

**The Shah's "Fatherly Eye"**

**Iranian Espionage in the United States and the Anti-SAVAK Campaign (1970-1979)**

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Undergraduate Senior Thesis

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13 April 2020

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### Acknowledgments

On June 18, 2019, a square envelope from the FBI arrived at my doorstep. The CD inside uploaded 400 previously top-secret memoranda that revealed the version of a story I had never heard. Over the course of the next ten months, a small army of professors, government officials, intelligence experts, and friends helped me craft a narrative based on those documents.

Among the scholars who helped orient my research are Professors Robert Jervis, Rashid Khalidi, Peter Clement, and Manijeh Moradian. Professor Paul Chamberlin, who later became my second reader, sparked my interest in SAVAK during his lecture, *History of US-Middle East Relations*. His insightful recommendations also helped me improve the architecture of my thesis argument.

Professor Roham Alvandi helped sharpen my focus on this topic long before I had even written a word. His seminar, *The Iranian Revolution*, gave me the vocabulary to investigate the US-Iran relationship, and his constructive feedback throughout this process has been invaluable. I am especially indebted to Professor Elisheva Carlebach, whose confidence in my thesis never wavered. Even as I entered thickets of confusion and self-doubt, Professor Carlebach pushed me to think deeper, write more clearly, and take credit for my own claims. I would also like to thank the Middle East Institute at Columbia, which sponsored my trip to the Abbas Milani Research Collection at Stanford University.

To my fellow thesis writers, thank you for your incisive draft readings and shared laughs. I am really fortunate to have friends who cheered me on during this project. Special thanks are owed to Ilan Lavian and Talia Mamann, who both read drafts of this thesis and whose excitement and interest in this topic reminded me that writing history matters.

My parents deserve the most credit. Their selfless love and commitment to my education have provided me with the best model for personal growth. To my brothers: Noam, you might be able to beat me in a 1-on-1, but I still have the better shot. Ben, don't let your ego get as big as your coin collection. You are all rockstars.

*“No, I won’t start spying on my foreign-born students”*

Lee C. Bollinger, President  
Columbia University

## Introduction

Smoke drifted above the US Embassy in Tehran as American flags and Uncle Sam effigies smoldered beyond the compound gates. Restive crowds rallied outside the building and chanted *Marg! Bar! Amrika!* as US personnel, anticipating a takeover by Iranian students, rushed to shred classified documents stored inside.<sup>1</sup> Triggered by President Jimmy Carter's decision to grant the exiled Shah entry to the US for cancer treatment, rioters stormed the embassy on November 4, 1979 and took 52 Americans hostage.<sup>2</sup> The student revolutionaries sifted through haphazardly destroyed records to affirm the widely held view that the embassy harbored American spies. The documents, stitched together by Iranian carpet weavers, revealed the extent of US intelligence activities in Iran.<sup>3</sup> One secret file, however, exposed Iranian intelligence activities in the US.<sup>4</sup>

The classified file comprised a report from the US Military Information Control Committee (USMICC). The committee, established by President Harry Truman after World War II, oversaw the transmission of confidential military information from the US to foreign countries.<sup>5</sup> In the autumn of 1965, fourteen years before the hostage crisis, a USMICC delegation visited Tehran to evaluate the success of Iranian military initiatives backed by the US Army.<sup>6</sup> The delegation submitted its formal assessment of Iranian security programs to the committee

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<sup>1</sup> A common slogan at pro-revolutionary rallies in Iran, literally "Death to America"

<sup>2</sup> Ervand Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 126; Elaine Kamarack, "The Iranian Hostage Crisis and its Effect on American Politics." Brookings Institute. November, 2019

<sup>3</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, "Real #Argo: Skilled carpet weavers did reconstruct shredded documents, but they didn't reveal one of the Americans at the last moment," Twitter, November 7, 2014.

<sup>4</sup> United States Military Information Control Committee, "Security in the Government of Iran" in Documents from The US Espionage Den, ed. Muslim Students Following the Line of the Imam (Tehran, Iran: Center for the Publication of the US Espionage Den's Documents, 1979), 8.

<sup>5</sup> State-Defense Military Information Control Committee (Langley, VA; Central Intelligence Agency, 1962), 2.

<sup>6</sup> United States Military Information Control Committee, "Security in the Government of Iran" in Documents from The US Espionage Den, ed. Muslim Students Following the Line of the Imam (Tehran, Iran: Center for the Publication of the US Espionage Den's Documents, 1979), 8.

one year later.<sup>7</sup> The report, titled “Security in the Government of Iran,” contained information about the Iranian National Police and Imperial Iranian Gendarmerie (rural law enforcement).<sup>8</sup> The report also examined *Sazeman-e Ettela’at va Amniyat-e Keshvar*, or Iran’s National Organization for Intelligence and Security.<sup>9</sup> This agency, known by its acronym, SAVAK, operated as Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi’s combined foreign and domestic intelligence organization from 1957-1979.

Founded with assistance from the CIA, FBI, and Israeli Mossad, SAVAK would come to epitomize the Shah’s mistrust of Iran’s top military brass, intelligentsia, intellectuals, and urban working class. Often referred to as the Shah’s “eyes and ears,” SAVAK penetrated every segment of Iranian society and often used torture to extract confessions and locate political dissidents.<sup>10</sup> During its 22 years of operation, the agency had the freedom to spy on, censor, infiltrate, and punish perceived traitorous organizations and their members. Despite the agency’s efforts to protect the Shah, SAVAK became a liability to the monarch. Scholars have overlooked this paradox at the heart of the Shah’s relationship to SAVAK. Political repression fueled animosity toward the emperor, who eventually abdicated his throne when the Iranian Revolution unfolded in 1979. This thesis examines the hitherto unexplored contradiction between SAVAK’s mission to defend the Pahlavi dynasty and the agency’s deleterious impact on the Shah’s public image abroad.

US officials recognized that the Shah established SAVAK to crush rivals and suppress rebellion. The USMICC analysis of SAVAK wryly suggests that the agency’s first director,

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<sup>7</sup> United States Military Information Control Committee, “Security in the Government of Iran,” 8.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran: Between Two Revolutions* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983), 436.

Major General Teymour Bakhtiar, had been discharged “presumably because he had grown too powerful.”<sup>11</sup> In 1961, the Shah replaced Bakhtiar with General Hassan Pakravan, but Pakravan was soon sacked and replaced by the “ruthless and efficient” Lieutenant General Nematollah Nasiri in 1965.<sup>12</sup> Despite the frequent leadership changes, often attributed to the Shah’s suspicion of his own civil servants, SAVAK’s duties continued to increase after its 1957 establishment.

According to the USMICC file recovered at the embassy, SAVAK’s responsibilities included:

[The] monitoring of political activities of Iranian students abroad, the investigation of espionage, sabotage, treason, insurrection, and other subversive activities; the collection of intelligence information on political opposition; surveillance of foreign embassies, official delegations from abroad and resident aliens; foreign operations connected with intelligence and counterintelligence; official liaison with friendly foreign intelligence services (especially with the Israelis); and security in the civilian Ministries.<sup>13</sup>

Chief among SAVAK duties spelled out by the USMICC delegation was the surveillance of Iranian students abroad.<sup>14</sup> The report highlights this function of Iranian intelligence to suggest an important point: the Shah’s mistrust of intellectuals extended beyond Iran’s borders, and SAVAK agents visited university campuses abroad to abate the perceived threat that students posed to the Pahlavi regime. In the Shah’s words, SAVAK intended to keep a “fatherly eye” on Iranian students in the US.<sup>15</sup> The agency infiltrated Iranian student groups to weaken the anti-Shah movement at American universities. In doing so, SAVAK imported what one historian has labelled a “politics of distrust” that pervaded Iran during the Pahlavi era to these college campuses.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> United States Military Information Control Committee, “Security in the Government of Iran,” 8.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 9.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> United States Military Information Control Committee, “Security in the Government of Iran,” 9.

<sup>15</sup> Matthew K. Shannon, *Losing Hearts and Minds: American Iranian Relations and International Education During the Cold War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2017): 134.

<sup>16</sup> Amin Saikal, *The Rise and Fall of the Shah: Iran from Autocracy to Religious Rule* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), 189.

According to historian Ervand Abrahamian, SAVAK's creation aligned with the Shah's expansion of the military and state bureaucracy following the 1953 coup of Mohammed Mosaddegh.<sup>17</sup> Mosaddegh, the democratically elected Prime Minister of Iran from 1951-1953, challenged the Shah's authority and threatened the British when he nationalized the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company in 1951.<sup>18</sup> To protect American and British oil interests, the CIA and MI6 launched Operation AJAX, a covert plot to overthrow Mosaddegh and replace him with Prime Minister Fazlollah Zahedi.<sup>19</sup> After Mosaddegh's ousting, the Shah took steps to bring the Iranian government under his control, and the deployment of a new national security service fell squarely within this masterplan. He enabled SAVAK to operate beyond the oversight of any judicial or legislative body. SAVAK answered to the Shah alone.<sup>20</sup>

The seeds for SAVAK were sown when the US helped the Iranian military establish a counterespionage branch to ward off Soviet spies.<sup>21</sup> Prior to the formal establishment of SAVAK in 1957, Bakhtiar, who had previously served as Military Governor of Tehran, travelled to the US to meet with CIA and FBI officials who would help build Iran's future state security apparatus.<sup>22</sup> The Shah, however, did not endorse the American model of two separate agencies for domestic and foreign intelligence. He consolidated these functions to directly influence state security through one central organization that operated both within and outside Iran.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Ervand Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, 126.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, 117.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, 121.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, 126.

<sup>21</sup> Markaz Asnad, "How the CIA and Mossad Helped Form SAVAK," Islamic Revolution Documents Center. November 11, 2016.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*.



From 1956-1957, ten CIA advisers travelled to Iran and trained the nascent SAVAK.<sup>24</sup> Working alongside Bakhtiar, the Americans helped sharpen and direct SAVAK's first operations, which often targeted the Shah's detractors in the communist Tudeh Party.<sup>25</sup> When the Shah ousted Bakhtiar in 1965, the CIA advisory cohort returned to the US. According to Hossein Fardoust, the Deputy Director of SAVAK from 1961-1971, the Israeli Mossad began to train SAVAK operatives when the Americans departed.<sup>26</sup> David Ben Gurion already established ties with the Shah vis-à-vis his Periphery Doctrine, a foreign policy strategy that called for Israeli alliances with nearby non-Arab states.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, Israel and Iran grew closer due to their mutual rejection of Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser's Pan-Arabism.<sup>28</sup>

To that end, Mossad instructors were sent to Tehran to educate SAVAK agents about surveillance and interrogation techniques.<sup>29</sup> Fardoust also noted that while CIA officials carefully guarded their training manuals, Mossad officials translated Hebrew materials into Persian, which enabled the agency to become more self-sufficient. Given SAVAK's various functions related to both domestic security and foreign intelligence collection, the agency was organized into nine separate bureaus.<sup>30</sup> Department Three, charged with domestic security, informed the agency's reputation of savagery and callousness.<sup>31</sup> By 1970, SAVAK boasted 5,000 employees, carried

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<sup>24</sup> Hossain Fardoust, *The Rise and Fall of the Pahlavi Dynasty: Memoirs of Former General Hossein Fardoust*, Trans. Ali Akbar Dareini (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1999), 217.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 217.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 262.

<sup>27</sup> Leon Hadar, "The Collapse of Israel's Periphery Doctrine," *Foreign Policy*, June 26, 2010.

<sup>28</sup> James Buchan, *Days of God: The Revolution in Iran and Its Consequences* (London: John Murray, 2012), 170.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 263.

<sup>30</sup> James A. Bill, *The Eagle and the Lion: The Tragedy of American-Iranian Relations* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 98.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

out intelligence operations abroad, and gained infamy for its brutal treatment of suspected criminals.<sup>32</sup>

To foment an atmosphere characterized by the “politics of distrust,” SAVAK developed a reputation of exaggerated strength and size. The agency employed at least 20,000 part-time informants who helped cultivate its rumored ubiquity.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, SAVAK planted officers within labor unions and political organizations to implicate dissidents and provide the Iranian security forces with cheap justifications for arrest.<sup>34</sup> SAVAK spread propaganda to discredit the Shah’s political opponents and purchased advanced surveillance equipment to monitor religious institutions. Across the Atlantic, SAVAK operatives spied on Iranian students in the US who mobilized against the Shah.

