

## SOUTH AZERBAIJAN, 1945: A TURNING POINT IN HISTORY - AZER 21

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Under the guidance of its great leaders, Sattar Khan and Sheik Mohammed Khiyabani, the Azeri nation amazed the world with its struggle for national independence. Now was the eve of a third crucial event, Azer 21. During the days of crisis, the fall of 1945, S. J. Pishevari declared:

We should gain our own rights by the power of our own nation ... We will not repeat the mistakes of Khiyabani. The betrayers will have no answer other than death. The nation should not be afraid of sacrifices made for its rights. A nation that is not ready to make sacrifices has no right to be free. Beginning that Fall, there were two ruling authorities in Iranian Azerbaijan: the Democrat Party of Azerbaijan (DPA), which *de facto* controlled everything but had no legal authority; and the legal authorities who had lost their capacity to govern the province. In November of that year, attempts by Teheran to dispatch troops to Tabriz had resulted in a fiasco. But Iranian officials wouldn't accept the withdrawal of its armies as a loss. General Hasan Arfa, the Iranian Military Chief of Staff was afraid that a further attack could negatively affect the Iranian soldiers and military officers and proposed instead the sending the troops stationed near Qazvin to Hamadan.

In a secret report sent on December 8 to the United States Secretary of State, the U.S. Ambassador in Teheran Walles Murray, wrote:

I regret this Iranian action, since it implies submission to Soviet re-fusal of permission for advance to Tabriz. In talking to Colonel Baker yesterday, Arfa expressed extremely pessimistic view of situation. Said he considers Teheran is now on northern frontier of Iran. Anticipates attempt by "Democrats" with Russian help to cut off food supplies to capital. General staff is maintaining 24-hour

watch against possible sudden move on Teheran by the "Democrat" As forces.<sup>2</sup>

The central government in Teheran, which had failed to overcome loss of control through use of military force, was now relying on diplomatic maneuvers and negotiations the newly appointed governor of Tabriz, Murtezaqulu Bayat, was holding with "Democrats". The first round of these negotiations, which ended on December 3, had no important results. After having consulted with Teheran, Saham-as-Sultan (M.Bayat) was trying for more negotiations with Seyyid Jafar Pishevari. While he understood the hopelessness of the situation, he wanted, on the one hand, to gain time by holding negotiations. On the other hand, he needed to wait to see what other steps Teheran would take. Also, it was not a secret that, by appointing Bayat governor of the Azerbaijani province, the Prime Minister, Ebrahim Hakimi wanted to get rid of one of his strongest rivals in Teheran.

A second round of official talks began December 8 at ten in the morning in the house of a well-known Azeri nobleman, Siraj Zekauddovla. The Iranian central government was represented by Bayat and Hasan Dovlatshahi; the Democrats, by Pishevari, Haji Mirza Ali Shabusteri and Mahammad Biriya. During the negotiations Bayat repeatedly tried to get the Democrats to unilaterally sign a document that would define the nature of the autonomy of the Azerbaijan province to be established, the legal rights and obligations of the local Azeri Assembly, and the nature of the connection between the Azerbaijani and Iranian Assemblies. Just as he had in previous negotiations, Bayat wanted to emphasize only the creation of municipal assemblies, the issue of local language, and the possibility of education in the local Azeri language.

But Pishevari realized that by making many promises concerning municipal assemblies and other issues, Bayat wanted to exclude the idea of autonomy from the list of demands prepared by the Democrats for submission to the Teheran government. For this reason, he strongly re-argued that the demands of the Azeri people had been clearly set out in a Declaration and published in the mass media, and that these demands should be met by the Shah and the Iranian

Assembly. He further argued that, whether these demands were met or not, the Assembly of the Azerbaijan province, already elected, was to start its work in the coming days. When the issue of autonomy was being discussed, Biriya and Shabusteri supported Pischevari. But Bayat argued: "You cannot live autonomously!" Pischevari wrote about these negotiations in his memoirs:

Although Mr. Bayat accepted and noted the accuracy of our ideas and principles, he could not talk openly and clearly about them. He wanted to replace our idea of autonomy with empty words and cheap talk. His words certainly were not the voice of his honesty. With his very limited powers, he could not negotiate normally and desperately tried to spend time on unimportant details rather than essential issues. Eventually our delegates described the situation and clearly explained that our nation was able to gain its rights and that it had already entered completely into the struggle to achieve its goal. Then they stated that "in the near future the local assembly will be opened, and the official government will be established. (The province of) Azerbaijan will be competent to administer its internal affairs, but will remain within Iran. We have already informed Teheran. But Teheran intends to gain time by ignoring our demands. This policy is wrong. If the central government doesn't want to take our hand today, we will never again offer that hand. This policy will stand as one of the central government's greatest betrayals.<sup>4</sup> In reply to those who argued that the autonomy of Azerbaijan would be contrary to the Iranian constitution, Pischevari reminded them that during the previous 25 years, many articles of that constitution had been changed. For instance, Reza Shah annulled the articles concerning the Qajar dynasty and instead set forth his own dynasty's rule. And, according to the constitution, the queen of Iran had to be an Iranian, but at the time, the Queen was an Egyptian. As far as the issue of autonomy was concerned, Pischevari explained to Bayat that he defined the autonomy of Azerbaijan like the autonomy of states in the United States or the cantons in Switzerland.<sup>5</sup>

