

THE INVASION OF IRAN BY THE ALLIES DURING WORLD WAR II

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Rezumat: După ce Germania nazistă i-a atacat pe sovietici la începutul celui de-al doilea Război Mondial, Statele Unite, Marea Britanie și Uniunea Sovietică au luat parte la război de aceeași parte fiind numiți Aliații. Pentru a transporta ajutorul militar pentru Uniunea Sovietică prin Iran, Statele Unite și Marea Britanie au invadat Iranul împreună cu sovieticii și l-au detronat pe șahul Ahmad Reza, care nutrea simpatii pentru Germania. Semnând un tratat în 1942, se obligau să-și evacueze trupele din Iran la șase luni după terminarea războiului. Au publicat o declarație prin care se angajau să protejeze integritatea teritorială a Iranului și au repetat aceste decizii în timpul conferinței pe care au organizat-o la Tehran în 1943. Totuși, în ciuda acestor hotărâri, în Iran a apărut o rivalitate ascunsă între Uniunea Sovietică și Occident. Rivalitatea a devenit evidentă către sfârșitul războiului. Sovieticii nu se vor retrage din Iran. În plus, se vor strădui să împartă Iranul. După unii, criza iraniană din 1946 dintre Occident și sovietici a reprezentat începutul Războiului Rece. Iranul a fost afectat profund de acest proces.

Abstract: When the Nazi Germany attacked the Soviets at the beginning of World War II, the USA, the UK and the Soviet Union took part on the same side and were called the Allies. In order to convey the military aid to the Soviets through Iran, the USA and the UK invaded Iran with the Soviets and dethroned Ahmad Reza Shah, who felt sympathy for Germany. By signing a treaty in 1942, they pledged to evacuate their troops from Iran six months after the war ended. They published a declaration that they would protect Iran's territorial integrity as well as they repeated these decisions during the conference they made in Tehran in 1943. However; despite these decisions, a hidden rivalry began between the USSR and the West in Iran. The rivalry became very clear towards the end of the war. The Soviets wouldn't withdraw from Iran. Additionally, they endeavored to divide Iran. The Iran crisis of 1946 between the West and the Soviets formed the start of the Cold War according to some people. As a country, Iran was highly affected by this process.

Résumé: Lorsque les Nazis Allemands ont attaqué les Soviétiques au début de la Seconde Guerre Mondiale, les Etats Unis de l'Amérique, le Royaume Uni et l'Union Soviétique se retrouvaient de la même partie de la barricade et étaient nommés les Alliés. Afin d'offrir d'aide militaire aux Soviétiques par Iran, Les Etats Unis de l'Amérique et le Royaume Uni ont envahi l'Iran avec les Soviétiques et ont détrôné Ahmad Reza Shah, qui sympathisait l'Allemagne. Tout en signant le traité en 1942, ils se sont engagés à évacuer leurs troupes d'Iran six mois après la fin de la guerre. Ils ont publié une déclaration par laquelle ils ont voulu protéger l'intégrité territoriale de l'Iran ; ils ont répété ces décisions pendant la conférence qu'ils ont organisée à Téhéran en 1943. En tout cas, malgré ces décisions, une rivalité cachée a commencé entre l'URSS et l'Ouest en Iran. La rivalité est devenue très claire

vers la fin de la guerre. Les Soviétiques ne voulaient plus se retirer de l'Iran. De plus, ils planifiaient à diviser l'Iran. La crise de l'Iran commençant de 1946 entre l'Ouest et les Soviétiques a représenté le début de la Guerre Froide selon quelques uns. En tant que pays, l'Iran a été extrêmement affecté par ce processus.

Keywords: *Iran, the Allies, the Tehran Conference, the Shah, the Cold War*

Introduction. Iran is a country which was exposed to intense foreign interventions in her many periods of history. In the 19th century, Iran attracts our attention as a rivalry area between the UK and Russia. Following the discovery of petroleum, Iran gained importance since the early 20th century and was divided into spheres of influence between the UK and Russia, and this situation lasted by the end of 1917. When the Bolshevik Revolution broke out in Russia, the Tsardom lost its influence over northern Iran. Although Britain tried to settle in Iran, she was forced to step back due to the opposition of the USA, France and the Soviet Union as well as Iranian people. Being the stage for an early cold war between the Soviets and Britain for a short time, Iran came to a standstill with Reza Khan's Coup as from 1921.

Reza Khan, who first became the minister of defense and then the prime minister, mostly ended the foreign interventions by making use of the rivalry between the Soviets and the British. Without opposing Britain, he followed a balanced foreign policy by signing the treaties of Amity, Neutrality and Non-aggression with the Soviet Union in 1921 and 1927 and gained an important stability in the country. In 1923, when the republic was announced in Turkey, the announcement of republic also in Iran was put on agenda. However, removing the Kacar Dynasty in 1925, Ahmad Reza preferred to be the shah rather than establishing the republic regime.¹ Endeavoring to form a strong central state, Reza Shah was supported by the Ulama (Moslem theologians and scholars) which had the most active influence on the country's policy. He implemented western reforms in the army, bureaucracy, justice and education. He tried to found a modern state by diminishing the influence of the feudal powers. In 1922, he tried regularizing the economy by appointing Dr. Arthur Millspaugh from the USA as Administrator-General of Finances of Iran². When implementing the reforms, he, on the other hand, had to conflict with the Ulama supporting him at the beginning. This process drove the Ulama to a secret illegality, making Reza Shah authoritarian.³ He became the only authority by closing down all political parties- firstly the Communist Party- as from 1927. Believing that the existence of political parties allows foreign countries to intervene in Iran easily, the

¹ Reza Ghods, *Iranian Nationalism and Reza Shah*, in "Middle Eastern Studies", 27, 1991, 1, p. 41.

² Hansen Bradley, *Learning to Tax. The Political Economy of the Opium Trade in Iran, 1921-1941*, in "The Journal of Economic History", 61, 2001, 1, p. 100-101.

³ H. E. Chehabi, *The Pahlavi Period*, in "Iranian Studies", 31, 1998, 3, p. 495.

Shah thought that the way to gain political independence in the international arena was to terminate the influence of the Ulama and political groups.⁴

Until being forced to abandon the administration in 1941, Reza Shah usually worked to keep a balanced foreign policy. Despite the treaties signed with the Soviets, Iran's relations with the Russians remained cold due to Soviets' supporting the communist activities in Iran. In 1933, an important tension took place between Iran and Britain about the percentage that the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company would pay Iran. Getting closer to the Soviets again against Britain, the Shah managed to extend the duration of "the nonaggression" pact. The Saadabad Pact signed between Turkey, Iraq and Afghanistan in 1937 aimed at improving close friendship relationships with the neighbors and deactivating the potential interventions by the Britain and the USSR as well. However; believing that his country was exposed to the British and Soviet threats, Reza Shah felt sympathy for the Nazi Germany, the rival of these two countries. The dictatorship regime of the Shah facilitated this rapprochement.⁵ The Shah also felt close to the Italian fascism and the Japanese militarist system. Prior to World War II, he allowed a large number of German specialists and consultants to be in Iran. In 1939 he had Muhsin Jahansuz killed, claiming that Muhsin would organize an uprising against him. Before that, Reza Shah had accused Muhsin Jahansuz of collaborating with the Soviets although he was a right-winged and democratic person. The Shah's such act was interpreted as the sign of Germany's influence over Iran.⁶ Reza Shah paid back his sympathy for Germany by losing his throne.

Iran and World War II. Iran didn't participate in both world wars officially. She, on the other hand, suffered at least as much as the sides in World War I and II during both wars. It was because Iran was invaded by foreign countries in both World War I and World War II. When World War I broke out, southern Iran was under the British sphere of influence and northern Iran Russia. During the war, pro-German and pro-Ottoman movements and civil uprising exposed the country to a chaos.⁷ While Reza Shah had tendencies towards Germany on the eve Of World War II, it was certain that he had no idea about the fact that Ribbentrop, German Minister of the Exterior told Molotov, Russian Minister of the Exterior on August 24 1939 that Russia was free to attack Iran.⁸ However, on September 4, 1939, three days after the war commenced, Iran declared her neutrality officially. It is clear that this declaration

⁴ M. Reza Ghods, *Government and Society in Iran, 1926-34*, in "Middle Eastern Studies", 27, 1991, 2, p. 219-220, Rouhollah K. Ramazani, *Iran's White Revolution: A Study in Political Development*, in "Middle East Studies", 5, 1974, 2, p. 127.