However, SAVAK’s surveillance did not go unchallenged. The FBI, which oversees US domestic security and intelligence, began to investigate SAVAK espionage in the early 1970s. These highly confidential inquiries heralded the first stage of what would later become the anti-SAVAK campaign. The State and Justice Departments collaborated with the FBI to determine the extent of SAVAK espionage in the US.<sup>35</sup> By the mid-1970s, students suspected that SAVAK officials used surveillance and blackmail to punish their Iranian peers. Congresspeople even received letters about SAVAK spies from worried constituents. Between 1977-1979, major news outlets published reports of SAVAK agents lurking around university campuses. While the FBI

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid, 228.

<sup>33</sup> Mark Gasiorowski, *U.S. Foreign Policy and the Shah: Building a Client State in Iran* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 152.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 158.

<sup>35</sup> The FBI technically operates under the Justice Department’s jurisdiction, but I will consider US legal and counterintelligence efforts separately.

investigated SAVAK before other federal agencies, a wider network of individuals and organizations advanced the effort to stymie Iranian surveillance on American soil.<sup>36</sup>

Although these groups often communicated with one another, the anti-SAVAK campaign was not a centrally coordinated effort. Members of the movement, from students to journalists, joined the cause at different times. What began as an FBI evaluation of Iranian foreign service officers morphed into a large-scale project to dismantle SAVAK's surveillance strategy abroad. Ultimately, attempts to curb SAVAK became critical to student opposition to the Pahlavi regime in the years prior to the Iranian Revolution.

Therefore, the anti-SAVAK campaign underscores the central paradox that defined the Shah's relationship to the spy agency. The Shah's attempts to crack down on Iranian students abroad did not quell resistance to the Peacock Throne. Instead, SAVAK's deployment to the US only damaged foreign opinions of the leader. The Shah's identity became tied to SAVAK as reports of the agency's espionage within the US came to light. In fact, criticisms of the Shah and SAVAK eventually converged. Participants of the anti-SAVAK campaign came to view the agency as a simulacrum of the Shah's perceived brutality.

Throughout its decade-long expansion, the anti-SAVAK campaign increasingly informed anti-Shah agitation in the US. While historians have attributed American disapproval of the Shah to the post-1970 human rights heyday and the oil price hikes of 1973-1974, I contend that aversion to the monarch also stemmed from Iranian surveillance of university students in the US.<sup>37</sup> SAVAK's activities fueled wider anti-regime sentiments that erupted toward the end of the 1970s. By 1979, the Shah's "fatherly eye" had proved quite near-sighted.

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<sup>36</sup> I employ the term "campaign" to highlight the shared objective of these groups to thwart Iranian spying of students in the US.

<sup>37</sup> Barbara Keys, *Reclaiming American Virtue*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), 179; Roham Alvandi. "Re: Columbia Senior Thesis Draft," Email Message to Author. 18 March 2020.

### Historiography, Sources, and Methods

Much ink has been spilled about the suppression of dissent in pre-revolutionary Iran, but few scholars have considered the effects of SAVAK espionage on the Shah's reputation. For example, Abrahamian's earlier work, which explored the Islamist opposition (*Radical Islam, The Iranian Mojahedin*) and SAVAK countermeasures (*Tortured Confessions*), does not cover Iranian espionage in the US. Gholam Afkhami and Roham Alvandi have paid considerable attention to the Shah's reign (*The Life and Times of the Shah*) and involvement on the international stage (*The Age of Aryamehr*), but do not review SAVAK's global reach. James Bill (*The Eagle and the Lion*), Andrew Scott Cooper (*Oil Kings, The Fall of Heaven*), and Mark Gasiorowski (*US Foreign Policy and the Shah*) have examined the SAVAK-CIA liaison, but mainly focus on American contributions to the Iranian security establishment. Historians treat SAVAK as a byproduct of the Shah's power-mongering rather than a legitimate cause of his decline. For this reason, the agency has received short shrift by scholars.

Perhaps Afshin Matin-Asgari comes closest to an analysis of SAVAK through his exploration of the anti-regime student movement in the two decades leading up to the 1979 Revolution (*Iranian Student Opposition to the Shah*). He examines the origins of the Iranian student opposition and the spread of anti-Shah views to groups across Europe and the US.<sup>38</sup> While Matin-Asgari discusses SAVAK retaliation for anti-regime initiatives, he does not explore the connection between Iranian surveillance and the monarch's public image.<sup>39</sup>

Limited research on SAVAK can also be attributed to the agency's nature as a highly secretive intelligence organization. Although SAVAK officially dissolved shortly after the Shah

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<sup>38</sup> Afshin Matin-Asgari, *Iranian Student Opposition to the Shah*, 121.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 163.

fled Iran in 1979, the agency did not close its doors.<sup>40</sup> While most of the Shah's former cronies, including heads of SAVAK, were executed after the Revolution, the agency was simply rebranded as SAVAMA (*Sazeman-e Ettela'at va Melli Iran*) and business continued as usual.<sup>41</sup> Today, SAVAMA operates under a different name and most of the agency's records remain classified.<sup>42</sup> Limited scholarship on SAVAK, however, only marked one obstacle in the development of this project.

Another challenge involved the procurement of confidential government documents. The bulk of primary sources for this thesis have been obtained via Freedom of Information/Privacy Act (FOIPA) request to both the CIA and FBI. These documents form the skeleton of all four chapters. Chapter three, which focuses on the expansion of the anti-SAVAK campaign from 1975-1976, incorporates State Department records from the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) at College Park, Maryland. Chapter four, which examines the campaign's growth between 1977-1979, relies on archival research from the Abbas Milani Research Collection at Stanford University. The CIA's Research Search Tool (CREST) database, in addition to WikiLeaks' library of released government documents, supplied important sources to all four chapters.

Each chapter traces the evolution of the anti-SAVAK campaign and uncovers the movement's growth over the course of a decade. This chronological method also elucidates how the campaign intensified the Iranian student opposition and contributed to the Shah's declining public image in the US between 1970-1979.

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<sup>40</sup> Nikki R. Keddie and Yann Richard, *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution*, (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 2003), 248.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> On August 18, 1984, SAVAMA became *Vezerat-e Ettela'at Jomhuri-ye Eslami-ye Iran*, or the Ministry of Intelligence of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

## Chapter 1: Roots of the Anti-SAVAK Campaign

### **Domestic Unrest in Iran**

SAVAK wasted no time flouting the Shah's promises of an "enlightened" Iran.<sup>43</sup>

Between 1962-1963, student demonstrations broke out in major Iranian cities like Tehran, Isfahan, and Shiraz.<sup>44</sup> Angered by the rigged 1956, 1960, and 1961 Majlis (parliament) elections, these protests resulted in the mass arrests of hundreds of demonstrators frustrated by the consistent appointment of the Shah's loyalists. The severe measures taken by SAVAK led State Department officials to consider this period the end of the Shah's "loose authoritarianism."<sup>45</sup> Even though mass arrests became more frequent during the early 1960s, Iranian university campuses grew quieter after 1963.

US Embassy officials in Tehran acknowledged a more generally calm political atmosphere in 1966.<sup>46</sup> High oil profits and surging foreign investments helped power a growing Iranian economy and, in turn, a more relaxed opposition.<sup>47</sup> The same officials also attributed the relative tranquility to SAVAK efficiency. An airgram from the US Embassy in Tehran to the State Department summarized that "opponents of the regime are scattered and unorganized, if not in jail. Censorship is effective; so is police surveillance of potential troublemakers."<sup>48</sup> This damning assessment of Iran's repressive political atmosphere hardly affected US policy, however. When Iranian Prime Minister Amir Abbas Hoveyda visited President Lyndon B.

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<sup>43</sup> Golnar Nikpour, "Claiming Human Rights: Iranian Political Prisoners and the Making of a Transnational Movement, 1963-1979," *Humanity* 9, no. 3 (2018): 372.

<sup>44</sup> Matin-Asgari, *Iranian Student Opposition to the Shah*, 56.

<sup>45</sup> *The U.S. and Human Rights in Iran: Public Inquiries and U.S. Actions* (Washington, D.C., US Department of State, January 29, 1980), 3.

<sup>46</sup> Tehran Embassy to State Department, Airgram A-449, January 4, 1966, M2042 Box 10, Abbas Milani Research Collection, Stanford University.

<sup>47</sup> James Buchan, *Days of God*, 170.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

Johnson in 1968, the State Department warned Johnson that any discussion about freedom of the press in Iran should be avoided as the topic had become a “touchy subject.”<sup>49</sup> The State Department likely extended this warning to maintain warm relations with the Shah. In fact, the “Pahlavi/Texas chemistry” that analysts observed between Johnson and the Shah often shielded the emperor from US criticism of Iran’s poor human rights record.<sup>50</sup> Human rights did not become a cornerstone of US foreign policy until the Carter presidential campaign in 1976. Still, various non-governmental organizations investigated SAVAK abuse earlier.

In 1971, Amnesty International appealed to the Iranian government on behalf of 2,000 citizens imprisoned weeks before the *2,500 Year Anniversary of the Persian Empire* celebrations at Persepolis hosted by the Shah and Queen Farah.<sup>51</sup> The Iranian criminal justice system fissured while royal guests raised their Baccarat glasses to the Shah’s *Tamaddon-e Bozorg* (“Great Civilization”). More troubling than the mass arrests, however, were the military tribunals that often led to detainee convictions based only on evidence presented by SAVAK agents. While a State Department assessment of human rights during this time denounced SAVAK’s role as “police, prosecutor, and magistrate,” the agency earned more infamy for its macabre methods of torture.<sup>52</sup>

The literature on SAVAK punishment techniques has been written mainly by those who experienced torture firsthand. These accounts are important because they influenced the anti-SAVAK activists who later demonstrated against the agency’s espionage in the US. Prior to

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<sup>49</sup> “Visit of Amir Abbas Hoveyda: Prime Minister of Iran.” State Department Memorandum, November 27, 1968, M2042 Box 10, Abbas Milani Research Collection, Stanford University.

<sup>50</sup> “The Shah’s Visit to the United States.” British Embassy to US State Department, June 19, 1968. British Embassy Telegram. M2042 Box 11, Abbas Milani Research Collection, Stanford University.

<sup>51</sup> Amnesty International, *Annual Report: June 1, 1971 - May 13, 1972* (London, UK: Amnesty International Publications, 1972), 49.

<sup>52</sup> US Department of State, *The U.S. and Human Rights in Iran: Public Inquiries and U.S. Actions*, 4.

1971, SAVAK employed less advanced torture methods to extract information from Tudeh activists.<sup>53</sup> These crude forms included whipping prisoners, breaking their limbs, or throwing chairs at them.<sup>54</sup> However, more complex methods of torture were used after 1971, when Marxist guerilla fighters attacked a military outpost near the village of Siahkal. The Siahkal incident marked a new period of armed resistance against the Shah's regime, and SAVAK head Nematollah Nasiri responded to the assault with alacrity.

With the Shah's approval, Nasiri broadened SAVAK's authority and introduced a slew of more sophisticated torture techniques. With an expanding network of informants across Iran, accused dissidents often "disappeared" and returned bloodied and bruised.<sup>55</sup> Many of the new torture methods were used by interrogators at Evin Prison in Tehran.<sup>56</sup> To imbue torture sessions with some charade of scientific necessity, wardens called each other "doctor" and underwent training to maximize pain without killing detainees.<sup>57</sup> One pamphlet published by the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI) recounts the torture of 19 year old guerrilla fighter Mehdi Reza'i.<sup>58</sup> Like hundreds of others, Reza'i underwent *kable* punishment at Evin, which involved whipping the feet with steel cables.<sup>59</sup> When Reza'i refused to divulge the location of a PMOI safe house, his interrogators burned him with hot plates. Other Evin prisoners reported acid burns, nail extractions, mock executions, and electric shock by cattle prod.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Ervand Abrahamian, *Tortured Confessions: Prisons and Public Recantations in Modern Iran* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999), 88.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, 126.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid, 105.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, 106.

<sup>58</sup> Mehdi Reza'i, *The Defenses of Martyred Mojahed* (The People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran, 1980), 12.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Abrahamian, *Tortured Confessions*, 106.



