

# The struggle between the constitution and tyranny during the government of Mirza Ahmad Khan, the Field Marshal of the Second Sultanate of Iran 1908-1909

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**Abstract:** The period during which Mirza Ahmed Kham, the Mushir of the Sultanate, became prime minister in Iran constituted a major conflict as a result of the political, economic, and social transformations that the country witnessed, the extent of which was not limited to Iran only, but also transcended those borders, to include the regional neighborhood, and to the period in which it was These transformations represent the beginning of the end for him assuming his ministerial portfolio in Iran, and a catalyst in many subsequent events in the political arena, which in turn were also reflected in the general scene in Iran. Given the importance of these events and their political connections that almost constituted a crossroads in the political future of Iran, and the size of their impact on social awareness in Iran, the title of the research came to shed light on the political developments and the accompanying events and conflict between the advocates of the constitution and the oppressive group in Iran during the government of Mirza Ahmad Khan Mushir The second sultanate, as the study was divided into three sections, the first topic dealt with political developments and their effects on the nature of constitutional life. In contrast, the second topic touched upon the Shah's preparations to strike the National Assembly, while the third topic discussed the stage of petty tyranny.

## Introduction

After the random raids and arrests carried out by the Shah's agents intending to reach the perpetrators of his assassination, the manifestations of discontent and anger among the general public increased. The country's state was turbulent after the government resigned from the Sultanate's regime. At the same time, Ihsam the Sultanate resigned from the presidency of the council [1], and Mirza Ismail Khan (Mumtaz Al-Dawla) was chosen [2]. The National Consultative Council and its constitutional supporters thought that the main reason behind the dispute between it and the Shah was the Shah's advisors. The latter always push it towards clashing with the Council and inciting it to end the latter's control and not expanding the dispute between the two parties and exploiting it by the Russians [3]. The Qajar dynasty princes, headed by Adud al-Dawla, met to deliberate on the country's situation and eventually concluded that the government must be rid of reactionary elements. Hence, they submitted a request to the Shah that he must expel six people considered the cause of unrest and crisis in the country, especially the Emir Bahadur Genk [4], as well as the Sultan's venerable (Minister of Court), the King's Secretary, the King's Pride and the Majlis of the Sultanate. These are all subjects of the Shah in the court as the cause of all the problems between the two parties, and the Shah pretended to accept the request submitted to him [5].

As he was surrounded by Russian advisers as well as Iranian advisers, such as the pride of the state and the glory of the king, and that in itself was enough for his position to be against the constitution as Muhammad Ali Shah was utterly subject to the Russians, to the extent that they moved him and controlled him through Chapechal. However, the constitutionalists forced Muhammad Ali Shah to respond to some of their demands, as the two Belgians represented the Russian policy in Iran. Therefore, the Russian hostility to the Council and the Constitution increased day by day. The Shah and their support against the patriots and the constitutionalists [8], as Muhammad Ali Shah was busy mobilizing the villains to overthrow the constitutional life in the country, and the people were sure that the court was the one who secretly stirred up events [6].

***The first topic: the development of political events and their impact on the nature of constitutional life***

Although the Shah had promised them to achieve their demands, the truth was otherwise, as Amir Bahadur fled that night and took refuge in the Russian Embassy. Members of the Council, accusing them of being

hard-line and behind that quarrel. However, the council did not respond to the Shah's demand due to his realization that what the Shah had offered and what he was planning were not true, which brought the situation to an end. As a result of the support he was receiving from Britain and Russia through their ambassadors in Iran, the Russians hinted to the Shah that the constitutionalists were planning to overthrow him with the help of Adad al-Malik, the emir of the Qajar dynasty, and the sultan, the son of Nasir al-Din Shah - meaning the uncle of Muhammad Ali Shah - and the appointment of the latter. Instead, which aroused the Shah's fears and prompted him to demand that the Assembly comply with his request to dismiss the eight members [3].