⁵ Justus D. Doenecke, *Iran's Role in Cold War Revisionism*, in "Iranian Studies", 5, 1972, 2, p. 104, John C. Campbell, *The Soviet Union and Middle East: In the General Direction of the Persian Gulf, Part I*, in "Russian Review", 29, 1970, 2, p. 147.

⁶ Stephanie Cronin, *The Politics of Radicalism Within the Iranian Army: The Jahansuz Group of 1939*, in "Iranian Studies", 32, 1999, 1, p. 15.

⁷ Ervand Abrahamian, *Factionalism in Iran: Political Groups in the 14th Parliament (1944-46)*, in "Middle Eastern Studies", 14, 1978, 1, p. 25.

⁸ John C. Campbell, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

was made to eliminate any potential attack on Iran by the belligerent states. Additionally, when the war was only in Europe then, the need to make such an immediate declaration strongly signifies that Iran's administration was expecting an intervention.

Despite the declaration of neutrality, Iran could not avoid the foreign invasion during World War II. In 1941, when Germany waged war against the Soviets and Japan against the USA, Iran gained a very strategic importance. Especially, Germany's attack on the Soviets put together a communist state and her ideological rivals- the USA and the UK- on the same side. When the war forced these states into an alliance, Iran became a key geography so that the alliance could run. Convening at Placentia Bay, Newfoundland in August 1941, US President Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Churchill decided to provide the USSR with economic and military aid. Yet, there were big difficulties in conveying the aid to the Soviets.⁹ The reason for that was the security problem rather than the geographical barriers. The Soviet's Baltic gate was closed due to the German threat and the Far East gate, due to Japan. The Turkish straits and Iran were other alternative ways to establish a connection with the Russian geography. However, the utilization of the Turkish straits was not possible according to the terms that the Treaty of Montreux¹⁰ prescribed. So, there was no other way for the Allies to convey the aid to the Soviets but through Iran.

When the Allies decided to aid the Soviets through Iran, they saw Ahmed Reza Shah as a hindrance to them. It is because the Shah declared his neutrality and didn't want to make an attempt against Germany. Despite this, the Allies didn't take into consideration Iran's neutrality and independence and invaded Iran by force on August 26, 1941. The Soviet Army invaded northern Iran and the British Army and then the US Army southern Iran. Ahmad Reza Shah was obliged to leave his throne on behalf of his son.¹¹ Exiled to the Mauritius Islands by the British, the Shah died in South Africa, where he travelled in 1944. Reza Pahlavi, Ahmad Reza's successor, only 23 years old, was guided by the Allies as they wanted. Meanwhile, the Allies managed to base their invasion of Iran on the law. By signing a treaty with the new Shah Muhammad Reza Pahlavi on January 29, 1942, they agreed to totally evacuate their soldiers from Iran's territories in six months after the war ended.¹²

⁹ Fahir Armaoğlu, *20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi, (1914-1995)*, Alkım Yayınları, İstanbul, 1999, p. 382.

¹⁰ According to the 1936 Montreux Treaty; (Article 19) at a war that Turkey doesn't participate in the passage of the belligerent states' ships through the Turkish straits is forbidden. See, İsmail Soysal, *Türkiye'nin Siyasal Andlaşmaları (1920-1945)*, C. I, TTK Yayınları, Ankara, 1983, p. 497.

¹¹ Homa Omid, *Theocracy or Democracy? The Critics of 'Westoxification' and the Politics of Fundamentalism*, in "Third World Quarterly", 13, 1992, 4, p. 675-676, Ronald Ferrier, *Iran and the Cold War: The Azerbaijan Crisis of 1946* by Louise L 'Estrange Fawcett, in "Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies", University of London, 58, 1995, 1, p. 160.

¹² Kuross A. Samii, *Truman against Stalin in Iran: A Tale of Three Messages*, in "Middle Eastern Studies", 23, 1987, 1, p. 97.

Due to the invasion, important changes happened in Iran's domestic and foreign policy. During the invasion, Iran seemed like Machiavelli's country. Forced by the Allies, the Shah appointed Foroughi, an experienced statesman and a philosopher, as Prime Minister. At the demand of the Allies, Iran waged war against Germany on September 9, 1943 and the same year, the 1942 Treaty was passed through the Iranian Parliament with an overwhelming majority (80 votes to 8).¹³ Immediately after the invasion, the Iranian Army of 124.000 soldiers was reduced to 65.000. But, it was increased to 80.000 soldiers due to the war waged against Germany.¹⁴ During the war a big famine broke out. Cereal products had been conveyed to the Soviets and the food was rationed due to the famine, which caused a civil commotion in Tehran in December 1942. During the commotion, led by the university students, on December 8, 150 shops were burnt, 20 persons were killed, 700 people were injured and 150 people were arrested.¹⁵ Many merchants who took advantage of the war, on the other hand, made a lot of profits from the black market and many rich people appeared after the war as in all wars. The Allies' invasion of Iran affected the social and political life in the country. Intimidated and forced to step back due to the dictatorship regime during the old Shah's administration, the groups became active again. The occupying states gave these groups the green light. Having left the Capital due to the Shah, many wealthy people returned to Tehran. The majority of those immigrating into Tehran were composed of the people coming from the Soviet occupation zone and most of them were the leading people of tribes. They immigrated because they were scared that the Soviets could both seize on and nationalize their property after the war.¹⁶ Making use of the existence of the UK and the USA in Iran, the wealthy were trying to have a right to say in the country's administration and so they were supporting the Allies. In order to prove that their dethroning the Shah was justified, the Allies were feeling sympathy for those who suffered the Shah's regime. Besides, the Supreme Court, guided by the Allies, opened a legal case for investigating the corruption of the Shah.¹⁷ However, the political parties came first among those most affected by the dethroned Shah.

In 1941, when Iran had been invaded, the political party activities which were suspended and forbidden during Ahmad Reza Shah were allowed again. It was a message sent to the political parties in Iran, meaning that Iran would change into democracy. It is apparent that the UK and the USA had influence on taking this decision and thus, they wanted to tolerate the potential opposition against themselves. Though, there is evidence that young Shah Muhammad Reza Pahlavi didn't have a positive look on it and defended that democracy could not exist in Iran. Averell Harriman, US representative of Tehran spoke with the Shah that the political parties

¹³ A. H. Hamzavi, *Iran and Tehran Conference*, "International Affairs", 20, 1944, 2, p. 195-198.

¹⁴ Ervand Abrahamian, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

¹⁵ Stephen L. McFarland, *Anatomy of Iran Political Crowd: The Tehran Bread Riot of December 1942*, in "International Journal of Middle East Studies", 17, 1985, 1, p. 51.

¹⁶ Helmut Richards, *America's Shah Shahanshah's Iran*, in "MERIP Reports", 40 1975, p. 3.

¹⁷ Ervand Abrahamian, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

and the parliament should be opened after the elections were made. The Shah expressed as follows: “Democracy in Iran is impossible. Iran is a little child. A hand is needed to watch her.”¹⁸ But, the Shah had no power to stand in the Allies’ way. Despite the Shah’s reluctance, political parties were allowed to open and it was the first time that Iran had been so close to constitutional monarchy. Although the activities of political parties were allowed at the end of 1941, the elections were able to be made in November 1943. The most organized parties were the Moderate Democrat Party and the Dowreh Party, appealing to the small-scale merchants. Additionally, the UK-supported National Will Party and the Soviet-supported Tudeh Party were other influential groups. Although some parties made an alliance, 86 deputies out of 136 composing the parliament had been elected by the top-level people. The majority group in the parliament defended the cooperation with the UK and the USA rather than the USSR¹⁹. However; when the marginal deputies in the 14th parliament in 1944 opposed it harshly, the Shah suggested delaying the parliament negotiations by the end of the war. When Bullard, the Britain Ambassador to Tehran, reacted to this, the Shah had to step back. In this period, the Tehran Conference, held during the wartime, was another important event affecting Iran’s domestic politics.