The cruelty of SAVAK punishment even became the laughingstock of British officials, who found both the agency's torture procedures and subsequent cover-ups highly absurd. When SAVAK ignored British Embassy inquiries into the status of two Tudeh activists, British Foreign Office personnel mocked that "presumably it takes a little while for the first to be resurrected and the second to be disemboweled."<sup>61</sup> This witty reference to SAVAK torture suggests that foreign officers had become aware of the agency's barbaric methods. Similarly, British officials, commenting on the prolonged disappearance of a suspected coupist, joked that "SAVAK, having twisted his balls off, were having difficulty putting them back on again!"<sup>62</sup> British sarcasm aside, these droll comments point to the predictability of SAVAK abuse by the early 1970s. Still, the British Foreign Office did little to address the mistreatment. In a 1980 report on the causes of the Iranian Revolution, a Foreign Office analyst admitted:

Reports of torture and other malpractice were not usually given much attention...it was of peripheral interest to Britain how the [Iranian] regime treated its own subjects, and that the less Britain concerned itself with this the less the danger of damaging Anglo-Iranian relations.<sup>63</sup>

Like the State Department, which advised Johnson to avoid human rights talk with Hoveyda, the British Foreign Office overlooked SAVAK wrongdoing to prevent clashes with Iranian authorities. Both British and US officials preferred to appease the Shah rather than attempt to tame his repressive security apparatus.

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<sup>61</sup> "The Bakhtiar Plot," British Embassy to UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, January 1, 1971. British Embassy Telegram. M2042 Box 10, Abbas Milani Research Collection, Stanford University.

<sup>62</sup> "Terrorism," British Embassy to UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, April 5, 1971, British Embassy Telegram, M2042 Box 11, Abbas Milani Research Collection, Stanford University.

<sup>63</sup> Nicholas Browne, *British Policy on Iran: 1974-1978*, UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, March, 1979. M2042 Box 12, Abbas Milani Research Collection, Stanford University.

Throughout the 1960s, the Shah circulated his doctrines of “independent nationalism” and the “third force.”<sup>64</sup> These ideologies called for unity among developing countries and represented an Iranian shift toward non-alignment.<sup>65</sup> The Shah’s increasing bravado and remarks about the moral decay of the West worried policymakers in Washington and London, who feared they might lose a crucial Cold War ally. For this reason, US and British officials had to tread carefully when it came to the issue of human rights in Iran; often ignoring the issue altogether to lessen friction between friends. Although diplomatic officials in Tehran may have turned a blind eye to SAVAK practices, students in the US learned about the agency’s sophisticated torture techniques by the early 1970s.

Accounts of SAVAK cruelty were often translated and distributed to US audiences. Some of these stories, however, contain descriptions that appear exaggerated to elicit sympathy from readers abroad. A 1976 pamphlet by the Tudeh Central Committee, published in English for an American audience, asserted that bears were trained to rape female prisoners.<sup>66</sup> Despite the far-fetched nature of this allegation, the culture of suspicion that pervaded Iran only worsened as reports of SAVAK mistreatment abounded. These reports ascribed an infamy to the agency that tarnished the Shah’s reputation. When rumors about Iranian espionage surfaced in the 1970s, personal accounts of SAVAK violence influenced the way that Americans perceived the Shah.

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<sup>64</sup> The Concept of a Third Force in Iran’s “Independent Nationalism,” Airgram A-51, August 1, 1966, M2042 Box 10, Abbas Milani Research Collection, Stanford University.

<sup>65</sup> Zhand Shakibi, “The Rastakhiz Party and Pahlavism: The Beginnings of State Anti-Westernism in Iran,” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 45, no. 2 (March 15, 2018): 251–68.

<sup>66</sup> “SAVAK: The Shah’s Secret Police,” (Central Committee of Tudeh-Party of Iran, 1977), “Iran Pamphlets,” Box 1, Princeton University Archives, Princeton, NJ.

### What Did SAVAK Aim to Accomplish?

In 1950, the Shah created the Office of the Supervisor of Iranian Students, a diplomatic office that dispatched officials to Iranian embassies in the US and Europe.<sup>67</sup> These foreign officials arranged class schedules and secured visas for Iranian students in the US.<sup>68</sup> However, the diplomats were soon joined by members of Department Three, the SAVAK branch responsible for domestic security.<sup>69</sup> In 1959, Mansur Rafizadeh, a high-level SAVAK operative disguised as a member of Iran's United Nations delegation, travelled to the Iranian Embassy in Washington and became the new US station chief. Rafizadeh later recalled the Shah's request that SAVAK keep a "fatherly eye" on Iranians in the US.<sup>70</sup>

According to one SAVAK document obtained by a journalist, agents were ordered to "send information regarding demonstrations of dissident Iranians, strikes, suspicious traffic, holdings of meetings, publishing of publications and conventions and seminars."<sup>71</sup> In 1975, approximately 13,500 Iranians studied in the US, so SAVAK could only carry out these directives by recruiting informants and paying them to incriminate their peers.<sup>72</sup> This network of spies, which violated the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, provoked the "politics of distrust" that framed Iranian student experiences at American universities in the 1970s.

The FBI began to investigate SAVAK activities in the US from 1970-1972, but the initial searches did not yield conclusive discoveries about Iranian surveillance. However, these inquiries led to the origins of the anti-SAVAK campaign as a counterintelligence project spearheaded by the federal government. Ultimately, the incipient campaign, characterized by

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<sup>67</sup> Matthew K. Shannon, *Losing Hearts and Minds*, 134.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid, 135.

<sup>71</sup> College Press Service, "Secret Police Seek Out Iranian College Students," *The Stanford Daily*, November 27, 1976.

<sup>72</sup> Edward Fiske, "Arab and Iranian Students Increasing at US Colleges," *The New York Times*, March 28, 1975.

these early FBI investigations, would snowball into a larger collective effort to foil Iranian espionage and damage the Shah's image in the US.

## Chapter 2: The First Phase of the Anti-SAVAK Campaign (1970-1974)

### **Federal Suspicions Stir**

According to internal memoranda, the FBI did not launch a full-scale investigation of SAVAK on college campuses until sometime between 1970-1972.<sup>73</sup> Although State Department officials knew that SAVAK monitored students at Iranian universities, they did not definitively know that the agency sent spies to the US. While the exact tip-off that led to the FBI's first investigation remains unclear, the Bureau's initial counterespionage exercises occurred after the Iranian government started to blame domestic opposition on "outside instigation."<sup>74</sup> Student grievances, the Shah argued, grew out of toxic ideologies from abroad.<sup>75</sup> Iranian officials vocalized this position to redirect blame for internal unrest on foreign instigators, and this strategy of finger-pointing complicated diplomacy between the US and Iran.

At the State Department's request, both Presidents Johnson and Carter, whose meetings with Iranian officials occurred nine years apart, had to steer clear of critical dialogue with the Shah or his emissaries. While State Department officials warned Johnson about the discussion of human rights with Hoveyda, they later notified Carter that the Shah would dismiss any conversation about Iran's student opposition. Analysts surmised that "[the Shah] would prefer that this issue not be raised at all and, if it is, will take the line that agitation by students and opposition elements is foreign-inspired or has foreign connections."<sup>76</sup> The FBI likely suspected that SAVAK monitored US students not only because the Shah insisted that domestic instability

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<sup>73</sup> While the FBI did liaise with SAVAK prior to 1970, likely through the COINTELPRO spying initiative, criminal investigations of the Iranian agency did not commence until 1972; Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Alleged Iran State Security Organization (SAVAK)*, (Washington, D.C., 1972), FOIPA #1437715-000.

<sup>74</sup> "Iran: Internal Dissidence - A Note of Warning," State Department Report, June 12, 1972, M2042 Box 12, Abbas Milani Research Collection, Stanford University.

<sup>75</sup> Memorandum to the President for his Visit to Tehran, State Department Memorandum, December 13, 1977, M2042 Box 13, Abbas Milani Research Collection, Stanford University.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

had foreign roots, but also because the emperor remained tight-lipped about his strategy to subdue anti-regime protesters.

The Shah's simultaneous criticism of foreign instigators and refusal to discuss domestic opposition with US leaders certainly garnered suspicion. The State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) disclosed that the global scope of anti-regime opposition created an obstacle for SAVAK. When the FBI first began to inspect the suspicious activities of Iranian personnel in 1972, the State Department reported the possibility that SAVAK deployed spies to the US.<sup>77</sup> The FBI's investigation of the agency, which coincided with these State Department revelations, marked the inception of the anti-SAVAK campaign. This campaign, which began as an FBI counterintelligence inquiry, evolved into a larger movement to remove Iranian spies from the US over the course of a decade.

On January 6, 1972, FBI Director John Edgar Hoover sent a classified memorandum to FBI field offices in 10 US cities.<sup>78</sup> The letter, subject "Alleged Iran State Security Intelligence Organization (SAVAK)," contained a list of rumored SAVAK operatives and requested that field offices report back any suspicious activity attributed to these individuals (Appendix A).<sup>79</sup> Within three months, agents at the Denver, Los Angeles, Miami, and Newark field offices responded that their records and indices failed to produce any information about the presumed spies. The negative reply submitted by the Memphis field office included a note that FBI agents had also searched the faculty and student directories of Vanderbilt University and Memphis State

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<sup>77</sup> "Iran: Internal Dissidence - A Note of Warning," State Department Report, June 12, 1972, M2042 Box 12, Abbas Milani Research Collection, Stanford University.

<sup>78</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigation, Alleged Iran State Security Organization (SAVAK), (Washington, D.C., 1972), FOIPA #1437715-000.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

University.<sup>80</sup> Similarly, the Salt Lake City field office replied that student directories from Utah State University, Weber State College, and Brigham Young University did not provide any useful information.<sup>81</sup> The Memphis and Salt Lake City responses highlight the relevance of students and faculty to intelligence gathering efforts related to SAVAK activities in the US. Later, responses generated by other field offices affirmed that FBI contact with students and professors was critical to the investigation of SAVAK espionage.

The Baltimore Field Office responded to the director's request on March 24, 1972.<sup>82</sup> The special agents assigned to the case met with a university administrator at Johns Hopkins University. The contact, who confirmed that the named individuals were not enrolled students, also indicated her concern about the Iranian Student Association chapter on campus.<sup>83</sup> Another FBI contact at Morgan State University "did not care to discuss" her knowledge of the Iranian Student Association when asked about the organization by FBI special agents.<sup>84</sup> These responses reveal that beyond checking local records, the FBI collaborated with people connected to US universities to assess the extent of domestic SAVAK activities.

These exchanges across FBI field offices are some of the earliest declassified records that document a growing US interest in SAVAK operations abroad. The correspondence between field offices demonstrates that the FBI targeted specific individuals associated with SAVAK. The memoranda do not mention wider government efforts to prevent Iranian espionage, nor do they allude to any communication with the Iranian Embassy. The FBI may have investigated

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<sup>80</sup> Memorandum from FBI Director to Memphis Field Office, Alleged Iran State Security Organization (SAVAK), (Memphis, TN, 1972), FOIPA #1437715-000.

<sup>81</sup> Memorandum from FBI Director to Salt Lake City Field Office, Alleged Iran State Security Organization (SAVAK), (Salt Lake City, UT, 1972), FOIPA #1437715-000.

<sup>82</sup> Memorandum from FBI Director to Baltimore Field Office, Alleged Iran State Security Organization (SAVAK), (Baltimore, MD, 1972), FOIPA #1437715-000.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

Iranian surveillance activities between 1970-1974, and the Bureau was certainly aware that SAVAK agents had US university affiliations, but federal efforts to weed out SAVAK operatives would remain opaque until the mid-1970s. Several campus incidents traced back to SAVAK, paired with heightened domestic unrest within Iran, necessitated additional federal analysis of Iranian spying.

### **Counterintelligence to Campaign**

Although the FBI led the initial investigation to determine whether SAVAK agents had infiltrated US universities, other federal organizations joined the probe shortly thereafter. By 1973, the FBI had submitted intelligence collected about SAVAK activities to the Justice Department.<sup>85</sup> FBI correspondence with the Justice Department did not offer any evidence to incriminate SAVAK, but the involvement of the Justice Department points to the suspected illegality of foreign surveillance on US soil. While the FBI operates under the jurisdiction of the Justice Department, the Bureau specified that intelligence related to SAVAK could neither be copied nor distributed by outsiders.<sup>86</sup> These conditions point to the central counterintelligence role that the FBI assumed. When Congress and the State Department began to examine SAVAK operations in the US more closely, the FBI continued to proceed as the campaign's driving force.

Congressional inquiries about human rights in Iran also yielded critical information about the carte blanche afforded to SAVAK by the Shah. These hearings examined the mistreatment of political prisoners in Iran to gather more information about SAVAK espionage. Additionally, constituents who worried that foreign agents monitored student activities began to lob complaints at Congress. Often, members of Congress reviewed these concerns and encouraged the State

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<sup>85</sup> United States Department of Justice, *Alleged Iran State Security Organization (SAVAK) Operative*, (New York, NY, 1973), FOIPA #1437715-000.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*



Department to address foul play by SAVAK. By the mid-1970s, the FBI, State Department, and Congress were all aware of SAVAK surveillance at American universities. As the anti-SAVAK campaign expanded, federal investigative efforts were supplemented by the work of student journalists.