Perhaps the Shah believed that these members were behind this scheme, or wanted to use this as a pretext to strike the council and eliminate it, as the most prominent evidence of the Russian intervention at that stage is Sergey Shapachal's meeting with the commander of the Cossack forces in Tehran, the Russian general Lyakhov on June 2, 1908, to draw a plan aimed at striking the council. Perhaps this encouraged the Shah to threaten the council the next day - that is, on June 3, 1908 - if its members did not comply to achieve his demands by obtaining some powers that authorize him to lead the army and police and expel some of the members who had him previously and specify their names. This coincided with the increased pressure exerted by the ambassadors of both countries - Britain and Russia - in Tehran, and this indicated something, but indicated the apparent interference in Iran's internal affairs and the Shah's incitement to eliminate the Council and disrupt the constitution, especially after they felt the danger of constitutional life in It is worth noting that the British ambassador in Tehran (Marlink) predicted the threat of the internal situation in Iran, as the message he sent to his government on June 3, 1908, carried an accurate description of the developments of those events, specifying the burdens of this on the governments of Britain and Tsarist Russia [6].

### **The second topic: the Shah's preparations to strike the National Assembly**

As a result of the developments that the country witnessed, the Shah found that the time had come to achieve what he aspired to, so on June 4, 1908, he left the capital, Tehran, heading to the area (Baghshah - meaning the Shah's garden), and Chapchal, his private advisor, went with him. And Lyakhov, the Cossack leader, and this confirms the fact that the Russians stood by his side to strike the council and pushed the Shah to implement that, so it is not surprising that the Russian embassy in Tehran resorted to following diplomatic maneuvers to achieve a particular success and impose greater hegemony through pressure. The Shah should fight the constitutionalists after they felt the gravity of the situation on their colonial interests. With regard to the members of the Council, although they were aware of the Shah's plans, they did not take the necessary measures to ward off the danger that surrounded the Council and its members, and they only waved timidly at the session held on the evening of June 4, 1908, about the fact that the Shah left for Baghshah for the purpose of hiking, according to What the Speaker of the Council believed, as the National Consultative Council had to take the necessary measures and frankly with the Iranian people about the moves made by the Shah and the intended goals behind them, but that did not happen as a result of the state of weakness that the Council reached and we do not move away from the truth much if it We said that the internal dissent of the members of the Council and the acceleration of events, as well as the Russian-British interference in Iran's affairs, contributed in one way or another to the Council's increasing weakness and confusion and its inability to take the right decisions regarding these situations.

In an attempt to besiege Tehran and isolate it from the rest of the other Iranian cities, the Shah ordered on June 6, 1908, to cut off all telegraph wires from it. Military equipment was sent from Tehran to Baghshah, which clearly aroused suspicion among the Iranian people. It appeared to everyone that the Shah had taken Baghshah A place for a real confrontation to strike at the constitutionality and to eliminate the council, at a time when the latter showed his good intentions towards the Shah in order to heal the rift in the relations between the two sides, as he sent a delegation to negotiate with the Shah on the same day. Still, the delegation members were surprised by the Shah's intransigence and his indifference to what they said, which eventually led to the failure of the council's efforts [7].

This position on which the Shah appeared was likely due to the Russian support, which he believed would be enough to trim the nails of the Council and then strip its powers.

The development of events in Iran was accompanied by the presentation of the formation of his government to the council on June 7, 1908, by Misra Ahmed Khan, the marshal of the sultanate. Obtaining religious legitimacy, and in this regard, it is mentioned that the Council was not in a position to discuss the ministerial formation and contented itself with its lukewarm support. On the other hand, the National Societies in Tehran summoned the Sultan's shadow on the same day - that is, June 7 - and proposed to him to take over power in Iran, which aroused the Russians' resentment as a result of their realization that the latter had good relations with the British, which the Russian government feared. From increasing the influence of the British in Iran. The ministry was formed from Mirza Ahmed Khan, the Field Marshal of the Sultanate, as Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, Mirza Hassan Mostofi Al-Mamluk, as Minister of War, Alaa Al Sultanate, as Minister of Foreign Affairs, and San'a al-Dawla, as Minister of Finance, and the State's Field Marshal, as Minister of Science, and Mu'tamin Al-Malik, as Minister of Commerce, and Mohtasham Al Sultanate, as Minister of Justice. It is noticeable that most of its ministers had worked in previous ministries and did not bring any enlightened constitutional aspects. Perhaps its purpose was to establish what the Shah was planning to do.