The Tehran Conference. The Tehran Conference at the end of 1943 was one of the most important conventions organized among the Allies. As from 1943, the US forces became involved in the war in northern Africa. A victory was achieved against Germany and in the same year the USSR won the Stalingrad War. These developments were important turning points in the course of the war. Meanwhile, we should repeat that the aid sent to the USSR by the UK and the USA through Iran helped to win the Stalingrad War. The railway route of 808 miles, spanning from the Persian Gulf to the Caspian Sea, was only allocated to the Soviets almost throughout the war.²⁰ When Italy collapsed and Germany began to withdraw, the Allies decided to make a series of conferences both to end the war and reshape the postwar world. This process first began in Casablanca and many conferences were organized in many countries and important decisions were taken until the Tehran Conference. But, Stalin, the Soviet leader, could not participate in any of these conferences. The Tehran Conference was a summit conference because Stalin participated in it.

Stalin insisted that the conference, called *Eureka* (meeting) by political circles, should be convened in Tehran and it so happened. It was the first time that Stalin had left the Soviet borders during this conference.²¹ Besides Stalin’s insistence, the most effective reason why the conference was held in Tehran was Iran’s invasion by the countries convening in the conference. Stalin was the first to come to Tehran to attend

¹⁸ Habib Ladjevardi, *The Origins of U.S. Support for an Autocratic Iran*, in “International Journal of Middle East Studies”, 15, 1983, 2, p. 227.

¹⁹ Kuross A. Samii, *op. cit.*, p. 86, Ervand Abrahamian, *op. cit.*, p. 29-35.

²⁰ A. H. Hamzavi, *op. cit.*, p. 197.

²¹ Oral Sander, *Siyasi Tarih*, AÜSBF Yayınları, No: 541, Ankara, 1984, p. 428, Fahir Armaoğlu, *op. cit.*, p. 394.

the Conference. On Friday, September 26, the airplane carrying Stalin and the Soviet delegation arrived at Ghalermorgi (Bird Castle) airport. Stalin and Molotov, Soviet Minister of the Exterior, went straight to the Soviet Embassy. One day after Stalin, US President Roosevelt landed at the same airport and settled in the US Embassy. The UK Prime Minister Churchill arrived in Tehran at the same time as President Roosevelt but landed at the Amirabad Airport. One day after arriving in Tehran, the US President Roosevelt accepted Stalin's invitation and visited the Soviet Embassy. Coming to Iran the earliest, Stalin wanted to show that he thought of himself as the host. When Roosevelt found this convenient, the negotiations were mostly made at the Soviet Embassy and Churchill had to accept it.²² During the Tehran Conference, lasting for four days, the Allies took important decisions on the state of the war and the postwar state. However, we did not find necessary to mention them since they are not directly related to the subject. What is important in terms of our subject is the impact of the Tehran Conference on Iran.

First, we need to state that Iran didn't take any side in the Tehran Conference. She neither attended the Conference nor had any impact on the decisions taken. However, the outlooks of these three countries on Iran were important because all of them had invaded Iran by force and they were the countries trying to design the future's world. The Iranian administrators, aware of this state, saw the existence of the world's three leaders as an opportunity and made a great effort to host them very warmly. They were trying to cultivate their friendship by presenting extravagant gifts such as silken carpets to the world's leaders. The Allies, on the one hand, were trying to leave an impression that they would be stuck to the Conference of 1942 and they would evacuate Iran after the war and they, on the other hand, were laying the foundation for the utilization of Iranian petroleum. Hence, they made many negotiations with the Iranian administrators by taking advantage of the Conference. Although accompanied by Molotov, the Soviet Minister of the Exterior and high-ranking military officers, Stalin visited Shah Muhammad Reza Pahlavi in his palace. Moreover; Molotov with another delegation had long negotiations with the Shah, Prime Minister Soheily, Minister of the Exterior M. Sa'id and Minister of Justice M. Hüseyin Ala at the Soviet Embassy. USA President Roosevelt also had a long negotiation with Sa'id, Iran's Minister of the Exterior. And before Roosevelt left Iran, the Shah gave him a unique historical Isfahan carpet. Likewise, Churchill had another negotiation with the Shah at the library of the Soviet Embassy.²³

The representatives of the Allies in Tehran also made complimentary explanations about Iran. Depending on these explanations, the Iranian Press published several news about the Allies, giving great coverage of news and comments on the sympathy felt for the USA. Particularly, the Atlantic Speech was the source of this sympathy. However, the relations with the UK and USSR were cold due to the events lived in the past. Though, all of the three countries very clearly explained that they would support Iran for providing them with convenience and cooperation. First, the

²² A. H. Hamzavi, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

²³ A. H. Hamzavi, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

UK and the USSR pledged to give Iran seeds and food to remove famine. Additionally, the USA pledged to give Iran financial aid. But, what was the most important to Iran was the declaration made by the Allies. According to the declaration, all of the three countries would protect Iran's territorial integrity and would give Iran economic aid.²⁴ These oral explanations and the published declaration made Iran exceedingly optimistic about the postwar period. Though, unlike what was expected, Iran was face to face with a new frustration. Because the Tehran Conference was made at a time when the Allies felt that they would win the war. Thus, as the victory came closer, the disagreement between them began to appear slowly. Despite the warm atmosphere in Tehran, the things didn't go that way. Moreover, Iran was on the agenda in the first serious crisis breaking out between the Allies.

Iran towards the End of the War. In 1941, when Iran was invaded and Ahmad Reza Shah was dethroned, an important resistance did not happen because the removal of the Shah's despotic administration had shadowed the invasion of the country. The Shah's not allowing the political organizations had prevented the organized resistances from rising. Additionally, the treaty made with the Allies prescribed that they would withdraw from Iran and the developments lived during the Tehran Conference kept low the opposition towards the allies.²⁵ The invasion both offered the political party members new opportunities and encouraged the feudal squires towards the end of the war. Important developments happened among Ulama as well. The leading clergymen²⁶ whose role in politics was annulled in the middle of the 1930s were the group looking forward to the dethroning of the Shah. Likewise, the clergymen had heated quarrels and conflicts about Ayatollahship²⁷, beginning in 1936, and they ended it in order to be active in politics again. Ayatollah Burujirdi was chosen unanimously by the leading clergymen and he settled in the city of Qom in 1944.²⁸ In the last year of the war, there was an activity in all Iranian political groups.

²⁴ Gary R. Hess, *The Iranian Crisis of 1945-46 and the Cold War*, in "Political Science Quarterly", 89, 1974, 1, p. 121.

²⁵ A lot of Iranian politicians were pleased with the dethronement of the Shah and thought of it as an opportunity to reach their goals. A few people criticized this and considered it to be an outside interference in Iran's internal affairs. Mohammad Mossadegh, whose name would be very popular ahead, came first among them. See, Andrew F. Westwood, *Politics of Distrust in Iran*, in "Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science", 358, 1965, p. 127.

²⁶ After becoming the Shah in 1925, Ahmad Reza Han began to restrict the increasing influence of the clergymen over the parliament. In the parliament which convened in 1935, no clergyman was allowed to have seats. He, on the other hand, made use of the conflicts by causing disagreements on the religious leadership. In 1936, when Hairi, the greatest leader, died, the leadership was divided into three. (Khawnsari, Hujjat ve Sadre), Majid Yazdi, *Patterns of Clerical Political Behavior in Postwar Iran, 1941-53*, in "Middle Eastern Studies", 26, 1990, 3, p. 285.

²⁷ The top religious authority.

²⁸ Majid Yazdi, *op. cit.*, p. 285.

Despite the economic problems which had been suffered due to the impact of the war since Iran's invasion by the Allies, there was a political stability in the country. Doubtless, the invasion had an impact on this stability as well. Early in 1945 it was almost certain that the Allies would win the war in Europe. Taking into consideration the fact that according to the Treaty of 1942, the Allies should withdraw from Iran, all political groups had already begun to calculate what they would do in the future. Except for acquiring the political administration in domestic politics, the political groups gave the most importance to the policy Iran would follow in foreign politics. Being the most active group in the country, the patriot democratic groups considered the USSR to be a threat and defended the USA. TUDEH, The Communist Party, along with some liberals and some neutral groups, considered the UK to be an enemy. Other than these, there were also some groups who defended keeping each one of these three states at an equal distance and following a balance policy.²⁹

The activity started by the political groups affected the situation of the governments as well. The activity of the groups resulted from the attitude of the governments, mostly from the prime ministers as well as the internal dynamics in those political groups. The petroleum negotiations made with the foreign country companies were the sensitive spot of all governments. In 1944, the negotiations made with some companies during the prime ministry of Sohely and then Sa'id caused very fierce criticisms. Especially, some bargains were made with the USA-originated Standard Oil, Standard Vacuum of the U.S., Sinclair Oil Company and the British-Dutch originated Royal Dutch Shell of Britain during Prime Minister Sa'id, which caused great reactions. Having to step back due to these reactions, Sa'id was forced to explain that the bargains made with all oil companies were halted by the end of the war.³⁰ All these developments showed that not only the Iranian political groups but also foreign countries were calculating what they would do about the Iran's postwar future. Both these internal reactions and the Allies' attitude had driven Iran to a fragile political process before the war came to an end. As from 1944, the governments could last no longer than a few months.