While full-scale media coverage of SAVAK did not materialize until later, rumors of the agency's presence on US college campuses roused student concern during the first phase of the anti-SAVAK campaign. Local campus newspapers even hinted at the agency's intimidation of college students. For example, the *Columbia Daily Spectator* published an article in 1974 titled "Committee Seeks to Combat Repression of Artists in Iran."<sup>87</sup> The author noted that Iranian students at Columbia University opened a campus chapter of the Committee for Artistic and Intellectual Freedom in Iran, an organization that condemned the Shah's persecution of artists, authors, and students. A spokesman for the group asked not to be named in the article because he feared that his family members in Iran would be punished by SAVAK.<sup>88</sup>

Similarly, students who protested the Shah's extravagant 1971 Persepolis celebrations outside the Iranian Embassy in Washington, D.C. covered their faces with paper bags to escape identification by potential spies.<sup>89</sup> These masks would later epitomize US student opposition to SAVAK when the Shah visited the White House in 1977. Although student apprehensions about Iranian spies could be described during the early-1970s, panic about SAVAK did not gain mainstream media attention until several years later.

Fundamentally, the earlier years of the anti-SAVAK campaign were characterized by the FBI's attempts to locate suspected Iranian spies. While other federal agencies and campus

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<sup>87</sup> Jay Lisnow, "Committee Seeks to Combat Repression of Artists in Iran," *Columbia Daily Spectator*, New York: June 20, 1974.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>89</sup> Betty James, "Embassy Picketed: Protesters Here Hit Shah's Rule," *Washington Star*, October 16, 1971.

publications may have contributed to the growing commotion about foreign espionage on US soil, the FBI's efforts marked the first concrete steps taken to limit SAVAK surveillance.

Because the campaign was government-led and confidential at this point, student condemnations of the Shah remained separate from the anti-SAVAK campaign. However, between 1974-1975, SAVAK spying received more attention by both congresspeople and journalists. While the FBI continued to investigate the matter quietly, a new stage of the anti-SAVAK campaign unfolded. This period, marked by congressional involvement, would make SAVAK surveillance a matter of national concern. Consequently, the agency's negative impact on the Shah's reputation became more discernible.

Chapter 3: The Anti-SAVAK Campaign Expands (1975-1976)

**When Wallace Hit the Jackpot**

Iranian espionage on US soil breached diplomatic protocol and threatened national security. Additionally, surveillance violated student liberties and often led to retribution against family members in Iran. The Shah's October 22, 1976 interview on *60 Minutes* highlighted each of these grave infringements. When pressed about SAVAK by host Mike Wallace, the Shah admitted that spies monitored Iranian expats.<sup>90</sup> The bombshell moment confirmed student suspicions. As a result, anti-regime activists grew more hostile toward the Shah, who they began to view as the face of SAVAK espionage in the US. Wallace, who hoped to challenge the Shah's human rights record, inquired:

Wallace: We turned to the Shah's secret police force, his F.B.I. and C.I.A. combined. They are called SAVAK, and they have a reputation for brutality. He acknowledged that he has SAVAK agents on duty in the United States. And they are there for the purpose of checking up on Iranian students?

Shah: Checking up on anybody who becomes affiliated with circles, organizations hostile to my country, which is the role of any intelligence organization.

Wallace: And they are there with the knowledge and consent of the United States Government.

Shah: I think it is.<sup>91</sup>

The Shah's admission broadcast that SAVAK actively monitored Iranian students studying at American universities. Subsequently, federal organizations began to question Iran's ambitions more scrupulously and turned to the FBI for additional information. The importance of the Shah's revelation cannot be overstated. When one FBI official was asked how the Bureau knew the extent of SAVAK activity in the US, the agent cleverly retorted "watch *60 Minutes!*"<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Mike Wallace, Open Source Transcript, "CIA's Role in Forming SAVAK," Published by CBS Network, Released by the Central Intelligence Agency, Maryland: March 2, 1980.

<sup>91</sup> "The Shah on Israel, Corruption, and Torture," *The New York Times*, October 22, 1976.

<sup>92</sup> "Shah Threatened Reprisal If Curbed," *The Washington Post*, August 9, 1979.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry, which anticipated the chaos that followed the Shah's announcement, notified President Gerald Ford that the removal of SAVAK officials in the US would not go unpunished. Iran threatened to expel CIA officials secretly spying on the Soviet Union from reconnaissance stations on the Iran-Soviet border.<sup>93</sup> Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, who believed that the CIA listening posts gave the US a strategic advantage in the Cold War, received Iranian Ambassador Ardeshir Zahedi's hollow assurances that SAVAK did not conduct any illegal activities in the US despite evidence that proved otherwise.<sup>94</sup>

Two days after the Shah's startling admission, Kissinger tried to settle the public uproar and announced that the State Department found no evidence of Iranian spying. Three years later, when the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence specifically examined SAVAK espionage in the US, officials discovered that Kissinger had misled the American public.<sup>95</sup> Leaked selections from the report indicated that "at the time of Dr. Kissinger's October 24, 1976 statement, at least three documents had been submitted to the State Department by the FBI providing information diametrically opposed to [Dr. Kissinger's] statement."<sup>96</sup> However, neither Congress nor the FBI knew about the potential for Iranian reprisals and accepted Kissinger's declaration that the allegations against SAVAK appeared baseless.

Less than a week after the *60 Minutes* interview, State Department officials questioned FBI Director Clarence M. Kelley about his knowledge of Iranian spies.<sup>97</sup> Curiosity about SAVAK had spread within the foreign affairs community following the Shah's disclosure. Moreover, the State Department took an interest in domestic SAVAK initiatives because Iranian

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<sup>93</sup> Andrew Scott Cooper, *The Oil Kings: How the U.S., Iran, and Saudi Arabia Changed the Balance of Power in the Middle East* (New York, Simon and Schuster, 2012): 384.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 343.

<sup>95</sup> "Shah Threatened Reprisal If Curbed," *The Washington Post*, August 9, 1979

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>97</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigation, SAVAK Activities in the United States, (Washington, D.C., 1976), FOIPA #1437715-000

embassies abroad were also accused of harboring SAVAK agents. Shortly after the Shah's *60 Minutes* gaffe, US Embassy officials in Stockholm, Sweden wrote the State Department about two Iranian students, Alireza Nadimi and Ali Sadrzadeh, who had seized 2,800 classified documents from the Iranian Consulate in Geneva, Switzerland.<sup>98</sup> Nadimi and Sadrzadeh then traveled to Sweden and used the Geneva papers to claim that SAVAK agents sought to influence Swedish journalists. Professor Richard Cottam, an Iran expert at the University of Pittsburgh and former US foreign affairs adviser, later confirmed the authenticity of the documents.<sup>99</sup> The Nadimi and Sadrzadeh allegations, paired with the Shah's remarks on *60 Minutes*, led the State Department to independently investigate SAVAK.

The State Department investigation was the subject of a message sent from Henry Kissinger to the US Ambassador to Tehran, former CIA official Richard Helms.<sup>100</sup> Kissinger included scripted responses drafted by State Department spokespeople that addressed potential media questions relating to the Shah's recent statements on *60 Minutes*. The brief urged embassy officials to evade media questions about the State Department's inquiry into "improper activities" conducted by Iranian personnel.<sup>101</sup> While the *60 Minutes* interview made viewers suspicious of the Shah, the program also forced the US government to confront Iranian espionage more openly. State Department involvement during the mid-1970s signaled that the anti-SAVAK campaign had outgrown the FBI's top-secret counterintelligence investigation, and public resentment for the Shah would accompany this development.

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<sup>98</sup> US Department of State, Reported Iranian Intelligence Activities in Sweden, (Stockholm, Sweden, 1976), Released by US Department of State. Washington, D.C.: May 4, 2006.

<sup>99</sup> George. Rose "The Shah's Secret Police Are Here." New York Magazine. September 18, 1978.

<sup>100</sup> US Department of State, Press Guidance Re. 60 Minutes Program, (Washington D.C., 1976), Released by US Department of State. Washington D.C.: 22 May 2009.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

### **Congress Joins the Anti-SAVAK Campaign**

Congress joined the anti-SAVAK campaign while the FBI and State Department investigated the Shah's *60 Minutes* assertion. While congressional involvement did not become mainstream until the mid-1970s, SAVAK's brutal tactics and poor human rights record were not lost on Congress between 1970-1975. In fact, a new class of "congressional internationalists," provoked by US relations with authoritarian countries, had already launched inquiries into SAVAK repression.<sup>102</sup> For example, Representative Donald Fraser (D-MN), chairman of the House Subcommittee on International Relations, led congressional hearings on Iran's human rights record from 1973-1976.<sup>103</sup> Fraser's inquiry contributed to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1974, which stipulated that security aid be withheld from countries with human rights violations.<sup>104</sup>

William Butler, who led an International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) mission to explore the status of human rights in Iran, delivered his testimony to Fraser's subcommittee in 1976. Butler not only revealed that SAVAK operated "in every nook and cranny" of Iran, but he also noted that the agency spied in countries with sizable Iranian student populations.<sup>105</sup> While Butler uncovered the fact that SAVAK worked in the US, he pivoted from the discussion of espionage back to a conversation about human rights. Unsatisfied, Fraser returned to the issue of Iranian surveillance when the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, Alfred Atherton, provided his own testimony:

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<sup>102</sup> Shannon, *Losing Hearts and Minds: American Iranian Relations and International Education During the Cold War*, 126.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, 129.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>105</sup> Human Rights in Iran: Hearings Before the Subcommittee on International Organizations of the Committee of International Relations of the House of Representatives. August 3-September 3, 1976. M2042 Box 10, Abbas Milani Research Collection, Stanford University.

Mr. Fraser: Do we have reason to believe that members of the SAVAK are monitoring the activities of Iranian students in the United States?

Mr. Atherton: Could I give you a very general comment, Mr. Chairman, because I think that this is getting to an area that I would be very happy to talk more freely about not on the public record.

As a general statement, the Iranian authorities are interested in knowledge about potential terrorists who may be among students who would return to Iran. Again, I assume that this would be one of the responsibilities assigned to the Iranian secret services.<sup>106</sup>

Although Atherton dodged Fraser's question, he admitted enough for Congress to understand that SAVAK observed college students at American universities. Additionally, Atherton's willingness to discuss the matter off the record indicates that the State Department knew more than it wished to share. When journalists investigated the State Department's knowledge of SAVAK espionage in 1979, they exposed the Atherton/Kissinger cover-up to prevent the Shah's expulsion of CIA officers stationed along the Iran-Soviet border.

The Fraser subcommittee hearings bolstered the anti-SAVAK campaign by escalating Iranian surveillance from an intelligence issue to a legislative problem. Following Atherton's testimony, Fraser urged the Assistant Secretary to consider potential Iranian violations of the Foreign Agents Registration Act. Atherton, who had already spoken to Zahedi after the *60 Minutes* ordeal, followed through by clarifying with the ambassador that the "US will not countenance shadowing, harassment, or other police activities by Iranians."<sup>107</sup> The State Department recorded Zahedi's affirmation that any activities performed by Iranian personnel were "within the law and within the scope of accepted diplomatic activities."<sup>108</sup>

Fraser's inquiry pushed Atherton to confront Zahedi, which demonstrates that any secret attempts to monitor US students were not only scrutinized by federal investigators, but also by

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> US Department of State, M2042, Box 13, Abbas Milani Research Collection, Stanford University.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

the legislative bodies that signed off on military and monetary assistance to Iran. However, influential chairmen like Fraser were not the only government representatives who contributed to the anti-SAVAK campaign. Other congresspeople began to field questions about SAVAK from constituents between 1975-1976, and the influx of SAVAK-related letters and petitions indicated worsening US attitudes toward the Shah and his secret police.

### **Constituent Curiosity**

While most Americans were unfamiliar with SAVAK's university agenda, many had at least heard of Iran's Shah. The news media, which assumed more liberal predilections after the Watergate scandal (1972-1974) and Vietnam War (1955-1975), made more frequent attempts to discredit the Shah by the early 1970s.<sup>109</sup> As historian Golnar Nikpour has noted, the attentiveness of watchdog organizations and religious activists to Pahlavi domestic politics during the mid-1970s also provoked American suspicions of the Shah's purported liberalization.<sup>110</sup> Likewise, Jimmy Carter's 1976 presidential election campaign brought human rights to the forefront of US foreign policy.<sup>111</sup> These domestic conditions provoked interest in the Shah and SAVAK that citizens channeled through letters to Capitol Hill.

