

September 27, 1942

Cable, V. M. Molotov to the Soviet Ambassador A. Smirnov

Citation:

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Summary:

Molotov reports on a conversation between Stalin and Iranian Ambassador Ahi on the Soviet Union's lack of designs on Iran, the planned withdrawal of Soviet troops from Iran, Iranian opposition to Kurdish autonomy, and other aspects of the Soviet-Iranian diplomatic and military relationships.

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[USSR MFA cable letterhead]

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Cable

from TEHRAN to THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR Copy N° 1

On 19 September a conversation was held between Cde. Stalin and [Majid] Ahi, at which I was also present.

Cde. Stalin stressed that the USSR has no selfish purposes with respect to Iran, and asked whether, nevertheless, there is displeasure in Iran with respect to the USSR. The Ambassador replied that the events of the past year associated with the introduction of Soviet troops into Iran has caused some displeasure in Iran. At the same time Ahi said that Soviet Ambassador Smirnov has done much to create mutual understanding and an improvement of relations.

Cde. Stalin also said that after the end of the War not a single Soviet soldier will remain in Iran and expressed regret that the former Shah treated the Soviet government mistrustfully and, what is more, even prompted from abroad, supported the unrest in Iran to the detriment of the relations between both countries. The Ambassador replied that the current Shah and government are striving to establish good relations with the USSR and he hopes that a mutual understanding will be displayed by the USSR and support given to Iran. Cde. Stalin expressed agreement with Ahi and promised full support to Iran.

Cde. Stalin also said that some Soviet officials have possibly had a fantastic intent regarding annexing part of Northern Iran to the benefit of the USSR and had suggested showing the power of the Red Army in Iran. Cde. Stalin added that there's a black sheep in every flock, however, such people do not enjoy either influence or authority in the USSR. Again [he] stressed that Iran will be convinced of the unquestionably friendly attitude toward it from the Soviet Union.

In reply to a cautiously raised question from the Ambassador about the reinforcement of Iranian forces in Tabriz with the explanation that this was desirable to provide order with the forces of Iranian units themselves, right here our side agreed to the introduction of 1500 Iranian soldiers into Tabriz.

In addition, the conversation also touched on the Kurdish question. Ahi explained that the Kurds are real Iranians in their ethnicity and language, that there is the same difference between them [and Persians] as between Russians and Ukrainians. Akhi said at this point that the Kurds have not reached such a cultural level when one could speak of Kurdish autonomy. As regards ensuring order in the Kurdish regions then it could be ensured with the forces of the Iranian government, as he said was in the last 20 years. Saying that the Kurdish leaders often engage in robbery, murder, and violence against the Iranian population, Ahi gave assurances that the Iranian authorities will ensure order in the Kurdish regions. Cde. Stalin, favorably regarded the Iranian government's striving to ensure order in the Kurdish regions.

Cde. Stalin also asked about the number of Iranian troops and whether the Shah devotes attention to the question of aircraft. The Ambassador replied that Iran has the number of armed forces which are needed to maintain order and calm inside the country. As regards aircraft, then this is a new matter for Iran and has not received development, although it depends entirely on the importation of aircraft which is impossible for Iran to ensure in view of wartime.

The entire conversation occurred in a friendly atmosphere.

MOLOTOV

Authenticated: [illegible signature]

Copies: [to]

1. Cde. Stalin

2. Cde. Molotov

3. Cde. Vyshinsky

[handwritten: 1733

N5875/[several illegible letters]]

three copies. ak. sent 28 September 1942