Following the resignation of Soheily, Sa'id founded the new government in March 1944. It was the first government of the parliament period opened after the elections. The active groups in the parliament approved of him. In addition to the Patriots and the Democrats, the leading individualists such as Mossadegh also supported him. Representing Iran in foreign countries for 12 years, Sa'id had a good command of foreign politics. However, he was called *persona non grata* by the USSR due to the negotiations carried out with the Western countries about petroleum. When the Soviets demanded a treaty on petroleum from him, Sa'id avoided it. Hence, the Soviets launched a campaign against Sa'id via TUDEH. According to the Soviets,

²⁹ Ervand Abrahamian, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

³⁰ TUDEH and anti-West groups' propagandas and actions were effective in the revelation of the secret negotiations carried out with the Western companies by the Government. See in detail, Gary R. Hess, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

Sa'id was a hidden fascist although seemingly neutral.³¹ Despite hindrances by the British, Sa'id had to resign in November due to the Soviet pressure. The next government after Sa'id wasn't able to be founded easily. The USA and the UK didn't approve of the pro-Soviet people, whereas the USSR didn't want to see a pro-West person as the prime minister. Although the Cold War is believed to have begun between the Soviets and the West after World War II, such interventions in the governments to be founded in Iran shows that in fact the Cold War had already begun in 1944, when World War II had not finished yet.

Following Sa'id's resignation, neutral nominees in the parliament were searched that both sides could accept. Although Mossadegh was thought of as a nominee for a while, he was given up since there were only a few deputies in the parliament, who could support him. After a search of two weeks, Bayat, who was believed to be neutral, was appointed as Prime Minister. Bayat was a member of People's Party of Iran, which was pro-monarchist. He was an experienced politician who became a deputy in all parliaments during the old Shah. Expected to run a neutral administration, he gained the support of all political parties and the Allies at the very beginning. Though, the property of his large family was in Kirmanshah occupied by the UK. So, he could not avoid being accused of being close to the UK. He attempted to found an investigation commission into the secret negotiations carried out with the Western companies during the Sa'id period. This caused him to be accused of being guided by the Soviets. When Sa'id came to power, Bullard, who was Tehran Ambassador of Britain, was complimenting him but after a short time he began to talk about him as "the dummiest man". Due to corruption accusations, the student demonstrations against him and his loss of the majority support in the parliament, in April 1945, he had to resign from his office, which he began in November 1944.³²

It was like an ordeal to found the government and run the administration in Iran in this period. The person who wanted to be the prime minister had to gain the support of the USA, the USSR and the UK, which were the occupiers in his own country, and had to take his actions without opposing their demands. On the other hand, in accordance with the constitution, the government to be founded had to receive vote of confidence in the parliament. However, there was disunity in the Iranian Parliament and no political party had enough seats to found the government, so all these caused the governments to last for a short time. Likewise, the new government could not be founded after Bayat's resignation. Nobody nominated by the groups in the parliament was able to gain the support of the other groups. After a long search in the parliament, they came to an agreement that Ibrahim Hakim al-Mulk, one of the former doctors in the Palace, would found the new government because he was considered to be unpoliticized. Although he was Azerbaijani, most of his friends were Farsi and southerner. Thus, he was expected to gain the support of both northern and southern Iran. The political parties and the Allies supported him half-heartedly. Seen

³¹ Ervand Abrahamian, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

³² *Ibidem*, p. 43-45.

as harmless by every circle, Hakimi was quite old and had very weak relationships with the public. In more than one month he was able to complete his government affairs that he began at the end of April. But all his efforts failed. He couldn't receive vote of confidence from the liberal wing in the parliament because they thought that their deputies were not given enough support in the government and the Hakimi government came to an end without becoming official.³³

When the Hakimi Government didn't receive vote of confidence and collapsed, Sadr was appointed to found the new government. The Sadr Government received the vote of confidence from the parliament although it was difficult. When the Sadr Government began to take office, World War II had finished and the evacuation of Iran was being spoken about. In his government Sadr took over both prime ministry and ministry of the interior and appointed the pro-Shah people to the Department of War. This showed that he was thinking of holding all power in his hands after the foreign forces withdrew from Iran. Moreover, his appointing a pro-Britain person as Minister of the Exterior was the proof of whose man he was. Even the USA Ambassador felt uncomfortable about this situation and wanted him to be changed. Announcing the martial law, the Sadr Government took very harsh precautions against the anti-West groups and TUDEH and forbade 48 newspapers to publish. After that, the USSR launched a campaign against the Sadr Government and began to support the separatist movements in Azerbaijan and Mahabad. Believing that Sadr's running the government would cause Iran to disintegrate, a lot of deputies in the parliament no longer supported him, as a result of which Sadr had to resign from his office.³⁴

Following Sadr's resignation, all eyes focused on Hakimi again. Those who did not support him before considered him to be the way out of the crisis. With his neutrality, he was believed to establish balanced relationships with all political groups and foreign countries. Being Azerbaijani-originated, he was thought to prevent the separatist movement that had begun in Azerbaijan. As a Azerbaijani-originated person, his taking office as Prime Minister of Iran could reduce the participation in the movement. However, none of the expectations came true. Unlike what he was expected to do, Hakimi came back with a very radical program. Turkish language was announced as the foreign language and the close observation on the Press and TUDEH was resumed as well that began during the Sadr government. The reconciliation negotiations carried out against the separatist movements during the previous governments were cut off. These groups were announced as anarchist and terrorists and it was explained that no negotiations would be made with them. Implying that the developments in Iran resulted from a hidden Britain-USSR rivalry, Hakimi tried to keep both countries at a distance. His act was interpreted that he was guided by the USA. However, a balanced coalition was established between pro-Soviet, pro-Britain people and pro-Iran in the Hakimi Government. Because the separatist movements grew bigger, the BBC radio announced that Iran's internal problems would be handled in a meeting by a tripartite commission in February 1946.

³³ *Ibidem*, p. 45-46.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 47.

This caused a big argument. Asserting that this would bring back the 1907 Nightmare, the leading political groups fiercely opposed the process.³⁵ On the other hand, Russia began to complain about Hakimi's constant anti-Soviet actions. After all these developments, a public opinion came out that Iran's territorial integrity was in danger. The leading politicians, particularly Mossadegh, began to say that the government should change in order to avoid this. In a parliament speech Mossadegh said as follows: "If we ourselves cannot solve the problems, the commission will do it as it wants. The solution to the problems is to negotiate with the USSR directly. Though, Hakimi cannot do this job. If Qavam is appointed as Prime Minister, he can carry out the negotiations with the USSR". Thus, he invited the Qavam Government openly.³⁶ When Mossadegh's idea was adopted by many people, the Hakimi Government had to resign from office on January 20, 1946 and as he prescribed, the new government was founded by Qavam.³⁷ Iran became confronted with many political crises during the the Qavam Government.

The Soviets' Attempts to Divide Iran. During WWII, the 1945-46 events are the beginning of the development which ended the cooperation between the USSR and the Western countries, changing the cooperation into a clash. After the Tehran Conference, both the development lived in the Iran's domestic policy and the activities of the USSR, the USA and Britain in Iran showed that the cooperation during the war would not go on after the war. The USSR had lived a competition with Britain on Iran and now she wanted to change this into an advantage after the war. According to the Soviet calculations, Britain, weakened in WWII, could not be as strong as in the past in Iran. However, the events lived towards the end of war showed that the USA had no intention to leave Iran to the USSR. However, the USA was not as experienced as the USSR in Iran. The Soviets were Iran's neighbor and had historical relations with her from the past. However, Sadr and Hakimi Governments' pro-Soviet acts showed that the relations between the USSR and Iran wouldn't be good after the war as well. Like the period after 1917, Iran regained a bilateral importance in terms of the USSR. First, Iran was a security gate for the Soviets, so the existence of anti-Soviet countries in Iran was unfavorable in terms of the USSR. Second, Iran was an important country of petroleum and the Soviets didn't want these petroleum wells to be under the control of anti-Soviet countries because it was risky.

