, 1956), II, 266-67.

India, through the Resident at Bushihr and the Vice Consul at Aḥwāz, carried out British policy in ᶜArabistān. McDouall, although his service affiliation was under the Foreign Office, reported through Cox at Bushihr. Moreover, McDouall was ever ready to espouse the cause of Shaykh Khazᶜal, a tendency which India often found useful.

The tendency of Indian officers to ignore or evade the spirit of the Anglo-Russian Convention in carrying out British policy in ᶜArabistān was, on occasion, abetted by the personnel of the Legation in Tehran. The most notable instance of this phenomenon occurred in May of 1907, when Percy Loraine, a legation secretary, made a swing through Bakhtiyārī country. Briefly, Loraine urged that all the Legation's dealings with the Bakhtiyārī be conducted through Lorimer, the peripatetic Vice Consul based at Aḥwāz. Even when negotiating with the khāns in Tehran, the Legation should not commit itself without first communicating with him. This would "confine the scope for intrigue at present possessed by the Khans within the narrowest possible limit." Lorimer, it was urged, should be made the sole intermediary with the khāns for the Lynch interests and the oil concessionaires. Thus, all of Britain's interests would speak with one voice, and Britain's influence in the Bakhtiyārī country would be enhanced. Spring-Rice, in passing Loraine's report along to Grey, entirely concurred with its recommendations. He informed the Foreign Office that he intended to carry them into effect since he "would like to keep as much

as possible in the background."[74]

Regardless of the stated motives, the decision of Spring-Rice to entrust Bakhtiyārī affairs to Lorimer had the effect of removing them one more step away from Grey's control. In view of the Minister's expressed distaste for Grey's Persian policy, there are reasonable grounds for speculating that such a consideration was a factor in Spring-Rice's decision. Thus India and her officers in the field were left to pursue the Hardinge-Curzon policy in southwest Persia relatively isolated from Foreign Office interference.

If the negotiation of the Anglo-Russian Convention had little effect on the policies of the Government of India, it renewed the suspicions of the Persian Government toward those policies. This suspicion was demonstrated in June when the Persian Government, in unison with certain old-line Russian diplomats, accused Britain of plotting Khazᶜal's independence from Persia.[75]

Spring-Rice found the accusation amusing and playfully telegraphed Cox:

> We are accused by the Russians of organizing

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[74]Loraine to Spring-Rice, Gulahek, May 20, 1907, F.O. 371/309; Spring-Rice to Grey, Confidential, No. 109, Gulahek, May 21, 1907, F.O. 371/309.

[75]Although the Convention was not signed until late August, Persian officials were aware of the negotiations. As a matter of fact the Tehran press appears to have known of the final terms of the Convention before Spring-Rice himself, much to his embarrassment and anger.

> an alliance between the Sheiks of Mohammerah and Koweit with a view to the independence of the former.
>
> Wicked Man! Please let me have your observations by telegraph.[76]

There was some basis in fact for the charge. Earlier in the month, Mubārak had given his British watchman, Major Knox, the slip, loaded his steam yacht with arms, men, and ammunition, and sailed for Muḥammarah in order to aid Khaz-ᶜal in the suppression of the Banū Turuf, who were proving troublesome once again. He had sent the ship back for another load and stationed his men in Muḥammarah in order to allow its garrison to go campaigning. Mubārak apparently had money invested in Khazᶜal's date crop, and he wanted to insure its harvest and his investment. The incident raised the temperature of Major Knox, who was hurt at Mubārak's failure to consult him, and chilled the Persian Government, which feared it had a British-backed Arab rising on its hands. The Shaykh of Kuwayt, however, returned home within a month.[77]

Cox immediately informed Spring-Rice of the facts of the situation. The Minister informed ᶜAla al-Sultānah, the Persian Foreign Minister, adding that he was "at a loss to

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[76]Spring-Rice to Cox, Tel. No. 104, Tehran, June 30, 1907, F.O. 371/345.