At the end of talks, Bayat requested that the declaration of independence as well as other documents passed by the National Congress be given to him. He suggested, perhaps he would go to

Teheran; documents could help him while negotiating with the Shah. Lastly, Bayat declared his willingness to meet once again with Pischevari. Mir Jafar Bagirov, the First Communist Party Secretary of Soviet Azerbaijan, who was informing Stalin about these negotiations, wrote:

The second meeting with Bayat proved once again that, acting under the instructions of the Iranian government, he wants to delay the issue of Azeri autonomy by his long and endless talks. It seemed they want to solve this problem with the assistance of foreign governments. Taking all these things into consideration, we ordered the following.

1. The meeting of the first session of the Assembly shouldn't be postponed once more and should be held on December 12.
2. Both the Assembly and the government approved by it should immediately start to implement the directives accepted by the National Congress.
3. Any further meetings with Bayat should be refused until the first session of the Assembly ends.<sup>6</sup>

The evening of the day of negotiations with Saham-as-Sultan, the "Baku Troika": Hasan Hasanov, Mirza Ibrahimov and Aghaselim Atakishiyev; met with the "Tabriz Troika": Pishvari, Shabustari and Biriya; and discussed the issue of opening the National Assembly of Azerbaijan, electing the chairman and the board of the national assembly and approving a cabinet of ministers. Political spheres of the Great Powers and the mass media had already focused on the events occurring in Iran and the province of Azerbaijan. On December 7, an announcer of a U.S. radio station, Steal, invited the ex-editor of the Iranian Telegraph Agency, Reza Shahshahani to discuss the events in Azerbaijan. Shahshahani evaluated the Democrat movement and the documents passed by the National Congress positively and noted that the people of Azerbaijan were in the right. He expressed his view that people like the Ambassador of Iran to the United States, Husseyn Ala, who saw the Soviet Union as an enemy, distort the events taking place.<sup>7</sup>

Great Britain understood the seriousness of the situation. Thus, on December 8, via its ambassador in Moscow, the British government communicated with Vyacheslav Molotov and expressed

its desire to discuss the issue of withdrawal of Soviet and British troops from Iran. The letter of the British ambassador was based on an agreement reached between Molotov and Ernest Bevin in their meeting in London, and a letter of Molotov to Bevin, dated September 20. The surrender to the Partisans of the Iranian police and gendarme forces in Azerbaijani cities amazed diplomatic missions to Iran. On December 9, the *press-attache* of the U.S. Embassy in Teheran, Cuyler Young, came hurriedly to Tabriz and met with the President of the Central Committee of the Democratic Party of Azerbaijan (D.P.A.), Pischevari. During the conversation with Pischevari, Young expressed his interest in the issues of Azerbaijan autonomy; in the Partisan movement; the structure of the Democrat Party, including its ethnic and social composition; the documents of the National Congress; the relation of the DPA with armed partisan groups, etc. He asked many questions, particularly about the participation of Russians in this movement. Baghirov noted in his report to the leaders of the Kremlin, that Pischevari gave good replies to all questions.

In particular, to the argument of the American, that "Your declaration is contrary to the Iranian constitution.", Pischevari replied that the Azeri people had an historical right to claim its just demands, just as, once upon a time, the American people had claimed their rights. The constitution which existed at that time was not an obstacle to the just movement of American people for freedom. The people of Azerbaijan hoped for the help of the democratic nations of the world, especially of the American nation which can feel our present troubles very well. At the end of the conversation, the American said that he shared the views of Pischevari and agreed with his arguments. However, he asked Pischevari to promise not to publish these views in the journal "Azerbaijan", until he returned to Teheran and reported their conversation to the Ambassador.<sup>8</sup>

On December 10, the eve of the meeting of foreign ministers in Moscow, on the imperative received from Teheran, the Ambassador of Iran in Washington, Ala, asked Secretary of State James Byrnes to include the following issues in the agenda of the meeting:

1. The immediate evacuation of Iran by foreign troops, and
2. Pending such rapid withdrawal, absolute and complete freedom

of action of the Persian government in its own territory.