Even if they did not say it openly, the Soviets had no intention to withdraw from Iran. Though, the 1942 Treaty was a hindrance for the Soviets to remain in Iran. The USA's and Britain's showing their compliance with the treaty by withdrawing their troops would show the Soviets' incompliance with the treaty. The withdrawal of

³⁵ In the year 1907 Iran was divided into three zones of influence by a decision taken between England and Russia. Northern Iran was Russia's zone and southern Iran was England's zone. The midlands were accepted as the neutral zone. See in detail. A. Lobanov-Rostovsky, *Anglo-Russian Relations through the Centuries*, in "Russian Review", 7, 1948, 2, p. 49-50.

³⁶ Ervand Abrahamian, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

³⁷ Gary R. Hess, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

the West and the presence of anti-Soviet governments in Iran could cause Iran to be totally lost. To hinder this, the Soviets decided to divide Iran. The ethnical structure of the country created an important opportunity for the Soviets to reach this goal. Since similar separatist movements were tried out after WWI, it was not difficult for the Soviets to play the same game again. Even if the Soviets' attempts didn't bring the expected result, they could hinder the Iran governments from opposing the Soviets and could show how decisive the Soviets were against the West in terms of Iran. Azerbaijan, Mahabad independence movements, and Gilan and Khuzestan commotions were the products of the Soviets' such policies.

At the end of WWII the most effective event that took place in Iran was the movement of Cafer Pisaveri, which is known as Iranian Azerbaijan and whose capital is Tabriz. Although Shiite in religion, the entire region which composed almost one third of the Iranian population, spoke Turkish. In the region where a lot of rebellion attempts were made, the Seyh Khyabani movement was the last event during WWI.³⁸ Guided by the USSR, Pisaveri declared his autonomy in Iranian Azerbaijan at the end of 1945. Almost all region population was Azerbaijani and similar attempts were seen in the past. The movement seemed ethnical on the surface; however, the regime declared there- communism- told the truth. Even if she couldn't control the whole Iran, the USSR could annex the northern region due to the communist administration. This would mean that the USSR could control the northern Iran petroleum.³⁹ However, necessary conditions were not available in Iranian Azerbaijan for a communist administration to be founded. This showed that the Soviets' main aim was to divide Iran rather than make the region communist.

Openly supported by the USSR, Cafer Pisaveri, who declared the independence of Azerbaijani Republic in Iran, had a colorful personality. Born in Tabriz, Pisaveri was quite active in the Iranian communist movement during his youth. In 1921 he immigrated to Baku, the Soviet Azerbaijan. Staying there for almost then years, Pisaveri was among the pioneers of the idea of Great Azerbaijan, which joined Iran's Azerbaijan and Soviet Azerbaijan. After returning to Tehran in 1930, he was arrested by the Ahmad Reza Shah administration. He was put in prison and kept there for 11 years. In 1941, when the Allied States invaded Iran and put Ahmad Reza in exile, Pisaveri was released by benefitting from the amnesty granted for political prisoner. Participating in TUDEH, Iran Communist Party, for a while, Pisaveri began to publish a newspaper entitled Azhir in 1943 and he had a difference of opinion with TUDEH about politics. Despite this, he half-heartedly supported the TUDEH nominees in the 1943 elections. Totally departing from TUDEH in 1945, Pisaveri

³⁸ Although a clergyman growing up in Tabriz Mosque, Seyh Khyabani was one of the top leaders of the Democrat Party working in Iranian Azerbaijan in 1919. Rebellng against the 1919 Anglo-Persian Treaty, he declared independence against the Tehran Administration in Tabriz and founded a government. The movement was similar to that of Cafer Pisaveri in 1946. Homa Katouzian, *The Campaign against the Anglo-Iranian Agreement of 1919*, in "British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies", 25, 1998, 1, p. 36.

³⁹ Fred H. Lawson, *The Iranian Crisis of 1945-1946 and the Spiral Model of International Conflict*, in "International Journal of Middle East Studies", 21, 1989, 3, p. 316.

founded Firgah-i Dimokrat-i Azerbaijan Party and began to defend the disintegration of the region from Iran. Teaching in Turkish in the region's schools came first among the ideas of the Party.⁴⁰ The most important difference between these two communist movements was that TUDEH represented the whole Iran Communism, whereas Pisaveri was working for Azerbaijan region only. Ideologically, Pisaveri adopted Firgah-ı Dimukkrat Leninizm and Communism of Caucasian Model, whereas TUDEH defended European Marxism.⁴¹ This situation proves why the Pisaveri Movement was totally guided by the USSR.

Provoked by the USSR, another independence movement took place in Mahbad region, located in southwestern Iran. A Kurdish-originated communist leader, Muhammad Gazi declared an independent Kurdish Republic in the region immediately after Pisaveri. The Azerbaijan Republic, declared by Pisaveri, adopted a communist regime. Although the conditions were not sufficient, it was logical to some extent. Because Tabriz like Tehran was one of the most important centers of communist movements. However, Mahabad and most of the Kurdish living in the region had no idea about such a system. After all, the aim of the Soviets was not to adapt the revolution theory to Iran. Instead, based on these two ethnical problems, the USSR wanted to remain in Iran permanently and keep an important route under control to reach hot seas. The fact that Muhammad Gazi's Kurdish Republic and Pisaveri's Azerbaijan Republic immediately made an alliance treaty clearly shows that both of these separatist movements were the Soviets' plan.⁴² Via TUDEH, the Soviets also continued to cause commotions to take place in the other regions of Iran. In Gilan, where a Soviet Republic was declared in 1920, new actions against Iran Government started.⁴³ In Khuzestan, southern Iran, where the Arabs lived, the workers working at the petroleum facilities of the British Oil Company were provoked against the Iran Central Administration and the Western countries and pushed to general strikes.⁴⁴

The efforts of the Soviets to divide Iran gradually brought them towards a clash with the USA and Britain after the year 1945. The fact that the Soviets supported Azerbaijan and Kurdistan during their declaration of autonomy and independence was against the agreements signed among the Allies. Because, as mentioned before, with the declaration issued during the Tehran Conference, it was promised that territorial integrity of Iran would be protected. Thus, the act of the Soviets completely annulled this decision. Since the USA and Britain realized the attitude of the Soviets, they supported the Tehran Government in suppressing the efforts for independence, but the

⁴⁰ Ervand Abrahamian, *Communism and Communalism in Iran: The Tudah and the Firgah-i Dimokrat*, in "International Journal of Middle East Studies", 1, 1970, 4, p. 306-308.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, p. 316.

⁴² George Lenczowski, *United States' Support for Iran's Independence and Integrity, 1945-1959*, in "Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science", 401, America and Middle East, 1972, p. 47.

⁴³ See, Janet Afary, *The Contentious Historiography of the Gilan Republic in Iran: A Critical Exploration*, in "Iranian Studies", 28, 1995, 1, p. 3-24.

⁴⁴ Fahir Armaoğlu, *op. cit.*, p. 425.

entrance of Iranian forces into the areas where rebellions took place was blocked by Soviet soldiers. The most striking part of the event was that the efforts for autonomy and independence appeared in the areas in which Soviet soldiers were located. When Iranian Army Forces mobilized to intervene in the events in Azerbaijan and Mahabad, not only were they stopped by the Soviets but their ammunitions in military facilities were also seized. The Soviets also began to send new troops to Iran.⁴⁵ Following these, Iran applied to the USA and Britain for help against the acts of the Soviets. Although Iran's request was getting help from the USA and Britain in military terms against the Soviets, these countries and especially the USA wasn't very eager to do this. But they applied to the Soviets for them to allow the passage of Iran Army Troops into areas where clashes took place. The Soviets, informed these countries that they would only allow one battalion of Iranian Soldiers to pass from Tabriz to the Mahabad area. In spite of this, some of the Iran Army troops sent to the area were stopped by Soviet Soldiers on 19 November 1945 at the Kazvin region.⁴⁶

The fact that the USA and Britain withdrew their soldiers from Iran in compliance with the 1942 treaty and that the Soviets did not, gave rise to events in 1946 which are known as Iran Crisis. Many academic and politic establishments accept the beginning of the Cold War period as these events. Of course, it is not possible to conclude that the Cold War would not have taken place if these events had not happened, but it is a fact that they played an important role in its beginning. However, until the Blocs were established, the Cold War was a struggle between the USA and the USSR and this struggle began in Iran.