In the light of that atmosphere that was filled with feelings of widespread resentment and tense conditions, the parliament had no choice but to think about finding a solution to the crisis that had threatened its existence. Therefore, its response came quickly to the Shah's previous statement to shed enough light on the content of his twisted policy towards constitutional life [8]. They refuted the accusations made in the Shah's statement by the Council and the National Societies, as they issued an explanatory statement on June 10, 1908, under the title "An Answer from the People of Iran," and accused the Shah and his followers of all the woes and tragedy that is happening in the country [9]. With everything that happened between the council and the Shah, the former did not lose hope in restoring the waters to their streams, and perhaps this stemmed from the weakness of the majority of its members, and their realization that they would not withstand the Shah's forces, so they sent a delegation to the Shah in Baghshah on June 16, 1908, in order to reach a solution to the ongoing conflict with the Shah, but the latter took advantage of the fragility of the situation that the council was suffering from, as he never bothered himself to read the memorandum brought to him by the members of the council [7], and he responded arrogantly to them by accepting his conditions in exchange for agreeing to solve the existing crisis in the country. The conditions of the Shah were summarized in three main points, which included granting him many powers to appoint and dismiss the prime minister, establish a military force of 10,000 fighters, and that the Minister of War be subordinate to him with his free hand to dispose of freely in the affairs of the army, and as a result of the council's rejection of these conditions, the Shah announced On June 22, 1908, martial law in the country [9].

### **The third topic: the stage of petty tyranny, June 23. 1908 - July 16. 1909**

The Shah proceeded to implement his plan on June 23. 1908, after taking the final projects in agreement with the Russians to strike the council and end the constitutionality, he ordered the Cossack forces stationed in Behrستان Square near the council to hit the building with cannons that claimed the lives of many people. The other part of them fled, the council was suspended, professional associations and unions were banned, and the national newspapers stopped publishing. Fighting the wicked and that he will restore the council after three months, while the second statement was devoted to his prime minister, the Field Marshal of the Sultanate, in which he clarified that "our goals are to achieve the stability of the Kingdom and the general comfort of the people," while the third statement was related to the inauguration of Colonel Lyakhov as military ruler over Tehran [7].

The Sultanate's Mushir's government submitted its resignation after the council was overthrown to give the Iranian government the legal appearance. The Shah entrusted it with its formation a second time, including most of its former members. It consisted of: Mirza Ahmed Khan, the Sultanate's Mushir, as Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, and Alaa Al Sultanate, as Minister of Foreign Affairs. Amir Bahadur Jank, Minister of Finance, State Field Marshal, Minister of Science and Endowments, Mu'tamin al-Mulk, Minister of Public Benefits and Trade, Mohtasham al-Sultan, Minister of Justice, and informant of the Sultanate, Minister of Telegraph. After these events, it seemed that the matter had tended to the Shah and the tyrannical anti-constitutionality. Still, the developments of the political events and the changes that accompanied them proved otherwise. At the same time, Iran became a welcoming field for Russian and British actions, which

played a clear role like those events, and although The Shah eliminated constitutional life in most regions of Iran, except for Tabriz, which carried the banner of national opposition to the Shah's policy, and continued to dispute the Qajar authority for about ten months. From Sattar Khan and Baqir Khan, it has withstood the attacks of the Shah's arbitrary forces.