He further wrote:

This will enable us to restore order and restrain the mischief-makers, undesirable immigrants<sup>9</sup> and unknown individuals who, having come into Azerbaijan from over the border, are murdering officials of the Government and pillaging government buildings and offices. If our efforts continue to be paralyzed and obstacles are still placed in our way, the security forces of Iran in Azerbaijan and the northern provinces will gradually be overpowered because of the lack of reinforcements and will be obliged to surrender to the mob and seditious elements.<sup>10</sup> The issue of early withdrawal of foreign

troops from Iran was also mentioned in the diplomatic note of the United States to the Soviet Union, dated November 29, 1945. Moscow refused the U.S. proposal that "all allied troops be withdrawn from Iran by January 1."

The U.S. Department of State announced the reply of the Russians to this note on December 8. According to the government of the USSR, there was no pressing necessity and reason for the immediate withdrawal of foreign troops from Iran. What disturbed the United States, as far as the crisis of Azerbaijan was concerned, was the contents of note of the Soviet Union, in

which the following was stated:

Now that the Declaration of the Popular Assembly of Northern Iran has been published, it is evident that this is a matter of aspirations with respect to the assurance of the democratic rights of (the) Azerbaijan population of northern

Iran, which is seeking national autonomy within the limits of the Iranian state and which has its own particular language, different from the Persian language.<sup>1</sup> On December 12, after a five-day visit to Tabriz, Young (the U.S. *press-attache*) returned to Teheran. The same day, Ambassador Murray sent

a report to Secretary Byrnes, who was to go to Moscow, that included information from Young's meetings with Iranian officials, "Democrats" (who were still referred to within quotation marks), foreign consuls, clergymen,

etc. According to the telegram of the Ambassador,

Successful "Democrat" occupation Tabriz expected today.

Governor General Bayat and Iranian Commanding General

Derakhshaki both informed Young they could not and would not defend city and would confine efforts to protecting Governor General's residence and troop barracks. "Government Assembly of Azerbaijan" composed of members chosen in recent "elections" is to hold first meeting in Tabriz today. It will proceed, to select "cabinet" of ten "ministers" from own membership all portfolios of Iran Government being represented except War and Foreign Affairs. Bayat has had two meetings with "Democrat" leaders and has offered to compromise. They, however, insist on outright grant of "autonomy" without being willing define in advance scope of this grant and Bayat says he is unable meet this demand. Without exception, everyone in Tabriz says Soviets have distributed large amounts arms to "Democrats" and are assisting movement every way including manpower. Democrat leaders themselves admitted to Young they were receiving Russian help. Democrat headquarters and meetings Tabriz guarded by armed Soviet soldiers in uniform. Young personally saw truckload Iranian troops turned back by Soviet control post when they attempted leave Tabriz. He further saw official Iranian Army report just received from Ardabil saying Soviet troops there had prevented dispatch of aid to gendarme post which was under attack and Soviet Commander had ordered Iranian Commander in Ardabil not make any more with his forces ... Only major town left in Azerbaijan not de-facto Democrat control is Rezayeh. Iran government officials in Tabriz admitted to Young they no longer controlled city except in name. Iranian officials in Tabriz say recent moves of Democrats have been faster than anticipated ...<sup>13</sup>

On December 10, Young attended the meeting of Prime Minister Hakimi with the British journalists who had come to Teheran in connection with the crisis of Azerbaijan. When asked how the Iranian government thinks it can overcome this crisis, the Prime Minister answered:

The war has already ended. There's no need for Allies to keep their troops in Iran. If the three superpowers withdrew their armies from Iran, the government would obtain full freedom of action to implement reforms and provide order. And then the Iranian government would be ready to prove to the USSR and the entire world that Iran is willing to create friendly relations with the Soviet Union.

British journalists asked whether or not the Iranian government would request the United Nations to send a commission to Iran for smdyng the situation. The Prime Minister expressed his hope that the crisis would be overcome through negotiations with the USSR. At the same time, he noted that the Iranian government would consider positively "any attention given by the United Nations towards the solution of this problem. Lastly, Hakimi stated that, according to the Tripartite Treaty, concluded on January 29, 1942; and the Teheran Declaration of December 1, 1943; the allies would respect the sovereign rights of Iran.<sup>14</sup>

By December 11, the entire Azerbaijani province was under the control of the Democrats. Maraghe, Sardari, Sarab, Bostanabad, Marand and Sophiyan had been taken over by the Partisans. Tabriz was under siege and the Iranian Army there was cut off from communication with Teheran and other places. The last preparations for opening a session of a national assembly and organizing a national government were taking place. The proposed *By-laws of the National Assembly of Azerbaijan*, prepared by the Central Committee of the Democrat Party and the National Committee, was sent by Baghirov to Joseph Stalin, Vyacheslav Molotov, Lavrentiy Beria and Grigory Malenkov. The By-laws, composed of 39 articles, were accepted in Baku and Moscow without any important changes.<sup>15</sup>