The Beginning of the Rivalry between the USA and the USSR in Iran. It is seen that the USA had established relation with Iran in the period before WWII. It is known that some American citizens worked in Iran as missionaries commence from the beginning of the WWII. The first official connection between Iran and America started with the Trade Agreement signed in 1856. While American teachers such as Baskerville who worked in Iran in the College of Tehran between the years 1885-1909 and Dr. Samuel Martin between 1898-1941 were performing their duty, they acted like voluntary ambassadors. While the country was under the pressure imposed by Britain and the Tsarist Russia an inclination towards the USA arose. The movement which started with the 1906 Constitution was supported by American representatives in Iran. However; Britain and Russia felt uncomfortable because of such kind of acts of America. Although W. Morgan Shuster (an American) was appointed by President Taft to organize financial activities in Iran in 1911, the harsh opposition from Britain and Russia caused America to refrain from this. Although it was stated that Shuster wasn't an official representative of the USA and that he would

⁴⁵ George Lenczowski, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

⁴⁶ Gary R. Hess, *op. cit.*, p. 123-126.

work privately, Britain and Russia didn't accept this either and Shuster's duty was abolished in 1912.⁴⁷

During the Paris Peace Conference after WWI, Iran established close relations with the USA and strongly supported the Wilson Principles. The efforts of Britain to settle in Iran by itself and the 1919 Anglo-Iranian Agreement which would bring this into being was blocked by the open support of Americans to Iran. After the coup in 1921 which was performed by Ahmad Reza Khan, Britain and USSR had lost trust. America's return to an isolation policy gave rise to Iran's perception of America as a safe force. The USA was acting as a country which supported the modernization of Iran. Although some American Petroleum Companies carried out negotiations with Iran, they were rather careful in order not to go into a clash with Britain. The acts carried out in Tehran by America were only found dangerous by Ulama (men of religious). Nevertheless; when Ahmed Reza decreased the effect of Ulama, many American experts were benefitted from in the process of modernization. One of the most important of these experts was Dr. Arthur Milspaugh who organized the economical and financial system of Iran between the years 1922-1927.⁴⁸ This cooperation continued until the end of the 1930's. However, after 1937 when Ahmad Reza started to cooperate more with Germany this caused relations to lose momentum. With the beginning of the WWII a new period started in the relations between USA and Iran.

In 1941, the USA sent soldiers to Iran for the first time to help the USSR. The USSR was not in a position to calculate that this would cause some kind of competition in the future because of the dense pressure Germany applied to it. However; after the beginning of 1943, the change in the course of the war caused both the USA and USSR to make plans on Iran about its future. This hidden rivalry which also included Britain continued until the end of the war. But it mainly continued between the USA and USSR. According to the USSR, since Britain would lose its power, its influence on Iran would also decrease and if America returned to its isolationist policy they would be left alone in the Iran matter. But the activities of America in Iran showed that the result wouldn't be as Soviets expected. During the WWII, America was the one that established the closest relations with Iran among the Allies. That Iran's past with Britain and USSR was not very trustworthy caused Iran to create easier links with America. America tried to seize every opportunity to establish close relations with Iran and while doing so America tried to convince Iran that it wasn't imperialist country. The young Iranian leader Mohammed Reza Pahlavi and the Iranian governments moved in accordance with America. Humanitarian aid given and care shown to Iranians raised American prestige in Iran. With an agreement signed in 1943 it was decided that American officers would work in Iranian Army as trainers. Many American officers, one of the most important whom is Norman

⁴⁷ Kamyar Ghaneabassiri, *U.S. Foreign Policy and Persia, 1856-1921*, in "Iranian Studies", 35, 2002, 1, p. 149-155.

⁴⁸ Chris Paine, Erica Schoenberger, *Iranian Nationalism and the Great Powers: 1872-1954*, in "MERIP Reports, Middle East Research and Information Project", 37, 1975, p. 14.

Schwarzkopf, trained Iran Army troops.⁴⁹ On the other hand, Arthur Millspaugh, who had worked in Iran before, became the mere official who would handle Iran's economy and financial system with the approval of the Iran Parliament on 29 January 1943. General Greely who was in charge of American troops in Iran and the Tehran Ambassador Dreyfus, worked in coordination with Schwarzkopf and Millspaugh in order to reorganize Iran.⁵⁰

The USSR followed America's activities. Even Britain clearly stated that it wasn't pleased with this situation. In addition, American activities weren't welcomed by the Iranian press and they were criticized harshly. The main point of criticism was the closeness of the Shah and governments to the USA and the activities of Millspaugh.⁵¹ Millspaugh's proposal of a 20 yearly plan to improve the economy of Iran was perceived by the USSR as America's plan to establish strong bonds with Iran and to carry on with them after the war. Therefore, the USSR didn't allow Millspaugh to interfere into areas under their occupation and this caused disagreements with the USA and Iran.⁵² The competition between the USA and USSR became denser after 1944. The reason for this was the negotiations that American Petroleum Companies started with the Iran Government. That some English Companies joined these negotiations made Russia feel left out. The USSR felt unease because western petroleum companies asked for some privileges for the Iranian petrol in the north of Iran. The USA wanted the USSR to attend these negotiations in spite of Britain's opposition but this attempt ended to be fruitless. As soon as Sergei I. Kavtaradze who was the foreign representative of USSR and his board joined the negotiations he wanted privileges related to the North Iranian petroleum to be given to the USSR Iran rejected this offer and wanted negotiations to be put off until after the war and this made the USSR to believe that this decision was taken under the effect of the USA. The USSR showed such a reaction to American activities in Iran that Millspaugh had to resign in February 1945.⁵³

In the last year of the WWII, the rivalry became even denser and started to change direction. The attempts of the USSR to divide Iran were a reflection of this competition. The hidden competition became apparent in 1945. One reason for this was that the war in Europe had completely ended. Since the Germany factor which caused the allies to come together no longer existed, their dependence on each other also decreased. With the effect of this, relations turned from cooperation into conflict. Another and maybe more important factor was that administration both in Britain and America had changed hands. Upon the death of the American president Roosevelt in April 1945, Harry Truman became president. It is believed that Roosevelt was lenient

⁴⁹ Habib Ladjevardi, *op. cit.*, p. 229, Chris Paine, Erica Schoenberger, *op. cit.*, p. 16-17.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 17.

⁵¹ Camron Michael Amin, *Selling and Saving "Mother Iran": Gender and the Iranian Press in 1940s*, in "International Journal of Middle East Studies", 33, 2001, 3, p. 337-338.

⁵² *Ibidem*, p. 337.

⁵³ Gary R. Hess, *op. cit.*, p. 119-121.

towards the USSR.⁵⁴ It isn't easy to answer the question as to whether Roosevelt would continue with his lenient attitude towards Russia if he had lived. It also isn't difficult to predict that no American President would turn a blind eye to Soviet activities in Russia after his death. It is certain that with Truman the competition between the USA and USSR turned into a clash. Long after he started his duty Roosevelt had sent a letter to the Foreign Minister Byrnes stating that he was fed up with the childish attitude Russia was showing in Iran.⁵⁵ After the elections held in the summer of 1945 in Britain Atlee had replaced Churchill as Prime Minister and Bevin had replaced Eden as Foreign Secretary. Although Churchill and his Conservative Party had an allergy towards Russia, Atlee who was a member of the Labour Party was more flexible.⁵⁶ That Britain was tired after the war and this change of administration had put the USA in front position against the USSR in Iran. Despite this, the USSR had no intention to step back in Iran. In 1946, the USSR showed that it had no intention to withdraw from Iran, and this caused relations between the USA and USSR to head towards a dead end.