[77]Cox to Sir Louis Dane, Secretary in the Foreign Department to the Government of India, No. 1611, Bushihr, July 28, 1907, F.O. 371/345; Busch, Britain and the Persian Gulf, 308-09.

understand why the Persian Government or anyone else should entertain doubts as to the loyalty of the Sheikh or Mohammerah to the Persian Government."[78]

The Persian Government was not convinced, however. The Persian Foreign Ministry representative at Muḥammarah showed McDouall a memorandum from Tehran that Cox was trying to arrange an alliance between Mubārak and Khaz^{c}al to Persia's disadvantage.[79] Rumors of an alliance in the making between the two Gulf shaykhs and the chiefs of Central Arabia, Ibn Sa^{c}ūd and Ibn Rashīd, had been current since the fall of the preceding year. This rumor had been thoroughly investigated by the British at the time and was found to be farfetched--except for the truth of the close relationship between Mubārak and Khaz^{c}al.[80]

The Persians continued to find designs in that relationship more far-reaching than those of mutual cooperation in matters of local interest. Months after the Banū Turuf incident was finished, in October, the Tehran newspapers again accused Khaz^{c}al of plotting rebellion, and these reports were discussed on the floor of the Majlis. The Shaykh was most disturbed.[81]

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[78]Spring-Rice to ^{c}Ala al-Sultānah, Private, Gulahek, July 5, 1907, F.O. 371/311.

[79]McDouall to Bell, Confidential, Demi-official, Muḥammarah, July 27, 1907, F.O. 460/1.

[80]Cox to Dane, Confidential, No. 2477 w/encl., Bushihr, October 21, 1906, F.O. 371/345.

[81]McDouall to Charles Marling, Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, Confidential, No. 11, Muḥammarah, October 12, 1907, F.O. 371/501.

Shortly after the discussions in the Tehran papers and on the floor of the Majlis, the struggling Persian Central Government had to contend with two demonstrations of its lack of sovereignty (or rather lack of Britain's respect for it) in ᶜArabistān and the Persian Gulf.

The first, which occurred in October, involved the dispatch of the Royal Indian Mail Steamer Comet to Aḥwāz to protect the lives and property of the British oil concessionaires endangered by Bakhtiyārī factional struggles. Each of the contending parties had made threats to keep the English from aiding its opponents.

The decision to send a gunboat was made without careful consultation with the men on the spot by men with little knowledge of local conditions. When he was informed by McDouall of the reason for the Comet's presence, Khazᶜal pointed out that Aḥwāz was fifty miles from the Bakhtiyārī country. He hoped, he added, that the British "would do nothing to injure him with the Persian Government in view of the newspaper articles accusing him of plotting with the British."[82]

Lorimer, who reported the inability of the Comet to come within four miles of Aḥwāz (she had, in fact, run hard aground on a mudbank), acidly commented, "if my opinion is required, I should say that 'Comet' is quite powerless to

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[82]McDouall to Cox, No. 28, Muḥammarah, October 19, 1907, F.O. 371/497.

have effect on the Bakhtiari question, and her presence at Ahwaz is useless. In this opinion the oil manager concurs."[83]

The hapless Comet, aboard which smallpox had broken out, ignominiously returned to Muhammarah and quarantine. She then returned to Baghdad.

Khaz^{c}al did not appreciate the farcical element in the Comet's voyage. The new constitutional regime was, as yet, an unknown quantity. In discussions with McDouall over the unfavorable newspaper stories, he had expressed his anxiety over the question of the "proper recognition of his position" by the Government. He feared "the Mejlis might wish to reduce his power further" and that the British "would support them [the Persians] as in the case of the Customs which he accepted on British advice."[84]

Thus, when the Comet arrived, he was forced to make a show of loyalty to the Tehran Government. In the absence of the Karguzar, he was the local representative of the Foreign Ministry. So, in this capacity, and with the connivance of McDouall, he formally lodged a protest, through the Persian Foreign Ministry, against the presence of a British gunboat. As Marling commented to Grey, it was unlikely that the protest would produce any result at Tehran. Still, Khaz^{c}al

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[83]Government of India to Morley, November 1, 1907, F.O. 371/306; Henry Longhurst, Adventure in Oil, the Story of British Petroleum (London: Sedgwick and Jackson, 1959), 32.

[84]McDouall to Marling, No. 11, Confidential, Muhammarah, October 12, 1907, F.O. 460/2.

had been concerned enough about his reputation in Tehran to go through the motions of a concerned Persian civil servant.[85]

The second instances of infringement of Persian sovereignty was the capture of pirates and the destruction of their ships and fortress at Dayir, on the Persian coast south of Bushihr. The piracies had been committed in November of 1906 and March of 1907. Citing precedents and agreements with Persia as justification, Cox had over a period of months built a flawless case for British naval action in Persian territory. The Foreign Office could find no error. The Persian Government acquiesced after strong remonstrances in Tehran for reparations. The ships were on the way to Dayir while the Persian Government was trying to reach a decision, and arrived at their destination in the second week of December to capture the pirates, and proceed with the work of destruction. Cox telegraphed Marling: "The news of the capture and of such public and prompt retribution will travel quickly, and will greatly promote maritime peace and our prestige in the Gulf."[86]

It was decided not to hand the prisoners over to the Darya Begi, the Persian Governor of the Gulf ports, for fear that local bribery and intimidation would undo work carefully

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[85]McDouall to Dox, No. 28, Muḥammarah, October 19, 1907, F.O. 371/497; Marling to Grey, Tehran, No. 273, December 23, 1907, F.O. 371/497.