On December 3, 1976, Senator John Glenn (D-OH) wrote to the State Department's Acting Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations, Kempton Jenkins, about a letter he received from a constituent.<sup>112</sup> The letter's author, Richard Bayluk, noted his concern about SAVAK operations within the US. Assuming the State Department might offer information

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<sup>109</sup> Gholam R. Afkhami, *The Iranian Revolution: Thanatos on a National Scale*, (Washington, DC: Middle East Institute, 1985): 160.

<sup>110</sup> Golnar Nikpour, "Claiming Human Rights: Iranian Political Prisoners and the Making of a Transnational Movement, 1963-1979," *Humanity* 9, no. 3 (2018): 372.

<sup>111</sup> Afkhami, *The Iranian Revolution: Thanatos on a National Scale*, 161.

<sup>112</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Glenn-Jenkins Correspondence. December 3, 1976, P770003-1680, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-79/P-Reel Printouts, RG 59: General Records of the Department of State, National Archives, Washington, D.C.



about SAVAK that he could transmit back to Bayluk, Glenn forwarded the message to Jenkins.

Instead, Glenn received a generic message that would become the template response to

congresspeople inquiring the State Department about SAVAK. Jenkins wrote back:

We are monitoring this situation carefully to make certain that there is no violation of our laws. When the allegations about SAVAK activities were first raised, we immediately informed the Iranian Embassy that we do not accept the exercise of police functions by foreign officials in the United States for whatever reason. As a next step, we requested the Iranian ambassador to call at the Department and went over with him our laws, including the obligation of the Foreign Agents Registration Act, to ensure that his government clearly understood what we would regard as illegal or improper activities by foreign officials.<sup>113</sup>

Jenkins' response likely helped Glenn appease Bayluk, but the reuse of this statement for subsequent inquiries revealed the State Department's unpreparedness to address questions about SAVAK on a national scale.

When Senator William Scott (R-VA) forwarded the State Department a letter from Catherine Capers, another constituent concerned about Iranian spying, Jenkins responded with the same blurb that Glenn had received.<sup>114</sup> Representative John Anderson (R-IL) also received Jenkins' vague message in response to concerns raised by Donald Coser, a student interested in SAVAK's attempts to hinder anti-Shah protests outside the French Consulate in Houston, Texas.<sup>115</sup> The protestors demonstrated against the arrest of six Confederation of Iranian Students (CISNU) members in Paris, France. Coser requested more information about the rumored collaboration between SAVAK and the Houston Police Department. While these congressional

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<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Scott-Jenkins Correspondence. December 6, 1976, P770003-1879, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-79/P-Reel Printouts, RG 59: General Records of the Department of State, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

<sup>115</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Anderson-Jenkins Correspondence. December 27, 1976, P770003-1665, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-79/P-Reel Printouts, RG 59: General Records of the Department of State, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

attempts to obtain information about SAVAK may have been fruitless, the constituent missives reveal that both citizens and congresspeople tried to grasp why SAVAK was active on US soil.

On December 1, 1976, Howard Thompson, Dean of the Business School at Eastern Kentucky University, wrote Senator Wendell Ford (D-KY) about a pamphlet he received from the Iranian Students Association (ISA).<sup>116</sup> Thompson, concerned about ISA allegations of “conspiracy between SAVAK with the French and US governments,” requested that Ford provide him with relevant information to share with Iranian students.<sup>117</sup> Like Coser’s letter to Anderson, the ISA pamphlet bemoaned the treatment of Iranian students who protested at the French Consulate in Houston. Thompson forwarded his letter to the State Department’s Congressional Liaison with a short request for more information about SAVAK’s role in the detainment of the Houston protesters.<sup>118</sup>

Although Jenkins responded to Ford’s request, he did not address the dean’s concerns about SAVAK. Instead, Jenkins assured Ford that most of the arrested students were released. Those who illegally resided in the US were under detention by the Immigration and Naturalization Service.<sup>119</sup> Thompson’s correspondence with Senator Ford, and Jenkins’ subsequent input, underscores that student publications also inspired letters from academic administrative figures like Thompson. Even if Thompson did not receive valuable insight about the Houston protests, his inquiry points to university administration concern for Iranian students and the desire to limit domestic SAVAK activities altogether.

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<sup>116</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Thompson-Ford Correspondence, Dec 1, 1976, P760193-1764, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-79/P-Reel Printouts, RG 59, Box 193: General Records of the Department of State, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

University faculty anxiety about SAVAK surveillance was not limited to congressional correspondence, however. In the autumn of 1976, Daniel Partan, a law professor at Boston University, wrote President Ford about his alarm in response to the Shah's *60 Minutes* interview (Appendix B). Partan expressed consternation at the Shah's blatant admission and demanded that Ford "put an end to the abuse of the rights of people in the United States by the government of Iran."<sup>120</sup> The White House's Director of Correspondence, Roland Elliot, responded to Partan one month later, citing Ambassador Zahedi's guarantee that Iranian agents did not spy in the US.<sup>121</sup> Partan's letter clarifies that Ford knew about the SAVAK dilemma and highlights that university officials, like the students they educated, began to link the Shah and SAVAK.

While the FBI and State Department considered SAVAK spying prior to 1975, congressional involvement in the mid-1970s points to the expansion of the anti-SAVAK campaign. However, Iranian spying no longer remained a problem exclusive to the federal government, and the State Department's unwillingness to address the matter publicly only aggravated both students and university personnel. Between 1977-1979, Iranian espionage would gain more media attention as revolutionary sentiments simmered in Iran and campus publications attributed student harassment to both SAVAK and the Shah. Slowly, SAVAK's dreadful reputation and the Shah's image ossified as one.

### **Media Criticism and the Shah's Image**

While the media became most active within the anti-SAVAK campaign between 1977-1979, local campus editorials reported on SAVAK activities at the end of 1976. For example, the

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<sup>120</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Partan-Elliot Correspondence, Oct 22, 1976, White House Digital Central Policy Files, 1976, General 68.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

Stanford Daily reported that SAVAK agents arrived in “squadrons” to spy on Iranian students at US universities.<sup>122</sup> The same article alleged that Iranian spies disguised themselves as news reporters and beat up protestors at Johns Hopkins University, where Princess Ashraf, the Shah’s sister, accepted an honorary doctorate.<sup>123</sup> More problematically, however, the report accused the university of giving SAVAK “free reign” to carry out attacks against students.<sup>124</sup> This paranoia, which later characterized student writing about SAVAK activities, could best be summed up by the author’s final admonition:

*Pay heed to the sunglasses man in the dark, ill-fitting business suit standing for hours by the campus pub. He may be some rattling eccentric, but remember, the evil eye of SAVAK knows no limits.*<sup>125</sup>

Surely, SAVAK’s “evil eye” kept tabs on students across US universities, but campus publications could hardly be taken at face value. Instead, they point to the mounting fear of SAVAK by students, who became more active participants in the anti-SAVAK campaign toward the end of the decade. While the FBI continued to investigate SAVAK, the Bureau’s search would be overshadowed by congressional and media attempts to protect student interests and denounce the Shah’s repressive security force.

Although anti-regime and anti-SAVAK sentiments fused as the decade progressed, we must consider how anti-SAVAK opinions stained the Shah’s reputation. The Shah’s *60 Minutes* tell-all, in addition to the Geneva papers and Fraser investigation, signaled lower public approval for the king, who had become the target of American condemnation. In fact, one historian has argued that “‘Iran’ and ‘SAVAK’ became one and the same in the American imaginary” during

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<sup>122</sup> College Press Service, “Secret Police Seek Out Iranian College Students,” *The Stanford Daily*, November 127, 1976.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*

the period between 1975-1976.<sup>126</sup> Iranian foreign service officers understood that SAVAK's "quite needless excesses" had damaged the Shah's reputation.<sup>127</sup> Furthermore, the agency's cruelty drove journalists to compare the Shah to Chile's Augusto Pinochet and South Korea's Park Chung-Hee, other despots who controlled brutal security agencies.<sup>128</sup>

The Shah himself recognized a crumbling public image, and he worried immensely about how American politicians, journalists, and businesspeople perceived his rule.<sup>129</sup> To that end, he commissioned US public relations firm Yankelovich, Skelly, and White in 1976 to determine whether public opinion of the Pahlavi regime had waned.<sup>130</sup> The firm's poll indicated that the Shah only remained popular among businesspeople, but this sobering news did not slow the king's attempts to influence his own coverage in Washington. He showered journalists such as *Newsweek's* Arnaud de Borchgrave and *The Today Show's* Barbara Walters with Cartier jewelry and Dom Perignon champagne, presumably for their acclamatory reporting.<sup>131</sup> Even the Shah's emissaries in the US tried to save the monarch's image, but the extent of their bribery would not become known until later.

However, the Shah's attempts to gain positive press were not limited to his generous gift-giving. In fact, the monarch banned physical torture following gruesome reports from international organizations such as the Red Cross and Amnesty International.<sup>132</sup> The State Department often advertised these measures to fight for the Shah on what historian Vittorio Felci

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<sup>126</sup> Shannon, *Losing Hearts and Minds*, 136.

<sup>127</sup> Parviz C. Radji, *In the Service of the Peacock Throne: The Diaries of the Shah's Last Ambassador to London*, London: Hamilton, 1983: 85, 102, 147.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>129</sup> Bill, *The Eagle and the Lion: The Tragedy of American-Iranian Relations*, 367.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, 368.

<sup>132</sup> Abrahamian, *Tortured Confessions: Prisons and Public Recantations in Modern Iran*, 119.

has labelled the “battleground of image management.”<sup>133</sup> Nevertheless, major newspapers began to publish stories about SAVAK espionage at the end of the decade. These articles would address ongoing congressional investigations, which aroused the curiosity of students who criticized SAVAK overreach. Felci’s “battleground” would be bloodied by the Shah’s fruitless attempts to divorce his own image from American perceptions of SAVAK between 1977-1979.

In this vein, the Shah’s reputation continued to drift away from his artificial public persona. His lofty promises to shepherd Iran toward an “enlightened” future rang hollow. The anti-SAVAK campaign had humble origins as an FBI investigation, but the Shah’s failure to contain SAVAK abroad during the mid-1970s led to the campaign’s fiery growth. Toward the end of the decade, the anti-SAVAK campaign and the wider anti-Shah movement were indistinguishable, and the synthesis of these two camps forecasted the Shah’s imminent fall.

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<sup>133</sup> Vittorio Felci, “A Cumulative Image Problem: Human Rights and US Foreign Policy Toward Iran in the Seventies” NIDABA 2, no. 1 (2017): 56.

Chapter 4: The Anti-SAVAK Campaign Prior to the Revolution (1977-1979)

**Students Go Live**

Student concern about Iranian espionage heightened as campus incidents and extensive media coverage peeled away at the federal government's classified inquiries. The FBI, State Department, and Congress continued to investigate SAVAK despite assurances from the Iranian Embassy that the agency's activities did not violate any laws. Meanwhile, the media continued to unearth details of these investigations. Various news outlets, both campus and national, shed light on the agency's surveillance during this three-year span, but none more than *60 Minutes*, which covered allegations of SAVAK spying once again in the spring of 1977.

Mike Wallace, who brought SAVAK to national prominence during his interview with the Shah one year earlier, interviewed Ambassador Zahedi to clarify the Shah's statement about SAVAK's interest in "anybody who becomes affiliated with circles, organizations hostile to my country."<sup>134</sup> While Zahedi attempted to downplay the Shah's words, Wallace's subsequent conversation with an audience of Iranian students demonstrated that fear of SAVAK espionage had become more widespread in the US.<sup>135</sup> During a short engagement with the audience, Barry Lando, a *60 Minutes* producer, asked the audience:

Lando: Would you please raise your hands if you think there is a SAVAK informant here in this group tonight?

[All raise their hands]

Lando: You all think there's a SAVAK somewhere in this hall tonight?

[Students respond positively]

Lando: But you don't know who?

Students (collectively): No

Lando: It could be anybody here?

Students (collectively): Yes<sup>136</sup>

<sup>134</sup> "The Shah on Israel, Corruption, and Torture," *The New York Times*, October 22, 1976.