The 1946 Crises and Beginning of the Cold War. WWII ended after the Japanese surrendered on 2 September 1945. According to this, the withdrawal of the allies from Iran due to the 1942 Agreement had to start, too. Since the duration of withdrawal was stated as 6 months, all foreign soldiers had to leave Iran by 2 March 1946. But because the USSR didn't comply with this rule caused a crisis between them and the USA, Britain and Iran and according to many diplomacy historians this marked the beginning of the Cold War. Although the crises took place in 1946, that Iran wouldn't withdraw from Iran without any hindrance could be understood from their previous attitude. The Iranian administration which had doubts about this, applied to the USA to learn their real intention. Before the Yalta Conference which would be held in February 1945, Muhammad Shayesteh who was the second Ambassador to the USA wanted America to remind the withdrawal rule to the USSR, but when the USSR said that this item wasn't on its agenda, the USA and Britain didn't show any opposition.⁵⁷ Not wanting an immediate clash with the USSR and that the war was going on was effective in their decision.⁵⁸ The attitude of the USSR was the first indication showing that they weren't planning to withdraw from Iran.

When the Potsdam Conference was held in July 1945 the war in Europe had completely ended. The matter of withdrawal had been put on the agenda with the insistence of the USA and Britain and in spite of the reluctance of the USSR it was decided to withdraw from Iran immediately. Upon this decision, the new American President Truman, announced that the remaining 5000 American soldiers in Iran

⁵⁴ Concerning the foreign policy disparity on Iran between Roosevelt and Truman, see, Kuross A. Samii, *op. cit.*, p. 95-107.

⁵⁵ George Lenczowski, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

⁵⁶ Mehmet Gönlübol vd., *Olaylarla Türk Dış Politikası*, Siyasal Kitabevi, 9. Baskı, Ankara, 1996, p. 195.

⁵⁷ Gary R. Hess, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

⁵⁸ Fahir Armaoğlu, *op. cit.*, p. 402.

would withdraw from Iran within 60 days.⁵⁹ It is understood that this timetable was created to force the USSR to withdraw, too. But although Britain also made similar explanations, this fell on deaf ears on the USSR side. However; the USSR understood that neither America nor Britain would turn a blind eye to their occupation of Iran after the Yalta and Potsdam conferences. Therefore the USSR tried to create an alibi to stay in Iran. The aforementioned attempts to divide Iran were a result of this. The Soviets wanted to extend their time in Iran under the cover of the Azerbaijan and Mahabad uprisings. Even though the new Foreign Secretary of Britain, Bevin, proposed to deal with the withdrawal issue in a conference, the Soviets didn't show much interest in this.⁶⁰ Although the USSR didn't want to join any conference which included the matter of withdrawal from Iran, the Iran crisis was the most important item in the Moscow Foreign Ministers Conference held in November 1945.

During the Moscow Conference, when the American Foreign Minister Byrnes brought the subject of withdrawal from Iran to the table by reminding the 1942 agreement and the Potsdam Conference decision, Foreign Minister Molotov strictly opposed him. Molotov stated that the 1921 Soviet-Iran Agreement gave them this right and showed the complications in the north of Iran as a reason. He said that the Soviet had to stay in Iran for the safety of Azerbaijan's petroleum.⁶¹ After this Byrnes said that Iran would take the matter to the United Nations and tried to force the USSR, but this didn't change the idea of the Soviets and they showed how determined they were. During the conference Molotov stated that western countries were located in many countries and that he couldn't understand why they were against Soviet soldiers in Iran.⁶² Even though Byrnes stated that he wanted to see Stalin regarding the subject, nothing changed on the Russian side.⁶³ The Moscow Conference ended in despair. There had been many disputes between the USSR and the West in many conferences and meetings, but they had always tried to be settled in others. Within this scope, it can be said that the Moscow Conference ended the alliance between the USA and USSR and started a period of clash.

⁵⁹ Gary R. Hess, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

⁶⁰ England had the privilege to use Iranian petroleum via the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. The presence of the Soviets in Iran meant that this privilege would be lost. So, England was concerned about the Soviets' holding her troops in Iran and even she criticized the USA for acting softly against the USSR. See, George Lenczowski, *op. cit.*, p. 48, Gary R. Hess, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

⁶¹ Kuross A. Samii, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

⁶² Justus D. Doenecke, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

⁶³ Like Molotov, Minister of the Exterior, Stalin repeated the Soviet claims at the meeting too. Since Baku petroleum was close to the Iranian border, he drew attention to the dangers that could come from Iran. He said that the danger of fascism hadn't been over and according to the 1942 Treaty the Soviets had the right to hold her troops in Iran until March 15, 1946 and the duration hadn't expired yet. Although there was no danger of fascism at the date when the meeting was held, it is apparent that using this expression, Stalin meant to say the USA and England as the danger. Likewise, after a while, Stalin said in a speech he delivered that the future wars would take place between Communism and Capitalism. Gary R. Hess, *op. cit.*, p. 133, Kuross A. Samii, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

That the conference did not produce any solution, created concern both in Iran and in Western countries. The insistence of the USSR is not withdrawing from Iran arouse from the fact that English and American soldiers had withdrawn.⁶⁴ The Soviets didn't believe that Britain and America would bring their soldiers back to Iran and go to war against them. The USA did not have any intention of going so further, too. In this case, the only thing left to do was to take the case to the UN. But since the time was not due yet, when Iran applied to the UN on 19 January 1946, they complained that the USSR provoked the Azerbaijan and Mahabad uprisings and interfered in their domestic problems. The UN representative of the USSR, Vyshinsky, refused the claims by stating that they did not interfere in Iran's internal affairs and they used the right that the 1921 Agreement gave to them.⁶⁵ When Iran brought the subject to the UN, the situation in Azerbaijan, Mahabad, Gilan and Khuzestan had deteriorated. The USA didn't want the newly established UN to be unsuccessful in such a sensitive subject. Since the Iran Parliament and especially the Shah realized this, they decided to settle the dispute by negotiating with the USSR, but it wasn't possible for the Hakimi Government which the USSR announced as an enemy to succeed this. Therefore, upon the request of the Shah, Hakimi resigned from prime ministry and Ahmad Qavam who was closer to the Soviets took office. Everybody believed that Qavam could solve Iran's problems with his experience. When he took office, the term of the fourteenth Iran Parliament was about to expire.⁶⁶

There were many problems waiting to be solved ahead of Gavam such as the withdrawal of the Soviets from Iran, the Azerbaijan, Mahabad and Gilan uprisings

⁶⁴ The USA troops had withdrawn totally from Iran before the Moscow Conference was held. There were small troops at the Persian Bay. All logistical materials were given to the UN team delivering aid to China. Though, the trucks, weapons and similar military materials that remained from the USA military troops were given to the Iranian Army on December 26, 1945. Fred H. Lawson, *op. cit.*, p. 317.

⁶⁵ Gary R. Hess, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

⁶⁶ Qavam was one of the most experienced politicians in Iran. When appointed as Prime Minister in 1946, he was almost 70 years old. In 1909 he lived his first political experience as Deputy Minister of the Interior. He was appointed as Prime Minister when Reza Han became the Minister of Defence with a coup. In the same government Mossadegh was the Minister of Finance. Claimed to plan a coup against Reza Han, who became Prime Minister instead of him in 1923, Qavam was arrested and all his property was seized. After being kept in prison for a while, he was released and he abandoned politics. In the year 1942, when the Allies signed a treaty with Iran, he was appointed as Prime Minister instead of Foroughi. Habib Ladjevardi, *op. cit.*, p. 231. What made him distinguished in this period were both his experience and his tendency towards the Soviets. However, there is no common opinion about whose man Qavam was indeed. According to the Shah, he is the man of the Soviets as much as he could take Iran to Communism. The Soviets, on the other hand, claimed that he was an Anglo-American flatterer. According to the British, Qavam is an old and experienced duck which can successfully swim in stormy seas. "Sly old bird". To some people, Qavam is a puzzle and to some, he is none of the above-mentioned and instead, he is a statesman who tried to protect his state's interests. See, Kuross A. Samii, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

and breaking the effect of TUDEH. It had just been a month since he had taken office when on 19 February 1946 he went to Moscow to negotiate with the Soviets and stayed there as long as three weeks. Within this period he met Stalin twice and Molotov four times.⁶⁷ When he returned to Iran he negotiated with Pishaveri about the Azerbaijan problem and the Western countries perceived this as a directive from Moscow. He added three TUDEH members as Ministers into his cabinet and this gave rise to criticisms that he was settling in the USSR's orbit, but the fact that he established his own party under the name of the Iran Democrat Party was also an indicator showing that he wanted to make TUDEH lose power.

