

## **National Consultative Assembly, 10<sup>th</sup> Term**

The 10<sup>th</sup> National Consultative Assembly was inaugurated on June 6, 1935. One week later, it took office. Legislative elections were held like the previous Reza Shah-led ones. A total of 137 MPs were elected. Of this number, eight died over two years. The lineup of Majlis in terms of social classes did not change significantly from the previous assembly. The downward trend of clerics that had started in the 6<sup>th</sup> Assembly continued. Land proprietors dominated the Assembly. Other groups represented in Majlis were civil servants and merchants. (Shajiei, 1965: 181)

One of the important events in that period was the uprising at Goharshad Mosque near the shrine of Imam Reza, the 8th Shiite Imam in the holy city of Mashhad. The uprising came only one month after the 10<sup>th</sup> Assembly was inaugurated. The reason for this uprising was the obligation to wear fedora instead of kepi earlier passed by parliament. As protests intensified military troops attacked Goharshad Mosque on July 14, 1936 and killed a large number of people. Some sources put the death toll at 1,500, but Majlis stayed put and did not announce any figure. (Abrahamian, 2004: 189)

In the wake of this event, MP Ali Akbar Assadi lost his immunity. He was the son of Mohammad Vali Asadi, the chief custodian of Astan Qods Razavi in Mashhad and also the son-in-law of Prime Minister Mohammad-Ali Foroughi. After the dismissal and execution of his father, Ali Akbar inherited his wealth. He served time in jail before being sent to exile. (Mollaei Tavani, 2011: 373-379)

Foroughi, who was an influential premier for six years, was unseated and never allowed back to politics as long as Reza Shah was in power. That came after he sent a letter to Reza Shah, demanding pardon for Mohammad Vali Assadi. This request infuriated Reza Shah and led to his dismissal in December 1935.

After Iran was occupied during World War, Foroughi was reappointed prime minister and he was instrumental in transition of power from Reza Shah to his son Mohammad Reza. Having done so, Foroughi helped prevent the disintegration of Iran. After Foroughi tendered his resignation on December 2, 1935, his interior minister Mahmoud Jam formed a Cabinet. (Varedi, 2012)

Other MPs who lost their immunity included Seyyed Ali-Reza Ehteshamzadeh, deputy from Zarand. He was in the seventh to tenth assemblies.

As part of his crackdown on political elites, Reza Shah targeted Hossein Dadgar, better known as Dispenser of Justice. Dadgar headed the assemblies from the 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> terms. He represented Tehran in Majlis. His credentials were rejected in the tenth Assembly. Reza Shah did not order his murder, but forced him to leave the country. No clear reason has been given for Reza Shah's fury against Dadgar. After Dadgar was unseated, Mirza Hassan Esfandiari (Mohtasham as-Saltaneh) was named speaker of parliament. (Mollaei Tavani, Ibid)

The most important law approved by this assembly was the Law on Freedom of Women, known as removal of Hijab (veil). It was adopted on January 7, 1936. During a visit to Turkey, Reza Shah was influenced by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of Republic of Turkey, and ordered the removal of veil in Iran. In Turkey, women were free to either cover themselves or be unveiled, but in Iran, Reza Shah forced women to remove their hijab.

On January 7, Reza Shah's wife and daughters attended a ceremony without hijab and ordered all ministers to hold public feasts. (Salah, 2005: 118)

The 10<sup>th</sup> Assembly adopted 135 laws, including the third book of Civil Code. A Law on Iran-Germany Account Settlement, Law on Transportation Institutes, Law on Iran-USSR Marine Trade, Iran-Austria Amity and Arbitration, Authorization for Employment of Foreign Specialists from Germany, France, Sweden, and Denmark, Law on Establishment of Iran State-Run Railway Institute, Law on Chiefdom, Insurance Law, 65-Point Law for Notary Publics, and Law for Raising Bank Melli Capital from IRR 8 million to IRR 300 million.

Furthermore, a law was approved that would give Iran-US oil company a 60-year right to drill for and explore oil in Eastern and North Eastern Iran. AIOC was also authorized by an act of parliament to build and maintain oil pipelines. Iran-US Oil Company was initially supposed to carry oil to Afghanistan and pay Iran transit fees, but after two years it stopped its work.

During this term of parliament, negotiations started for the signature of the Saadabad Pact between the four governments of Iran, Turkey, Afghanistan, and Iraq.

The Treaty of Saadabad (or the Saadabad Pact) was a non-aggression pact signed by Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Afghanistan on July 8, 1937. This treaty lasted for five years. The treaty was signed in Tehran's Saadabad Palace and was part of an initiative for greater Middle Eastern-Oriental relations spearheaded by King Mohammed Zahir Shah of Afghanistan. Ratifications were exchanged in Tehran on June 25, 1938 and it became effective on the same day. It was registered in League of Nations Treaty Series on July 19, 1938. (Shajiei, Ibid: 156 And Baqeri et al, 2014: 149-151)

The 10<sup>th</sup> National Consultative Assembly ended its term on June 12, 1937.

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