The events of the national opposition to the Shah's rule in many Iranian cities during the period 1908-1909 were monitored in minute detail in several sources [10], and they briefly included many events and clashes between the national opposition and the Shah's forces in the capital, Tehran. The federal opposition also had the city of Rasht, which carried the banner of the resistance. The Shah's rule took place simultaneously with the opposition movements of the rest of the other Iranian cities. Isfahan and Kermanshah also witnessed some revolutionary events opposing the authority. Still, the brutality of the government forces prevented its development, and Shiraz, Isfahan, Bushehr, and Behbahan were not immune to these events but also contributed to them [11].

On April 24, 1909, initial negotiations began between the opposition in Tabriz and the Qajar government due to increasing Russian pressures that threatened to occupy the city. The Russian forces, which were stationed near the town on April 30, 1909, were able to enter the city on May 2 of the same year to put a painful end to the struggle of the Tabrizi people. Still, it was not the last struggle, as Tabriz continued to carry the spirit of resistance against injustice and tyranny. This will be proven by the events of July, the return of parliamentary life in Iran, and the removal of Muhammad Ali Shah. If the matter in Tabriz went in this direction, other cities witnessed a revolutionary wave that represented a state of a popular challenge to the authority of the Shah. In the city of Rasht, the revolutionary societies became active in fighting the regime's forces. The Rasht Revolutionary Committee confronted the forces of Muhammad Ali Shah, and clashed with them in more than one place. The city of Kailan witnessed a revolutionary uprising led by Yefram Khan, in which more violent events took place that claimed the lives of dozens of citizens. Still, they did not affect the patriots but increased their insistence on the resistance, especially after Mirza Muhammad Wali Khan Sabhadar Azam Tankabni joined its ranks [6]. The Shah had no choice but to think about finding a solution to the crisis that threatened his existence on the throne in Iran. In addition to external pressure from the British and Russian ambassadors to reconstitute the Council, the Shah was forced to take action. Ministerial change by dismissing the Sultanate's Field Marshal in late April and appointing a new government headed by Mirza Jawad Khan Saad al-Dawla in early May 1909, but it did not differ from its predecessor in terms of tyranny and suppression of freedoms, which threatens the leaders of the constitutional revolution, who took a new form in confronting the Qajar authority and that By demanding the removal of Muhammad Ali Shah from power, and the restoration of constitutional life [9].

### Conclusion

Through what was previously mentioned, it is clear that Iran's political events during the government of the Sultanate's Field Marshal generated many problems and contradictions in the internal position between supporters and opponents of constitutional life. The secrets of those events and their complexities led to a mixture of papers that included support and criticism, consensus, and conflict. This contradiction in circumstances was not limited to the government of the Sultanate's Field Marshal but extended to more developed positions, as the Shah worked, by all means, to get rid of the council. The Iranian internal situation worsened as a result of the hostile actions of the Shah. The other thing that became clear from the reading of the events is the penetration of Iranian sovereignty by Russia and Britain, and that these two countries are the ones who formulate the political decision in Iran, which indicates that the constitutional system in Iran was formal and did not It is aware of its duties as the supreme authority in the country, as formality is what distinguished it. We do not avoid the truth when we say that this period witnessed a political awareness of the majority of the Iranian people, who became experienced readers and aware of the merits of matters and how the helm of governance in Iran and the leading players in the political arena is managed. It represents a positive development in Iranian society.

On the other hand, we see a state of confusion and confusion in the hasty and irresponsible decisions of the Shah, who thought they were decisions to consolidate his control over the throne of Iran. On the Shah, as the latter realized that constitutional development means that the life of the Qajar family in power has become short, so he was working in secret and in public to concentrate all powers in his hand, not in any



constitutional institution with which it is difficult to implement his plans and impose his will, so he worked with all his effort to spread division And the division between the national groups, especially the clergy so that they remain in permanent rivalry.

As a result of the previous, the position of Prime Minister remained a weak position, unable to create a state of balance between the Shah and the Council. The evidence is that this position is always blessed by the Shah and is therefore subject to the desires and whims of one of the parties to the conflict at the expense of the other, which creates an unsupported government. Constitutionally, even if it was granted confidence.

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