The proposal agreed to beforehand by Pischevari and Sabusteri, to create Budget and National Army commissions in addition to the other commissions of the parliament, was not accepted in Baku. Finally, Baghirov ordered not to create any commission other than the ones already been planned. At the same time, he recommended avoiding any disorder by the people of Tabriz during the first meeting of the Assembly. He said that both the meeting of the assembly and the process of takeover of rule by the new government of the Azerbaijan province should be done without bloodshed. Members of a newly formed "Baku Troika" in Tabriz, M. Ibrahimov, Public Commissar of the Interior, M. Yakubov, and Commissar of State Security, S. Yemelyanov, submitted to Baghirov their proposal on the implementation of the secret decision of the Central Committee of the Communist (Bolshevik) Party of the USSR, "On the Activities for

Organizing Separatist Movements in South Azerbaijan and Other Provinces of Northern Iran", dated July 6, 1945. The following was stated in that proposal:

We sent to you a set of proposals on the duties of the second phase of the national independence movement in Azerbaijan, which was prepared upon your request. In the proposal prepared from the debate of the competent officials of Soviet Azerbaijan with the leaders of the DPA, we planned to open the first session of the National Assembly of Azerbaijan on December 12, and to organize the cabinet of the autonomous government of Azerbaijan.

With the newly established Azeri government taking control over local offices between December 15 and 20, the first phase of the national independence movement would end. The document stated, that the leaders of the Central Committee of the DPA and the Azerbaijan National Committee were worrying about the future of the movement for the autonomy of Azerbaijan and what form of development of this movement. As a final analysis of the first phase of the national independence movement, it was noted that even if the Shah and the Iranian government recognized the autonomy of Azerbaijan, the situation could radically change after the withdrawal of Soviet troops from northern Iran. According to the leaders of the DPA, any Iranian government might abuse the withdrawal of Soviet troops and forcefully abolish the autonomy of Azerbaijan<sup>16</sup> The leaders of Soviet Azerbaijan stated that they shared this view of the Democrats. They considered non-recognition of the national rights of Azerbaijan the result of Farsi chauvinism and the sickness of "great statehood" in the minds of Iranian officials and politicians. The following points were mentioned in

proposals submitted to Baghirov. They believed that the only guarantee for protection of the national rights of people living in Azerbaijan must be the creation of an independent People's Democratic State, like the People's Republic of Mongolia. Therefore, the ineffective and stubborn policy of the reactionary Teheran government toward Azerbaijan rendered the creation of an independent People's Democratic State inevitable. We propose that the National Committee and the Central Committee of the DPA create a state in the form of the People's Republic of

Mongolia and we deem it their duty during this period of the movement for national independence, to abolish historical injustice and to provide for the historical rights of the Azeri people.<sup>17</sup> In a document entitled, the "Demands of Azeri People" which was signed by Pishvari and other leaders a month later, the ideas of independence were even more emphasized.

We should be entirely separated from Iran and establish our own independent state, the National Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan.... Our country should be called the National Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan. Unification of both Azerbaijan was stressed many times in conversations between the leaders of the DPA and Soviet Azerbaijan. Artashes Ovanesyan, who, as a leader of the Tudeh Party, was against the creation of the DPA and the declaration of autonomy, and who

<sup>18</sup> was secretly sending information to the leadership of the USSR, later on wrote:

The movement created in Azerbaijan was based on the personal designs and "dictates" of Bagirov and Pishvari. I was against the entire movement.

Bagirov wanted to unite the five million population of South Azerbaijan with the three million population of North Azerbaijan into one state, to counterweight that state to Ukraine, and to reign as a landlord. They wanted to get rid of me because I was against this, but they could not.<sup>19</sup> The military and political spheres of Iran also admitted that Azerbaijani affairs would develop in this direction. General Hasan Arfa, the Military Chief of Staff, wrote in his memoirs, which he had published outside Iran, "The process of separation of this region from Iran and annexation of it by Soviet Azerbaijan has already started."<sup>20</sup>

Eventually, after serious preparations and having agreed with the Soviet leaders, the first session of the National Assembly of Azerbaijan was opened in the "Dideban" cinema of Tabriz at 10 a.m., on December 12, 1945 (Azer 21, 1324, according to the Iranian calendar). This was to become one of the most important dates in the history and destiny of Azerbaijan. The following was mentioned in information sent by the Telegraph Agency of Azerbaijan from Tabriz to Baku that same day:

There are unforgettable dates in the life of every man. There are



many such dates in the history of nations and of states. Azer 21 (December 12), will never be forgotten by the five million people living in South Azerbaijan.<sup>21</sup>

Seventy-six of the 95 members elected from different places in Azerbaijan participated in the first session of the National Assembly. Taking part in the opening ceremonies of the Assembly were the Consul General of the USSR, a French diplomatic delegate, the French Catholic mission, delegates of the Governor of Azerbaijan, Deputy Chairman of the Office of Education, Chairmen from the Agricultural and the Financial Offices, the Director of the Tabriz branch of the Iranian National Bank, the Chief of Police, President of the Trade Association, co-chairmen of the Tabriz branch of the Association of Cultural Relations between Iran and the USSR, etc. The elder member of the Assembly, a wealthy landowner, Nizamuddovla Rafii opened that historical meeting.