It is understood that Qavam made some promises during his visit to the USSR in exchange for them to give up their plan of dividing Iran. During the visit, the USSR and Iran arrived at an agreement to sign an aviation agreement. After the visit the details of the agreement were negotiated. According to the agreement reached by the USSR Minister of transportation, General Firuz and the Iran minister of finance with the assistance of the leader of TUDEH, the technical maintenance of all Iranian planes would be handled by the USSR. That the USSR wanted a share from Northern Iran Petroleum was also brought forward.⁶⁸ Iran, under the management of Qavam, was getting closer to the USSR to solve its problems and stay away from division. According to Britain and the USA, a possible Soviet hegemony in Iran was not a far possibility. The Shah and Qavam's rivals were uncomfortable, but so far no agreement had been signed with the USSR. While these developments were taking place, the time of withdrawal for the USSR had expired. The Soviets not only did not withdraw but also did not state any date concerning when they would. It is seen that the Soviets acted this way to see the precise attitude of the USA regarding Iran.

The USA started to show this attitude after the time of the agreement expired. According to the 1942 agreement, the Soviets had to withdraw from Iran until 2 March 1946. Until this date the USA tried to persuade the USSR to withdraw. But when they saw that the Soviets had no intention to withdraw, they became harsher. Three days after this date, President Truman sent a warning message to Stalin with the Foreign Minister Byrnes. Stalin did not answer this message so on March 8 another message asking why the first wasn't answered and inviting the Soviets to withdraw as soon as possible was sent. The Soviets did not give a written response but restated their ideas orally.⁶⁹ The USA did not have many options about sanctions to force the Soviets to withdraw. Upon the request of Huseyin Ala who was the new Iranian ambassador to Washington, the USA decided to deal with the matter in the Security Council meeting which would be held on 25 March. This was something the Soviets were not expecting, so they wanted the meeting to be postponed to 10 April, but this was not accepted. News stating that the Soviets would withdraw within 5-6 weeks was published in the Izvestiya newspaper.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Gary R. Hess, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

⁶⁸ Habib Ladjevardi, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

⁶⁹ Kuross A. Samii, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

⁷⁰ Gary R. Hess, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

The UN Security Council was dealing with such an important issue on 25 March 1946 for the first time after its establishment. No matter what decision it reached, it would take its place in history and define the course of international relations from then on. The subject gave rise to heated arguments between the Soviets and other members in the council. However, the Soviets were alone and after a vote of 9 to 2, it was decided that the Soviets withdraw from Iran. After the voting, the Soviet representative, Andrei Gromyko left the meeting angrily. Of course the Soviets vetoed this decision and this was the first veto attempt in the history of the Security Council.⁷¹ This attempt was also a big disappointment for the hopes of peace after the most destructive war in the world. However, the decision was not a surprise for the Soviets and they were prepared for it. The agreement the USSR signed with Iran on the day of the decision created a huge impact. According to the agreement signed by Qavam and the Soviet ambassador, the USSR would have a 51% share of the petroleum in Northern Iran in exchange for withdrawal from Iran. The agreement also contained a condition which was that the Soviets would establish joint petroleum companies with Iran and accept the uprisings as Iran's internal problem. The date of withdrawal was noted as 6 May. The most striking characteristic of the agreement was that it would be put into force after the approval of the Iranian Parliament.⁷²

The Soviets were in a more advantageous situation after the Qavam-Sadikov agreement in the USA-USSR competition. Believing that they took what they wanted with this agreement, the Soviets started to withdraw their soldiers from Iran at the end of May 1946. Iranian soldiers easily dealt with the Tabriz and Mahabad uprisings after the Soviets stopped supporting these areas and took the situation under control. The USA was following the developments carefully. After the Soviet-Iran Agreement, the Tehran Ambassador Morris was replaced with Allen V. and this caused an activation in the USA's Iran policy.⁷³ The only hope of the USA and Britain was for the Iranian Parliament to refuse this agreement. But since the term of the Iranian Parliament (XIV) had expired, the newly elected Parliament(XV) would approve the agreement. The new Parliament wasn't able to come together effectively until 1947. The USA took action within this time. When the Qavam-Sadikov Agreement came to the parliament for approval, the famous declaration which would affect the polling was declared by America.⁷⁴ The declaration stated that in case there was any intervention by the USSR to Iran because they rejected the petroleum agreement, America would protect the unity of the country. With the effect of this

⁷¹ Kuross A. Samii, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

⁷² Gary R. Hess, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

⁷³ Concerning why the USA didn't give importance to Iran in this period, for detailed information see, Richard W. Cottam, The United States, Iran and the Cold War, in "Iranian Studies", 3, 1970, 1, p. 2-22.

⁷⁴ For the text of the USA's support declaration to the Iranian Parliament, see, Gary R. Hess, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

declaration the Iranian Parliament rejected the agreement.⁷⁵ This meant that the competition in Iran was lost by the Soviets, in other words, the Westerners had won in Iran where the first round of the Cold War took place.

Conclusion. Since Iran was occupied by the Allies in 1941, the events which have taken place due to Iran have affected the course of political history significantly. The aid which reached the USSR via Iran and by occupying Iran both made the Soviet resistance against Germany more decisive and played an important role in winning the war. Military aid delivered to the USSR via Iran changed the balance of the war. The occupation also prevented a possible German invasion and the chance to use the petroleum of this country during the war. However, it should not be forgotten that Iran was a neutral country when it was invaded. Iran which faced many the interventions during its history came across the most organized one during WWII.

The occupation also effected the internal political developments of Iran. Iran turned into a democratic management system when Ahmad Reza Shah was taken from office and his son Muhammad Reza replaced him. It is not possible to justify the occupation in any way. However; with this occupation both countries with totalitarian managements were defeated in battlefield and the despotic regime in this country was ended. After the occupation, the activities of political parties started and the Parliament reopened with the effect of Britain and the USA. By giving the public the right of self management, they tried to prevent possible objections to the occupation. Giving permission to TUDEH activities, created a situation in favor of the USSR. The Ulama class had lost power during the Reza Shah period also regained power. However, democracy which came hand in hand with the occupation was never practiced as it deserved to be. Democracy in Iran was always under the management of those who brought it.

One of the most important outcomes of the occupation was that America found the opportunity to establish relations with Iran for the first time. Although, the other allies, Britain and the USSR had been present in Iran before, this was the first chance for the USA. Being in Iran which is one of the world's most important petroleum producing countries was an important advantage for the USA. The fact that Iranians had prejudice against the USSR and Britain because they had intervened in Iran before raised the prestige of America in this country. The friendship between America and the Shah affected the future flow of relations dramatically.⁷⁶ While the USA-Iran relations flourished, the effect of Britain continued to hold the right to run Iran Petroleum via the company Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. The fact that the USA followed an effective policy against the USSR, saved Britain from losing its rights in

⁷⁵ In order to be a party to the Treaty which was signed with Russia, only two members of parliament from the TUDEH said "yes" in the voting. Since the treaty did not enter into force, the Government collapsed and the Prime Minister Qavam went to Moscow.

⁷⁶ After World War II, when the word "Shah" was said in Iran and in the world as well, "the man of America" always came to mind. This closeness affected the political history of Iran and the international relations of the Cold War period. See, Helmut Richards, *op. cit.*, pp. 3-22, 24, 26.

Iran. Britain realized that it needed the USA to protect its rights in Iran, so they transferred a part of their authority in this country to the USA. While the influence of Britain in Iran decreased, the influence of the USA increased.

One of the most important results of the occupation of Iran is that the hidden competition between the USA and USSR which started during the war turned into an open clash after the war and this started the cold war. Iran's idea of settling in Iran and ending the existence of Western countries in Iran was perceived by America as a danger concerning not only Iran but also the rest of the Middle Foot. America's decisive and effective attitude stopped the Soviets. That the USSR had to take a step back in Iran because of America's decisive attitude and this relieved both America and Britain in the Middle Foot. The Soviets missed the chance of going to the Middle East via Iran and also came face to face with an Iran which was in cooperation with the West. This was a big loss in the beginning of the Cold War. Due to his allergy to the Soviets, in order to prevent TUDEH the Shah also restricted the activities of the other political parties and this brought the end of borrowed democracy. As a result of anti-totalitarian USSR, pro-American and anti-democratic Shah regime, Iran became a country in which ideological world clashes always showed their face.