<sup>135</sup> Central Intelligence Agency Public Affairs Staff, "Sixty Minutes Transcript," March 6, 1977: 7.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*

Wallace, stunned by the unanimity of the students, proceeded to ask an unnamed individual about proof that SAVAK spied on Iranian expats. The student discussed the contents of the documents seized from the Iranian Consulate in Geneva by Nadimi and Sadrzadeh.<sup>137</sup> Among the SAVAK files, the student claimed, were profiles of Iranian individuals studying in Switzerland. The profiles included strength and weakness assessments of student personalities and the names of students' relatives in Iran.<sup>138</sup> Wallace's coverage of SAVAK emphasized the media's increased participation in the anti-SAVAK campaign and the mainstream nature of student concern about Iranian surveillance. Still, media coverage of SAVAK espionage would not reach its zenith until 1978.

One month after Mike Wallace's second *60 Minutes* special on SAVAK, student accusations of Iranian espionage erupted at the West Virginia Institute of Technology (WVIT). Tensions boiled over when WVIT's student-faculty disciplinary committee found three Iranian students guilty of assaulting Saeed Ghani, another Iranian student.<sup>139</sup> On April 7, *The Charleston Gazette*, a daily newspaper in Charleston, West Virginia, reported that Ghani was assaulted for his SAVAK affiliations.<sup>140</sup> The Iranian students who contributed to the article claimed that Ghani embedded himself within "Family," a pro-Shah Iranian student group at WVIT. Prior to the student-faculty disciplinary hearing, Dr. Leonard Nelson, the President of WVIT, wavered in his decision to support "Family." He strongly considered allegations brought by the Iranian Student Union, which defended the perpetrators and criticized SAVAK activity on campus.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> "Tech Iranian Students Staging Hunger Strike," *The Charleston Daily Mail*, April 7, 1977.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigation, Iranian National Security and Intelligence Organization, (Sacramento, CA 1977), FOIPA #1437715-000



Before the Ghani incident, the Iranian Student Union had already demanded the expulsion of several “Family” members for their suspected ties to SAVAK.<sup>142</sup> Without any evidence to support the accusations, Nelson could not expel “Family” members. While the Iranian Student Union requested that “Family” disband and leave campus, “Family” demanded action against Ghani’s assailants. Under this intense pressure, with each side flinging invectives against the other, Nelson contacted the FBI, State Department, and the Senate Subcommittee on Foreign Operations to determine the possibility that SAVAK conducted surveillance at WVIT.<sup>143</sup>

Ultimately, Ghani never returned to campus and his attackers were suspended. The State Department notified Nelson that any names of suspected agents would be forwarded to the Justice Department.<sup>144</sup> In a position paper on the incident, Nelson hinted at his own confusion during this unprecedented scenario. He described the general status of Iranian students at WVIT and summarized the clash between “Family” and the Iranian Student Union.<sup>145</sup> Approximately 80% of international students hailed from Iran and many of them contributed to campus protests against the Iranian government.<sup>146</sup> While he affirmed students’ rights to free speech and assembly, Nelson vocalized the oft repeated suspicion that SAVAK operatives reported student activities to the Iranian Embassy.<sup>147</sup> This information, argued Iranian student activists, would be used against them upon their return to Iran after graduation.

One leaflet published by the Iranian Student Union argued that the student-faculty disciplinary committee had “indirectly issued a death sentence for [the three Iranian students

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<sup>142</sup> Iranian Students Union at West Virginia Tech, “CREATION OF SAVAK AND ITS PRESENT ACTIVITIES IN IRAN AND OTHER COUNTRIES,” (Smithers, West Virginia, 1977), FOIPA #1437715-000.

<sup>143</sup> Richard Nelson, “Iranian Student Activities on the Tech Campus,” (April 7, 1977), FOIPA #1437715-000.

<sup>144</sup> “Tech Iranian Students Staging Hunger Strike.” The Charleston Daily Mail, April 7, 1977.

<sup>145</sup> Richard Nelson, “Iranian Student Activities on the Tech Campus,” (April 7, 1977), FOIPA #1437715-000.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

accused of beating up Ghani].”<sup>148</sup> The exact ramifications of alleged SAVAK surveillance notwithstanding, the Iranian Student Union disseminated flyers about SAVAK across campus and provided tips to detect whether a school club hid spies. According to the Iranian Student Union, any group that played Iranian films, insisted on Iran’s economic development, or introduced Iranian customs might be considered “the hidden attack of SAVAK.”<sup>149</sup>

The belief that nationalist Iranian student groups acted as fronts for SAVAK may be disputed, but even the FBI did not deny there was a chance that “Family” harbored secret agents. Nelson even quoted the State Department’s confirmation that the Iranian government “has an interest in Iranian student activities in foreign countries.”<sup>150</sup> Furthermore, the State Department notified Nelson that even without SAVAK agents at WVIT, pro-Shah students could report the names of anti-Shah demonstrators to the Iranian Embassy. Despite these alarming facts, Nelson concluded that he could not ban student groups without the necessary evidence to corroborate claims of campus espionage by Iranian authorities.

The WVIT ordeal faded once the alleged SAVAK agents left campus, but the incident marked another milestone for the anti-SAVAK campaign. Vocal student activists and university officials assigned urgency to the debate through publications and protests. While the FBI and State Department assessed the situation, federal involvement relied on the participation of these local figures. The anti-SAVAK campaign became more cohesive as students informed federal explorations of Iranian espionage. Furthermore, the WVIT incident emphasized the convergence of anti-regime and anti-SAVAK views. Because the Iranian Student Union linked nationalist

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<sup>148</sup> Iranian Students Union at West Virginia Tech, “SUPPORT IRANIAN STUDENTS HUNGER STRIKE,” (Smithers, West Virginia, 1977), FOIPA #1437715-000.

<sup>149</sup> Iranian Students Union at West Virginia Tech, “CREATION OF SAVAK AND ITS PRESENT ACTIVITIES IN IRAN AND OTHER COUNTRIES,” (Smithers, West Virginia, 1977), FOIPA #1437715-000.

<sup>150</sup> Richard Nelson, Iranian Student Activities on the Tech Campus (April 7, 1977), FOIPA #1437715-000.

sentiments to SAVAK, pro-Shah attitudes would be perceived as endorsements of Iranian espionage. This outlook gained more acceptance after 1976, when increasingly negative portrayals of the Shah reached Congress.

### **Congressional Pressure Intensifies**

Although citizens questioned their representatives about SAVAK in the mid-1970s, inquiries continued to arrive at Congress due to media coverage of the agency's surveillance. However, the letters that arrived post-1976 contained more specific questions about Iran's spy plot and often referred to SAVAK's attempts to monitor students at US universities. Furthermore, the dissemination of anti-regime pamphlets across college campuses spread allegations of SAVAK espionage and contributed to the barrage of letters received by congresspeople in 1977.

Historian Matthew Shannon refers to the print culture that characterized student opposition as a major factor that facilitated new perceptions of the Shah's regime between 1960-1970.<sup>151</sup> Student activists, emboldened by the anti-war movement, produced printed materials such as pamphlets and posters to spread revolutionary ideologies. Some of these materials took aim at the Shah himself, who had become the archenemy of anti-imperial students. Both of the derisive illustrations below were featured on the covers of pamphlets that proliferated across US college campuses.

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<sup>151</sup> Shannon, *Losing Hearts and Minds*, 132.

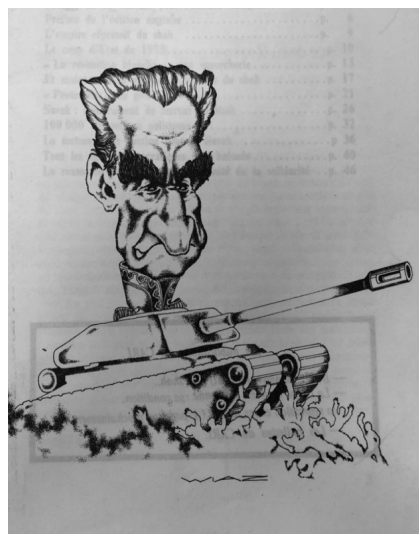


Figure 1. (left) The Shah, dressed in his regalia, angrily rolls over his own people with a tank.<sup>152</sup>  
 Figure 2. (right) The Shah, portrayed as a balding and maimed peacock, struggles to stand.<sup>153</sup>

Congresspeople received letters about SAVAK espionage from constituents that even included copies of these popular student publications and their cartoonish depictions of the Shah. The inclusion of these satirical portraits in letters criticizing SAVAK affirms a latent connection that students established between the Shah and his secret police.

On January 11, 1977, Sam Honeycutt, a student at Indiana University, wrote to his representative, Adam Benjamin Jr. (D-IN), to ask why “Iranian secret police are being allowed to openly spy on students attending American universities and colleges in this country.”<sup>154</sup>

Honeycutt also asked Benjamin Jr. to investigate the matter and report back accordingly (Appendix B). When Benjamin Jr. forwarded Honeycutt’s message to the State Department, the congressman received the template paragraph from Kempton Jenkins, the State Department’s Acting Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations. The State Department likely issued this

<sup>152</sup> Iran: l’empire répressif du Shah, (Committee Against Repression in Iran, 1978), “Iran Pamphlets,” Box 1, Princeton University Archives, Princeton, NJ.

<sup>153</sup> Iran: Info-Dienst, (1978), “Iran Pamphlets,” Box 2, Princeton University Archives, Princeton, NJ.

<sup>154</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Honeycutt-Benjamin Jr. Correspondence. Jan 11, 1977, P770034-0880, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-79/P-Reel Printouts, RG 59: General Records of the Department of State, National Archives.

stale response because Ambassador Zahedi had already guaranteed that SAVAK was complying with the Foreign Agents Registration Act in 1976.<sup>155</sup> More sensibly, however, Kissinger's Cold War stratagems interfered with any critiques or denials of domestic SAVAK espionage by the State Department. For CIA officials to remain stationed at Iranian satellite posts near the Soviet Union, Kissinger had to remain silent about Iranian espionage in the US.

Many citizens used letter-writing to remonstrate with congresspeople about SAVAK, and several constituents even challenged the federal government's murky relationship with the Shah's secret police. One constituent, Katheryn Black, wrote Senator Adlai Stevenson III (D-IL) asking about the contents of an anti-Shah flyer she found at her local civic center.<sup>156</sup> The flyer, which was published by the Iranian Student Association, demanded the release of students arrested for protesting outside the French Consulate in Chicago, Illinois.<sup>157</sup> SAVAK operations had extended to the US, according to the authors, where a "trained network of agents collaborate closely with the FBI."<sup>158</sup> However, the FBI launched its criminal investigation of SAVAK earlier in the decade, which suggests that SAVAK collaboration with the FBI, at least to the degree suggested by the Iranian Student Association, would have been highly unlikely.<sup>159</sup>

In 1977, Aryeh Neier, Executive Director of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), sent Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and Attorney General Griffin Bell a letter expressing dismay at evidence of the FBI's relationship with SAVAK.<sup>160</sup> The ACLU, a human

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<sup>155</sup> State Department, "Press Guidance Re. 60 Minutes." WikiLeaks Cable STATE050304 (7 March 1977).

<sup>156</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Black-Stevenson Correspondence. Mar 25, 1977, P770046-1874, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-79/P-Reel Printouts, RG 59: General Records of the Department of State, National Archives.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Alleged Illegal Activities of Iranian National Security and Intelligence Organization (SAVAK) Agents in the United States*, (Washington D.C., 1976), FOIPA #1437715-000

<sup>160</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Neier-Vance Correspondence. June 29, 1977, P770175-1784, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-79/P-Reel Printouts, RG 59: General Records of the Department of State, National Archives.

rights organization which represented an Iranian expat named Nasser Afshar, obtained a memorandum from the FBI that suggested Afshar was a SAVAK assassination target. Neier wanted to understand how the FBI, which also counted SAVAK as an intelligence liaison, could be trusted to protect political prisoners like Afshar. To that end, Neier asked Vance and Bell about the FBI's relationship to SAVAK.<sup>161</sup> Unlike constituents such as Black or Honeycutt, Neier already had confirmation that SAVAK operated within the US, so he inquired about the scope and methods used by the secret police.

Neier received a dodgy reply from Sidney Sober, a State Department official, on November 2, 1977. In his response, Sober referred to the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, which stipulates that embassies can appoint their own personnel without input from the host country.<sup>162</sup> The State Department implicitly recognized that SAVAK operatives acted under the guise of Iranian Embassy staff, but this likely did not surprise Neier. Instead, Sober's argument that "liaison arrangements with the foreign intelligence agencies of other countries are necessary and legitimate" likely bothered Neier, who refused to accept that the FBI could simultaneously collaborate with and investigate SAVAK.<sup>163</sup>

In fact, the FBI did liaise with intelligence officials based in Iranian diplomatic outposts. For example, the Iranian Consulate in San Francisco provided the FBI with the names of students in California suspected of attacking diplomatic officials in 1973.<sup>164</sup> In 1978, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence examined FBI collaboration with SAVAK as part of a classified report titled "Activities of 'Friendly' Foreign Intelligence Services in the United States."<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

<sup>164</sup> Matin-Asgari, *Iranian Student Opposition to the Shah*, 137.