After having elected the provisional Presidential Board, they discussed the by-laws, article by article. There were intense debates concerning Article 35, which stated that the government should be composed of ten ministers, including the Prime Minister. Members from Miyaneh and Marand insisted on the creation of a Foreign Ministry within the cabinet. Pischevari explained that since autonomous Azerbaijan remained within the Iranian state, there was no need to create a separate foreign ministry. Thus, with a vast majority of the vote, the Assembly rejected the creation of a foreign ministry. Many MPs expressed their objections to the fact that 25% of the taxes extracted from Azerbaijan was given to the central government. Then the by-laws were voted on and accepted.

Afterwards, the permanent presidential board of the assembly was elected; the following MPs were elected to the following positions: Mirza Ali Shabustari, President of the National Assembly of Azerbaijan; S. Padegan, N. Rafii and H. Jovdat, Vice-presidents; M. Vilayi and M. Azimi, Secretaries of the Assembly; A. Dibaiyan, S. Dilmagani and Murat Ali Khan Bayat Maku, members of the Presidential Board.

In compliance with Article 33 of the accepted by-laws, M.A. Shabustari requested Pischevari, the leader of the DPA, which had a

majority in the Assembly, to organize the government. When the meeting of the Assembly was going on, two men from the Gendarmerie of Tabriz-city entered and announced that they accepted the surrender offered to them by the Partisans. The Assembly instructed Qulam Yahya and Vilayi to register and make official the surrender of the Gendarme forces and to transfer their arms to the National forces. That was the end of the meeting, which had started in the morning. The people of Tabriz, who were crowded in front of the "Dideban" cinema, applauded the MPs as they were leaving.<sup>22</sup>

The evening meeting of the Assembly dealt mainly with the establishment of the National Government of Azerbaijan. The government Pischevari presented to the Assembly was approved in the following form: Seyyid Jafar Pischevari, Prime Minister; Salamulla Javid, Minister of the Interior; Qulamreza Ilhami, Minister of Finance; Reza Rasuli, Minister of Economy and Trade; Jafar Kaviyan, Minister of the Public Army; Hasan Orangi, Minister of Health; Mirzarabi Kebiri, Minister of Postal Affairs and Telegraph; Yusif Azimi, Minister of Justice; Javid Mehtash, Minister of Agriculture; Mahammad Biriya, Minister of Education.<sup>23</sup> (After some time, Hasan Jovdat replaced Reza Rasuli.) At this meeting, Zeynalabidin Qiyami was nominated as President of the High Court, and Fimdin Ibrahimi as Prosecutor-General of Azerbaijan. After formation of the cabinet, Pischevari made a speech about their government program.

The government, which had been established by people both influential and admired, was favored by the citizens. Members of the Assembly of Poets of Tabriz, Ali Fitrat, Mir Mehdi Etimat, Husseyn Sahhaf, Muzaffar Dervishi, Mir Mehdi Chavushi, Yahya Sheyda and Balash Azeroghlu congratulated the National Government with a poem.<sup>24</sup>

The Prime Minister, Pischevari, explained the meaning of the new government as follows:

Since the National Government of Azerbaijan was established for the well being of its people, it Will provide them with a lively brotherhood, protected by public wealth, security, honesty and order. Everyone is expected to consider the future of Azerbaijan seriously and to serve their nation and country. And the State will

try to achieve the wealth and well being of its people. At the same time, the diplomatic missions in Tabriz were asked to maintain their functions in accordance with international norms. It was also declared "The National Government will not refrain from any selflessness to provide security and order for the citizens of the democratic state."<sup>25</sup>

The morning of the following day, the Commandant of Tabriz, Rosheni, informed the Consul General of the USSR, Krasniy, of Bayat's order to the military police and Gendarme, in which he said that he deemed useless any bloodshed and thus, they should obey the instructions of the new government without resistance. Rosheni added that, as it was not an unusual public action, Bayat, as a representative of the central government, considered cooperating with the National Government of Azerbaijan. During the evening of the same day, he met with the American Consul in Tabriz and discussed the situation in Azerbaijan. On December 13, information was received about Bayat's urgent visit to Teheran. He had asked Krasniy to provide him with an airplane through "Intourist." General Consul Krasniy informed "In-tourist" that Rousheni requested the Soviet Consul not to deny the assistance of the Red Army in guaranteeing order in the city and avoiding civil disruption and mob rule. Krasniy gave an affirmative answer to his request. However, that answer was not favored by Baghirov. He wrote Stalin:

The answer of Krasniy is not satisfactory to us. Please, once again, order our military comrades not to interfere in the events taking place, since the Democratic forces themselves can provide order in the city.<sup>26</sup>

The escape of Governor Bayat from Tabriz after the creation of the National Government of Azerbaijan, was understandable. The stay of the Saham-as-Sultan (i.e., Bayat) was "... incompatible with the existence of a National Assembly, National Government and national autonomy... That's why, upon the decision of our government, we sent an official delegation to Mr. Bayat and asked him to leave Azerbaijan. Having had no authority and support, and considering that protests under such conditions would be useless, he accepted our suggestion"

On December 13, Bayat, who stayed in Azerbaijan for only 16 days, with six journalists from Teheran, left Tabriz.<sup>27</sup> The Secretary of the Soviet Consulate and Pischevari, accompanied him to the airport. Pischevari later wrote:

To prove our good intentions, we accompanied him to the airport. - At the airport, I personally declared to him that we were ready to sit for discussions with Teheran at any time, but with the condition that they accept our demands. I then explained to him the harm of a possible attempt of the State (Iran) to take control of Azerbaijan by force.<sup>28</sup>

After Bayat left, the leaders of the National Government came to the headquarters of the governor and started their work. During the night of December 12, the car of the British Consul, Wall, was stopped by Partisans on the Maraghe highway near Tabriz. Probably, under the pretext of going to Maraghe, Wall wanted to learn about the situation in Azerbaijan, especially around Tabriz. Despite the insistence of Partisans, he refused to return to the city and wanted to meet with the leader of the Partisans. While being accompanied to the leader, Wall, with the assistance of his interpreter, asked many questions about where they got arms, what was their number, and so on. He said, "Teheran will not give autonomy to Azerbaijan. You have no money. You cannot live separately."<sup>29</sup> The leader of the Partisans released Wall, and in the same night he continued his way to Kurdistan.

. The surrender and disarmament of the Gendarme was completed during the night, between December 12 and 13. After the evening meeting of the Assembly, negotiations started between the leaders of the National Government and the commander of the Tabriz military regiment, General Darakhshani. During negotiations, Darakhshani recognized the rule of the Azerbaijani government and ordered his army not to fire on the Partisans, even if they entered the troops' site and barracks. He asked for time, until 9 o'clock the following day, to solve this problem completely. However, he didn't come to the government building on time. At 12 o'clock, December 13, Pischevari invited Darakhshani to his office and declared that the regiment together with arms, should be transferred to the National Government.

The General required half an hour to think. Pischevari didn't reject his request. After expiration of that time, he called Pischevari by phone and said that he wanted to think until the next day. This, Pischevari firmly rejected.

After talks, Darakhshani sent a letter to the commander of Soviet troops in Tabriz, General Glinski, in which he wrote that the city was besieged by armed people and that if their regiment was attacked, they would defend themselves. At the evening meeting of the National Assembly, Pischevari informed the MPs that the behavior of General Darakhshani might lead to bloodshed. A paper about Darakhshani's behavior was prepared, copied, and then distributed to the people. The MPs swore that they would remain loyal to the Iranian government, and to the autonomy of Azerbaijan. The leaders of the Fourth Soviet Army were asked to provide four instructors and translators for assisting Partisan groups in completing the disarmament of the regiment successfully. However, the Commander of the Army of the Baku Military Zone, General Maslennikov, forbade it. In his official order, the following was written:

No instructors shall be provided. Glinski shall not interfere in these events and shall engage in the training of the army, as I ordered.

Atakishiyev has all necessary means and people. Don't give him any soldier or officer without my permission.<sup>30</sup> Deputy Commissar of State Security of Azerbaijan SSR, General Atakishiyev, was ordered not to conduct any military operation against, the Tabriz regiment and to isolate it so that the food and water supply would be cut off. Consultants thought that in this case, the soldiers themselves would give up their arms and surrender. Moreover, the government proposed using all well-known persons and

peaceful means for the disarmament of the regiment. Meanwhile, Darakhshani could explain the situation to Teheran. He sent a telegram to Teheran, to Prime Minister Hakimi, in which he wrote that if they didn't surrender before 9 o'clock on December 13, the Democrats would attack their camp with the assistance of Soviet forces. Hakimi ordered Minister of Defense Riazi to prepare instructions about the surrender of that regiment, together with General Arfa.

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After long discussions, the Prime Minister himself prepared the "shameful" order and sent it directly to Darakhshani. But he was too late. Two hours before he sent the order, Darakhshani had already surrendered.<sup>31</sup> At 8 p.m. on December 13, General Darkhshani phoned Pischevari and asked to meet him. Pischevari spoke with him in his office, with the participation of Shabustari, Javid and Biriya. During the meeting, he agreed to surrender the regiment to the National Government; however, he refused to give such an order to the military brigades in Rezayeh and Ardabil. He said that those brigades were supervised directly by Teheran. He also requested them to guarantee the security of the officers who wanted to go to Teheran and he obtained such a guarantee.