[86]Cox to Marling, Tel., Bushihr, December 10, 1907, F.O. 371/499; F.O. 371/308, 311, 312, 499.

undertaken over a period of several months to say nothing of the expenditure of several thousands of pounds. In the circumstances it was necessary to find a Persian official who could be counted on to execute Britain's policy and the pirates. Shaykh Khaz^{c}al proved to be the ideal person to whom such a job could be entrusted. The pirates, who were his subjects anyway, were handed over to him. But, as was often the case with the Shaykh when weighing the relative importance of British and local interests, he decided in favor of his tribal connections and commuted the sentences to life imprisonment.[87]

Thus at the end of 1907, British power and prestige in ^{c}Arabistān remained, in spite of the Anglo-Russian entente, undiminished. Indeed the shattering effect of the Persian Revolution and the internecine strife of the Bakhtiyārī khāns had reduced the power and effectiveness of the Central Government in the region to impotence. British ships cruised about penetrating Persian coastal regions at will.

Since British naval power proved to be an ineffective means of protecting British interests in the Bakhtiyārī country, military methods were resorted to. On November 29, Lieutenant Arnold Talbot Wilson was detached from his pioneer battalion in India and put in command of a detachment of the 18th Bengal Lancers. He was directed to proceed

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[87] Ibid.

through the Bakhtiyārī country to the drilling sites of the D'Arcy Exploration Company. As Wilson later wrote, "The detachment which I brought out was ostensibly intended to reinforce the guard of the Ahwaz Consulate, though in practice it was to protect the drillers until the attempt to find oil was successful or was abandoned."[88]

It appeared that in spite of the change of government in London, the Hardinge-Curzon policy of entrenchment in southwest Persia was flourishing--in fact, in view of the political situation in Persia and the dynamics of Indian imperialism, it was virtually inevitable. Ironically, the London-based, Europe-oriented policy in Tehran, by weakening the Persian constitutionalist movement, made the India-based imperialist policy in ʿArabistān a necessity.

This forward imperial policy was, however, impeded. The determination of Morley, the Secretary of State for India, to limit both the prerogatives and the initiative of the Viceroy and be master in his own house was bound to reduce the room for maneuver by Gulf officials. With the failure to gain a British-controlled irrigation scheme, there was no British enterprise in an area large enough to warrant a permanent British commitment to the region, especially as far as the Government in London was concerned. Moreover, the Shaykh of Muḥammarah was not bound tightly enough to British policy. A stronger commitment to the Shaykh would make him

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[88]Wilson, SW. Persia, 17.

more useful for transmitting British-Indian influence to the region. At the same time, a stronger commitment would increase British obligations in the area and would make it more difficult for London to abandon ᶜArabistān.

Khazᶜal would have been happy if Britain had increased her commitment to him. His abandonment by the British during the customs crisis still rankled. Moreover, the hostility of the nationalists in the Majlis and of the Tehran newspapers, if as yet ineffective and largely verbal, pointed the way to his future relations with a constitutional government. The Government which need not always be weak, might not recognize agreements made during the autocratic rule of Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh. While the reaffirmation of the Lansdowne Declaration and the recent demonstrations of gunboat diplomacy served to calm Khazᶜal's fears as far as his status as a Persian Gulf Power was concerned, his status as a semi-independent price with lands in Persia's neutral zone was still unclear.[89]

Therefore, in November 1907, Percy Z. Cox, His Britannic Majesty's Resident in the Persian Gulf, reopened the question of increased assurances for Shaykh Khazᶜal.[90] While he was waiting for the decision to be reached in London, there occurred on the Maydan-i-Naftun (Plain of

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[89]Marling to Grey, No. 18, Commercial, Tehran, December 21, 1907, F.O. 371/500.

[90]Wilson, Precis, 22.

Naptha), at Masjid-i-Sulaymān, fifty-five miles northeast of Aḥwāz, an event dramatic in world history, which had a profound effect on Khaz^{c}al's relations with Britain and Persia.