<sup>165</sup> United States Senate, Memorandum from FBI Director William Webster to Senator Birch Bayh, (Washington D.C., 1978), FOIPA #1364010-0

Specifically, the committee wanted to understand whether the FBI helped SAVAK attack protesters and violate diplomatic protocol in Chicago on January 9, 1978. According to FBI records, Senator Birch Bayh, chairman of the committee, wrote to FBI Director William Webster about the incident. Bayh, who suspected that the “close relationship” between SAVAK and the FBI resulted in the undue arrest of Iranian students, asked Webster to clarify details of the incident. When Bayh discovered that the Chicago Police Department had collaborated with SAVAK, he cautioned Webster that any such alliance with the FBI would constitute “improper conduct.”<sup>166</sup>

Both the Chicago incident and Neier’s correspondence with Cyrus Vance reveal that the FBI engaged SAVAK intelligence to track students suspected of rioting. Still, my research indicates that the Chicago incident marked one of the more egregious FBI violations during the Bureau’s post-1970 relationship with SAVAK. In this way, the incident does not reflect a larger conspiracy between the FBI and SAVAK to surveil Iranian students. Although the FBI may have worked alongside SAVAK to monitor certain individuals, or even turned a blind eye to some SAVAK practices, the widespread suspicion that SAVAK had free range to spy appears unfounded. Instead, the FBI likely relied on SAVAK intelligence illegally and allowed the agency to influence the Bureau’s detainment of specific anti-regime students.

Neier inserted the ACLU into the anti-SAVAK campaign to both question FBI motives and limit foreign spying. Therefore, major human rights organizations not only scrutinized Iranian domestic policies, but also called on the federal government to control SAVAK and ensure the legality of intelligence relationships with authoritarian countries.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> Memorandum of Conversation, Neier-Vance Correspondence. June 29, 1977, P770175-1784, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1973-79/P-Reel Printouts, RG 59: General Records of the Department of State, National Archives.

Between 1977-1979, media coverage of the anti-SAVAK campaign would complement the achievements of these human rights groups and spotlight the campaign's merger with the broader anti-Shah movement.

### **Press Coverage of SAVAK**

Media outlets began to report on SAVAK with increasing frequency as constituents pressured Congress to intervene on behalf of Iranian students. Often, news agencies interviewed students who had experienced harassment themselves or were asked to act as informants for SAVAK. One student, Ahmed, recounted an episode during his time as an informant. Ahmad recalled:

It was my duty to report on student groups. SAVAK sometimes told you what to say. They would give you a line that you were to say only after you heard another line said. It was funny to be in the radical groups' meetings. I remember one time I had my line to say, after I heard someone else say his. Suddenly, the worst anti-regime, radical, hot-tempered Communist student stood up and shouted. And I realized that he had said the line I was waiting for. He was a SAVAK. It took me totally by surprise.<sup>168</sup>

SAVAK often dispatched multiple agents to the same location to ensure that even spies feared agency betrayal. However, not all individuals recruited to spy for SAVAK wanted the job. A 1977 *Washington Post* interview with Reza Zanjani, a student at George Washington University, revealed the consequences of declining SAVAK's recruitment offer.<sup>169</sup> When an informant blackmailed Zanjani and exaggerated the student's anti-Shah views, Zanjani's visa and scholarship were revoked by Iranian Embassy officials.<sup>170</sup> To earn back his documents, an unidentifiable SAVAK agent exhorted over the phone, Zanjani had to record and submit a

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<sup>168</sup> George Rose, "The Shah's Secret Police Are Here," *New York Magazine*, September 18, 1978.

<sup>169</sup> Richard Sale, "SAVAK Said at Work in Washington," *The Washington Post*, May 10, 1977.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*



list of his anti-regime peers.<sup>171</sup> However, his refusal led to SAVAK vengeance. He never received his visa or scholarship, and he remained in the US without proper documentation.

The anti-SAVAK campaign not only expanded through media coverage in America's top newspapers, but also gained traction because student organizations, such as the Confederation of Iranian Students, published small leaflets that lamented SAVAK espionage. These student groups caused headaches for SAVAK, which found itself doing more damage control than surveillance by the end of the decade. The Committee Against Repression in Iran, a London-based organization that "campaign[ed] against the harassment of Iranian students and residents in Britain by the Iranian secret police," even exposed Iran's delegation to the International Labor Organization as another convenient disguise for SAVAK surveillance of Marxist students in Europe.<sup>172</sup>

Another group, the Committee for Human Rights in Iran, published a collection of essays in 1978 urging US readers to protest the Shah's draconian police state. The anthology, titled "Letters from the Great Prison," contained essays by prominent Iranian writers. One essay, authored by Ali Asghar Hadj-Seyd-Javadi prior to the Shah's 1977 state visit, listed grievances about Iran's poor human rights conditions. Several paragraphs, all of which begin with the refrain "On the Eve of His Majesty's Trip to America," lambasted the Shah for SAVAK's unyielding torture and surveillance. Toward the end of the 1970s, student organizations and the news media circulated more information related to SAVAK espionage, which emphasized the Shah's culpability for the agency's abuses.

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<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> "The Iranian Working Class: A Survey of Conditions, Repression, and Struggles," (Committee Against Repression in Iran, 1977), "Iran Pamphlets," Box 1, Princeton University Archives, Princeton, NJ.

However, the Shah continued to try and mend his broken public image. After banning torture in 1976, the Shah complied with recommendations offered by human rights organizations and demanded an improvement in prison conditions. Inmates at Evin began to receive visitors and better medical treatment.<sup>173</sup> Furthermore, the number of political prisoners dropped from 3,000 to 300 between 1977-1979.<sup>174</sup> Of course, the Shah's illicit attempts to win over American politicians and journalists did not cease as the monarch agreed to loosen SAVAK's suffocating grip. Congresspeople and media big-wigs were invited to the Iranian Embassy, where Ambassador Zahedi threw ostentatious parties that featured caviar, opium, and prostitutes.<sup>175</sup> SAVAK officials attended these soirees to network with news executives who could cap the negative press surrounding agency misconduct, but no amount of hobnobbing could contain the havoc unleashed by the Shah's 1977 trip to Washington, D.C.<sup>176</sup> The visit, which deepened anti-SAVAK views, would portend the Shah's demise two years prior to the Iranian Revolution.

### **The Shah's 1977 Visit**

Student demonstrators denounced the Shah more frequently than SAVAK, but protests reflected the widely-held belief that the agency could discipline Iranians in the US without fear of reprisal. On November 14, 1977, the Shah and Queen Farah arrived in Virginia to meet with the President and First Lady, Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter.<sup>177</sup> The state visit was intended to rekindle the US-Iran relationship, which had become more tumultuous after the Shah's oil price hikes and the Carter administration's human rights condemnations.<sup>178</sup> SAVAK officials believed

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<sup>173</sup> Abrahamian, *Tortured Confessions*, 121.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>175</sup> George Rose, "The Shah's Secret Police Are Here," *New York Magazine*, September 18, 1978.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>177</sup> Andrew Scott Cooper, *The Oil Kings: How the U.S., Iran, and Saudi Arabia Changed the Balance of Power in the Middle East*, 389.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.*, 388.

that the White House reception, set to take place the next day, could provide an important public relations opportunity.

To that end, SAVAK spent thousands of dollars to sponsor airfare and accommodations for Iranian loyalists who visited Washington to cheer on the royal couple.<sup>179</sup> Anti-regime demonstrators also congregated in front of the White House, but many wore paper bag masks to shield themselves from SAVAK agents planted within the crowd. Prior to the ceremony, shouts of “long live his majesty” and “the Shah is a US puppet - down with the Shah!” filled the air.<sup>180</sup> The clamor, along with tear gas sprayed at violent rioters, floated across the White House lawn, where the two couples awkwardly wiped their faces to maintain some semblance of dignity.<sup>181</sup>

Following the customary gun salute, anti-Shah demonstrators launched an assault on the loyalist crowd, which included plain clothed SAVAK officials. The fracas that ensued greatly embarrassed both the Pahlavis and the Carters, and President Carter later recalled that the moment foreshadowed a grief-ridden future for US-Iran relations.<sup>182</sup> The masks that protestors wore to obscure themselves became a symbol of the Shah’s authoritarianism: a subtle clue that hinted at SAVAK’s global reach. Anxiety about SAVAK’s ability to punish activities beyond Iran’s borders became, quite literally, the face of the Shah’s opposition.

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<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Stephen Lynton, “Shah Violence Sporadic,” *The Washington Post*, November 17, 1977.

<sup>181</sup> James A Bill, *The Eagle and the Lion: The Tragedy of American-Iranian Relations*, 232.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid.



Figure 3. (left) Anti-Shah protestors organize against the Shah's visit to the White House.<sup>183</sup>

Figure 4. (right) Pro-Shah demonstrators welcome the Shah to Washington, D.C.<sup>184</sup>

Following the November scuffle between demonstrators outside the White House, Senator George McGovern (D-SD), chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on International Operations, launched a congressional inquiry into SAVAK activities.<sup>185</sup> However, unlike previous congressional investigations that touched on the issue of human rights in Iran, McGovern's commission focused exclusively on foreign spying efforts in the US. McGovern requested that the FBI and Attorney General provide material relevant to the subcommittee's search.<sup>186</sup> While the complete findings of the McGovern commission remain classified, major news sources reported that the results implicated the FBI and State Department, which did not do enough to prevent espionage activities conducted by Iran, Taiwan, Chile, and the Philippines.<sup>187</sup> Moreover, the report found that evidence of espionage by SAVAK had a "chilling effect" on perceptions of the Shah's regime in the US.<sup>188</sup>

By 1978, the anti-SAVAK campaign also included important members of the executive branch. Attorney General Benjamin Civiletti warned National Security Adviser Zbigniew

<sup>183</sup> Uncredited. Shah Demonstrations, November 16, 1977, Associated Press. Image ID: 333153980696

<sup>184</sup> Uncredited. Shah Demonstrations, November 16, 1977, Associated Press. Image ID: 476398962584

<sup>185</sup> State Department, "Senate Investigation- Washington D.C. Demonstration," WikiLeaks Cable STATE281822 (24 November 1977).

<sup>186</sup> Calhoun, George. McGovern Investigation, (Washington, D.C., 1978), FOIPA #1364010-0

<sup>187</sup> Jim Hoagland, "Carter Pledges Not to Condone Spy Lawbreaking," *The Washington Post*, August 10, 1979.

<sup>188</sup> "Foreign Spy Activity Found Rampant in the US: Five Nations Have Conducted Systematic Campaigns," *The Washington Post*. August 9, 1979.

Brzezinski that SAVAK used “secret police, security, and non-diplomatic activity” to control the spread of anti-regime sentiments in the US.<sup>189</sup> Following his review of McGovern’s report one year later, Carter promised that he would never “condone any violation of US laws by foreign intelligence organizations.”<sup>190</sup> However, the dire domestic situation in Iran rendered Carter’s guarantee nugatory. Protests across Iran, which had become more frequent between 1978-1979, grew more intense after arsonists burned the Rex Cinema in Abadan to the ground and killed over 400 people.<sup>191</sup> Once rumor spread that SAVAK had torched the theater, riots broke out across Iran. As domestic stability continued to unravel, the monarch began to negotiate with opposition leaders in a desperate bid to save the Pahlavi dynasty. The Shah eliminated the Rastakhiz political party, his own brainchild, and fired top SAVAK officials.<sup>192</sup> However, the damage was already done. Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini rejected the Shah’s last-ditch compromise to create an opposition government and millions of protestors took to the streets in cities across the country. Revolution had engulfed Iran, and the Shah fled.

Ultimately, domestic unrest within Iran precipitated the Shah’s downfall, but SAVAK inflicted serious harm on the Shah’s image, especially between 1977-1979. The Shah often relied on the American press to uphold his prestige, but a poor reception in Washington did the emperor few favors. Images of irate students veiled by homemade masks plastered American newspapers like *The Washington Post*, which made sure to note that protesters concealed themselves because Iranian operatives might punish any identifiable demonstrators. The Shah’s trip only amplified negative coverage of SAVAK as news of the agency’s repression spread within congressional chambers and across the front pages of American newspapers.

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<sup>189</sup> “Shah Threatened Reprisal If Curbed,” *The Washington Post*, August 9, 1979.