Pischevari and Darakhshani signed a document about the subordination of the Iranian military forces in Tabriz to the National Government, as well as the transfer of arms. The document stated that the Tabriz regiment is entirely subordinate to the National Government of Azerbaijan; the arms are immediately transferred to the stocks under the control of the Partisans; the soldiers may not leave the military site without the permission of the National Government; officers serving in Tabriz are permitted to go to Teheran and those who want to stay in Azerbaijan and continue their military service can do so only after swearing an official oath of loyalty.<sup>32</sup> The members of the new government, Ilhami and Javid, were instructed to go and talk with the officers and transfer arms. After having signed the document, Darakhshani said that he did not want to go to the regiment any more and asked Pischevari whether he could stay in the government building over night. Darakhshani was allowed to stay in the house of Shabustari. Baghirov ordered:

Without disarming all Iranian arms in Azerbaijan, especially the brigades in Rezayeh and Ardabil, the soldiers of the Tabriz regiment should not be given arms. In order to overcome food and material difficulties, the soldiers and officers who want to go home should be allowed to do so. If General Darakhshani behaves well and if he is really afraid of repression by the Iranian government, he should be helped and protected.<sup>33</sup>

The morning of December 14, the groups of Partisans stationed around Tabriz entered the city as organized troops. Pischevari announced that all offices and institutions were completely in the hands of the National Government. He said, "In connection with the Muharrem anniversary, the National Assembly is stopping its work for a week."

So, with the military, political, diplomatic custody and participation of the Soviet Union, the first period of the national independence movement in South Azerbaijan, i.e., the process of takeover of rule, ended.<sup>34</sup> According to Pischevari, as a result of rapid development of events, "The period of two governments in Azerbaijan ended and, with the takeover of rule by the National government, a new period began, not only in Azerbaijan, but, perhaps, in Iran as well/<sup>5</sup>

*NOTES*

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## *X ü l a s ə*

### **GÜNEY AZƏRBAYCAN - 1945: TARİXİN DÖNÜŞ MƏQAMI - 21 AZƏR**

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Sona çatmaqda olan XX yüzillik böyük siyasi təlatümləri və dəyişiklikləri ilə tarixə qovuşur. Yüz il ərzində dünyanın siyasi xəritəsində ciddi dəyişikliklər baş vermiş, imperiyalar dağılmış, yeni milli dövlətlər yaranmış, müstəqillik ideyası tarixi gerçəkliyə çevrilmiş, parçalanmış xalqlar birləşmişdir. Bu tarixi prosesin gedişində müstəqil Azərbaycan Respublikasının yaranması Azərbaycan xalqının tarixi nəaliyyətidir. Lakin bu günkü müstəqil dövlət Azərbaycan xalqının və tarixi ərazilərinin yalnız bir hissəsini əhatə edir. Azərbaycan millətinin daha böyük və ərazilərinin daha çox hissəsi Güney Azərbaycanda yerləşir. XX əsr ərzində üç böyük inqilabın təşəbbüsçüsü və iştirakçısı olan Güney Azərbaycan əhalisi çağdaş dünyada çoxdan qərarlaşmış ən elementar mədəni haqlara belə sahib olmayıb, dil, məktəb, mətbuat haqlarını ala bilməyiblər.

Azərbaycanın XX əsr tarixi azadlıq, demokratiya və milli haqlar uğrunda mübarizə tarixidir. Səttərxanın başçılıq etdiyi Məşrutə hərəkatı, Şeyx Məhəmməd Xiyabaninin demokratiya davası təkcə Azərbaycanda və İranda deyil, Bütün Yaxın və Orta Şərqdə ictimai hərəkata çox böyük təkan verdi.

İkinci dünya müharibəsindən sonra genişlənən yeniləşmə hərəkatı Güney Azərbaycandan da yan keçmədi. Hələ müharibənin gedişində İranın müttəfiqlər tərəfindən işğal edilməsi Rza şah istibdadının böhranını doğurdu. Siyasi məhbuslar azad edildi, ölkənin həyatında partiyaların və mətbuatın rolu yüksəldi. Müharibənin ilk illərində Sovetlər tərəfindən Güney Azərbaycanın işğalı, ölkənin qərbində olduğu kimi, cənubunda da SSRİ sərhədlərinin genişləndirilməsi istisnaqlıq təşkil etmirdi. 1941-ci ilin noyabrında bu prosesin başa çatması gözlənilirdi. Lakin Sovet-Alman cəbhəsində vəziyyətin gərgin xarakter alması SSRİ-ni öz planlarından yayındırdı. 1942-ci ilin yanvar ayının 29-da İranın ərazi bütövlüyü haqqında Üçtərəfli Bəyannamənin imzalanması Azərbaycan məsələsini xeyli çətinləşdirdi. Sovetlər Birliyi bir də bu məsələyə böyük müharibədə əsaslı dönüş başa çatdıqdan sonra qayıtdı.

Müharibə illərində Pəhləvi rejiminin zəifləməsi Azərbaycanda azadlıq müharibəsinin genişlənməsi üçün əlverişli şərait yaratmışdı. Xarici amilin mühüm təsiriylə yanaşı Güney Azərbaycandakı milli hərəkat əsasən onun öz içindən qaynaqlanıb, Xiyabani hərəkatının, hətta Səttərxan hərə-

katının iştirakçıları hələ həyatda idi. 20-ci illərdən başlayaraq Azərbaycana həqarətli münasibət, qədim sənət və mədəniyyət mərkəzi olan Təbrizin və digər şəhərlərin tədricən baxımsız vəziyyətə düşməsi, ölkədə despotik re-jimin farsçılıq ideologiyasına söykənməsi Güney əhalisinin heysiyyətinə toxunurdu. Dilin, mədəniyyətin və ictimai fikrin farslaşdırılması, Azərbaycan millətinin mövcudluğunu danan çeşidli nəzəriyyələrin "əsaslandırılma-sı" milli özünü müdafiə fikrini fənnalaşdırırdı. Dünya müharibəsindən az əvvəl Sovet Azərbaycanından Güneyə sürgün edilmiş on minlərlə əhalinin özü ilə yeni ictimai baxışlar, az-çox dərk edilmiş milli hisslər və qabaqcıl görüntü gətirdiyini də istisna etmək olmaz. Sovet ordusunun tərkibində Təbrizə və digər şəhərlərə göndərilmiş Azərbaycan Sovet ziyalıları, mətbuat işçiləri Güney Azərbaycan əhalisinin milli özünü dərk prosesinin inkişafında əhəmiyyətli rol oynadılar. İkinci dünya müharibəsi illərində Güney Azərbaycanda ictimai fikrə əsaslı şəkildə təsir göstərə bilən yeni ziyalılar nəslə fənnalaşdı. Sonrakı mərhələdə bu nəsil milli hərəkata güclü təkan verdi.

Güney Azərbaycan əhalisi 1945-ci ilin payızından başlayaraq böyük bir milli mübarizə yolu keçdi. Sentyabrın 3-də Azərbaycan Demokrat partiyasının təşəbbüs qrupunun xalqa müraciəti elan edildi, iki gün sonra isə "Azərbaycan" qəzeti nəşrə başladı. İran Xalq partiyasından ayrılma prosesinin dərinləşməsi, 1945-ci ilin oktyabrında milli zəmin üzərində qurulan Demokrat firqəsinin formalaşması ilə nəticələndi. Noyabr ayının 20-21-də keçirilən Azərbaycan Xalq Konqresi muxtariyyət hərəkatına əməli xarakter verdi və bundan iki həftə sonra Azərbaycan Milli Məclisinə seçkilər başa çatdı. 1945-ci ilin dekabr ayının 12-də (Azərbaycanın 21-də) Təbrizdə Milli Məclisin açılması və S.C.Pişəvəri başda olmaqla Milli



hökumətin yaradılması Azərbaycan xalqının həyatında mühüm hadisə oldu. Bütövlükdə bu hadisələr tarixə 21 Azər hərəkatı kimi daxil oldu.

21 Azər hərəkatı Güney Azərbaycanı XX əsrdə üçüncü dəfə tarix səhnəsinə çıxardı. Səttərxan və Xiyabani hərəkatıyla müqayisədə 21 Azər hərəkatı məqsəd və məramı bəlli olan mütəşəkkil Azərbaycan hərəkatı idi. Bir sıra məhdud cəhətlərinə baxmayaraq bu bütövlükdə milli hərəkat xarakterini daşıyırdı. Təbrizdə qurulan Milli hökumət bir il ərzində Azərbaycan xalqına çox şey verdi. İlk növbədə Güney əhalisinin düşüncəsində vətən hissini və milli baxışlar sistemini formalaşdırdı. Azərbaycan Milli hökumətinin həyata keçirdiyi tədbirlər kompleksi, siyasi həyatdakı dəyişikliklər, iqtisadi reformalar, sözün əsl mənasında böyük mədəniyyət tədbirləri Güney Azərbaycan əhalisini çağdaş inkişaf səhnəsinə çıxardı. Həyatın bütün sahələrində tətbiq edilən ana dili, bu dil üzərində qurulan geniş maarif və mədəniyyət sistemi ictimai şüurun formalaşmasına güclü təsir göstərdi.