<sup>190</sup> Jim Hoagland. “Carter Pledges Not to Condone Spy Lawbreaking,” *The Washington Post*, August 10, 1979.

<sup>191</sup> Gholam R. Afkhami, *The Life and Times of the Shah*, 459

<sup>192</sup> Gasiorowski, *U.S. Foreign Policy and the Shah: Building a Client State in Iran*, 221.

During the last three years of the Shah's reign, the anti-SAVAK campaign merged with the anti-Shah opposition in the US. While clandestine efforts to investigate SAVAK proceeded in McGovern's subcommittee, students and journalists brought more public attention to Iranian spying. The expansion of the anti-SAVAK campaign occurred as the anti-Shah movement gained momentum in Washington. By 1977, President Carter had appointed ardent anti-Shah critics, such as civil-rights activist Patricia Derian, to his Office of Human Rights.<sup>193</sup> Derian's aggressive enmity toward the Shah elicited scorn from State Department officials who prioritized geostrategic interests over human rights. Like the anti-SAVAK demonstrators at the Shah's 1977 White House reception, Derian and her team considered the Shah a "retrogressive fascist."<sup>194</sup> Toward the end of the 1970s, anti-regime views were shared by both officials who criticized the monarch's human rights record and students who lambasted SAVAK espionage. Between campus episodes and the Shah's visit, Iranian surveillance incited public outcries that intensified anti-regime attitudes and attached contempt for SAVAK to dislike of the Shah.

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<sup>193</sup> Javier Gil Guerrero, "Human Rights and Tear Gas: The Question of Carter Administration Officials Opposed to the Shah," *British Journal of Middle East Studies* 43, no. 3 (2016): 286.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*, 293.

### Conclusion

The Shah's sister, Ashraf Pahlavi, once recalled that "it was not [the Shah's] wish to create, as some have said, a kind of gulag atmosphere or a security force of yes-men."<sup>195</sup> By the mid-1970s, however, the writing was on the wall; Americans began to view both SAVAK and the Shah through this suspicious lens. The anti-SAVAK campaign expanded from a top-secret investigation to a national cause célèbre, but historians have glossed over this critical component of the anti-regime opposition. While US investigations of SAVAK did not mark the genesis of the Iranian Revolution, the anti-SAVAK campaign certainly cultivated negative views of Shah.

For example, the Shah's *60 Minutes* admission practically invited American audiences to blame the monarch for SAVAK's cloak-and-dagger activities. In response, constituents wrote their congresspeople about the agency's supposed freedom to spy in the US. While the State Department would deny these claims, likely due to Cold War considerations, a vocal student opposition emerged to both condemn SAVAK and discredit the Shah's claimed liberalization. Toward the end of the decade, students, human rights organizations, and the news media had all participated in the anti-SAVAK campaign.

Furthermore, the extent of SAVAK interference with US politics became more widely known after Congress considered the fallout from the Shah's 1977 state visit. In 1979, the FBI began to investigate "payoffs to members of Congress, the press and others in the Washington, D.C. area by SAVAK."<sup>196</sup> Likely due to Ambassador Zahedi and SAVAK station chief Mansur Rafizadeh's profligate spending in exchange for political favors, the investigation revealed that SAVAK's lawbreaking implicated government officials who accepted gifts from Iranian diplomats. Not only did SAVAK spy on US college students, but operatives also tried to

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<sup>195</sup> Ashraf Pahlavi, *Faces in a Mirror: Memoirs from Exile*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J: Prentice-Hall, 1980: 151.

<sup>196</sup> Alleged Payoffs to Members of Congress by SAVAK, (Washington D.C., 1979), FOIPA #1364010-0

minimize the havoc caused by the agency's surveillance by luring American officials and journalists with lavish gifts. Ultimately, Congress determined that the FBI and State Department had not done enough to deter SAVAK espionage.

The anti-SAVAK campaign, which elicited increasingly more attention between 1970-1979, became tethered to the greater anti-regime opposition. The fusion of these initially distinct efforts became apparent toward the end of the decade, when student protests against the Shah reflected an outward fear of SAVAK. The image of a protestor below, taken one day before the Shah was scheduled to arrive at the White House in 1977, embodies this final stage of the anti-SAVAK campaign.



*Figure 5. Demonstrator wearing anti-SAVAK mask on Capitol Hill.<sup>197</sup>*

The demonstrator opposing the Shah's visit donned a mask that advertises: "for protection from SAVAK." Previously, historians may have dismissed the inscription as the protester's attempt to simply hide his own identity from undercover Iranian agents. The inscription would be viewed as a conventional expression of anti-Shah sentiment rather than the unique manifestation of a decade-long attempt to limit SAVAK activities in the US. I suggest that the mask's inscription has roots in a separate historical narrative, the anti-SAVAK

<sup>197</sup> Peter Bregg, *Shah Demonstrations*, November 14, 1977, Associated Press, Image ID: 331335444090



campaign, which merged with the anti-Shah movement toward the late 1970s. While these movements were practically indistinguishable by the end of the decade, their coalescence reveals that student opposition to the Shah was not only fixed in antipathy toward the monarch's leadership, but also in student encounters with and fears of SAVAK surveillance.

Therefore, US opposition to the Shah must be viewed through the context of the anti-SAVAK campaign. Scholars who examine the anti-regime opposition without considering the deleterious effects of SAVAK espionage on the Shah's reputation risk overlooking a critical factor that facilitated the monarch's decline. Of course, the Shah's crumbling public image cannot be exclusively blamed on SAVAK abuses, but opposition to the Shah in the US, especially toward 1979, was driven, in no small part, by student resentment for SAVAK.

Appendix A:

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10  
MAY 1962 EDITION  
GSA FPMR (41 CFR) 101-11.6

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI

DATE: JAN 28 1972

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

FROM : SAC, WFO [redacted]

SUBJECT: ALLEGED IRAN STATE SECURITY  
INTELLIGENCE ORGANIZATION (SAVAK)

(OO: BUREAU)

Classified by 367 JAT/amy  
Declassify on: ADR 11-10-82

CLASS. & EXT. BY 6883 VRT/amy  
FRASON-FCIM II 1-2.4.2 2,3  
DATE OF REVIEW 1-28-92  
9-24-81

ReBulet to Sacramento dated 1/6/72 captioned [redacted]

Enclosed for the Bureau and all offices receiving copies of this letter are two copies of LHM dated and captioned as above.

The Bureau has been designated office of origin because captioned organization is international in its scope of operations.

The information set out in the LHM was received from [redacted]

- 2 - Bureau (Enc. 2)
- 2 - Baltimore (Enc. 2)
- 2 - Denver (Enc. 2)
- 2 - Los Angeles (Enc. 2)
- 2 - Memphis (Enc. 2)
- 2 - Miami (Enc. 2)
- 2 - Milwaukee (Enc. 2)
- 2 - Newark (Enc. 2)
- 2 - New York (Enc. 2)
- 2 - Oklahoma City (Enc. 2)
- 2 - Salt Lake City (Enc. 2)
- 2 - WFO

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Classified by 367 JAT/amy  
Exempt from GDS, Category 2,3  
Date of Declassification Indefinite  
5/10/98 LLS/amy

HF:rms

NON-SYMBOL SOURCE PAGE

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN  
OTHERWISE

cc: [redacted]  
JTH/amy 2/7/72

3/26/84  
Classified by SPA [redacted]  
Declassify on: ADR  
per RE/SPAS/SSJ  
190-6/103-12  
190-6/333

b3  
b7E

b3  
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b7C  
b7E

(b7D)

b3  
b7E

b7E

b6  
b7C

b3  
b7E

CLIP (S) OF [redacted]  
DATE 6/6/98 LLS/amy

Appendix B:

17  
JN

7622281



Boston University

School of Law  
765 Commonwealth Avenue  
Boston, Massachusetts 02215

October 22, 1976

The Honorable Gerald Ford  
President of the United States  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

The Shah of Iran is quoted in today's New York Times as having said that SAVAK, the Iranian secret police, has agents on duty in the United States. He is further quoted as having said that the SAVAK agents are here with the knowledge and consent of the United States government, and that Iranian SAVAK agents carry out the following tasks in the United States:

Checking up on anybody who becomes affiliated with circles, organizations hostile to my country, which is the role of any intelligence organization. [New York Times, October 22, 1976, p. A27, column 4, quoted from an interview with Mike Wallace.]

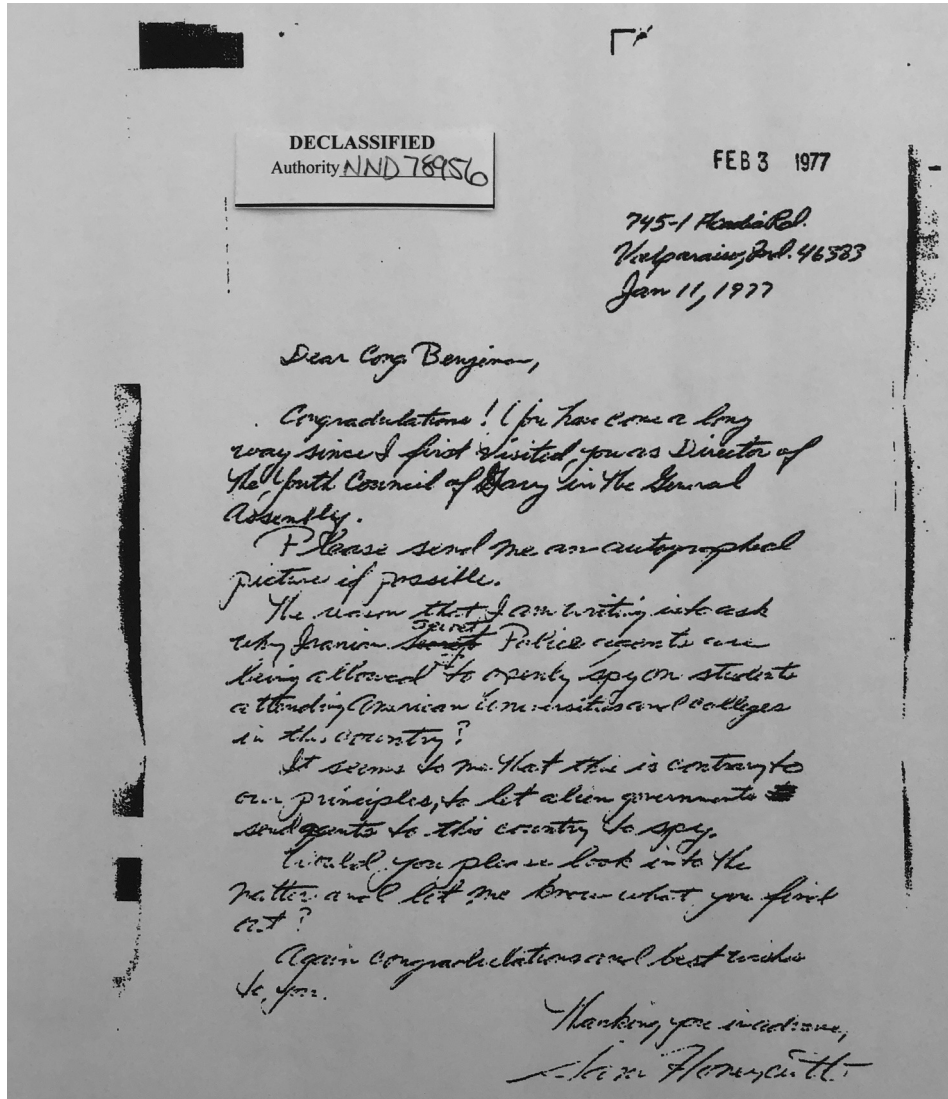
It seems to me that this situation cannot be tolerated by the United States. SAVAK, which is charged with barbaric practices in Iran, exercises the police powers of that country. Neither SAVAK nor any other foreign state's police should have any right to operate within the United States. I hope that prompt action will be taken to investigate SAVAK's activities here, and to put an end to this abuse of the rights of people in the United States by the Government of Iran.

Sincerely,  
  
Daniel G. Partan  
Professor of Law

DGP/jam



## Appendix C:



Dear Congressman Benjamin,

Congratulations! You have come a long way since I first visited you as Director of the Youth Council in the General Assembly.

Please send me an autographed picture if possible.

The reason that I am writing is to ask why Iranian secret police agents are being allowed to openly spy on students attending universities and colleges in this country.

It seems to me that this is contrary to our principles, to let an alien government send agents to this country to spy.

Would you please look into the matter and let me know what you find out?

Again, congratulations and best wishes to you.

Thank you in advance,  
Sam Honeycutt

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