

SECURITY
COUNCILCONSEIL
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ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

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SECURITY COUNCILLETTER FROM THE CHIEF OF THE DELEGATION OF IRAN
TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Sir,

The Iranian Delegation to the General Assembly of the United Nations have taken note of the letter of 24 January 1946, addressed by the Delegation of the Soviet Union to the Security Council and desire to bring to the attention of the Security Council the following facts:-

(1) The continued interference of Soviet military and civil authorities in the internal affairs of Iran can be fully proved. The statement of the facts showing this interference and containing the necessary proofs will be submitted to the Security Council. The Iranian Government has in fact brought many instances of such interference to the notice of the Soviet Government in a number of Notes which the Soviet Government have either completely ignored or failed to deal adequately with the complaint.

(2) While it is true that the Soviet Government in its Note of 26 November 1945, contrary to the true facts, categorically denied the allegations of interference contained in the Note of the Iranian Government of 17 November, yet it remains the fact that in their Note of 26 November 1945, the Soviet Government admitted that they had not been willing to allow the passage of Iranian reinforcements to suppress the revolt in Azerbaijan on the clearly unjustifiable grounds that, according to the Soviet Government, the arrival of Iranian troops in part of their own territory would cause disturbance and bloodshed and that in the

event of the outbreak of disturbances the Soviet Government would, to maintain security in the areas stationed by her armed forces, be constrained to complement her armed forces. Later, however, in the Soviet Government Note to the United States Government dated 29 November 1945, they tried to find a new excuse for their action alleging that it was "a matter of aspirations with respect to the assurances of the democratic rights of Azerbaidjani population of northern Iran which is seeking national autonomy within the limits of the Iranian State", which point is now reiterated in paragraph 3 of the letter of the Delegation of the Soviet Union to the Security Council.

The above reasons given by the Soviet Union are so utterly without foundation that the Iranian Delegation do not feel called upon to advance refutation. It is perhaps useful to remind the Soviet Delegation of the substance of a well known speech delivered by M. Litvinoff, on behalf of the Soviet Government, at the General Commission of the Disarmament Conference at Geneva on 6 February 1933, in which in a remarkably clear and precise manner he gave a definition of an aggressor nation. M. Litvinoff said:-

"No considerations whatsoever of a political, strategical or economic nature, including the desire to exploit natural riches or to obtain any sort of advantages or privileges on the territory of another state, no references to considerable capital investments or other special interests in a given state, or the alleged absence of certain attributes of State organisation in the case of a given country, shall be accepted as justification of aggression.

Nor do the following situations allow any nation to become an aggressor:-

The internal situation in a given State, as for instance, Political, economic or cultural backwardness of a given country.

Alleged mal-administration.

A revolutionary or counter-revolutionary movement, civil war, or disorders or strikes.

The establishment or maintenance in any State of any political, economic or social order.

The refusal by the Soviet Government to allow the passage of Iranian security forces to go through part of Iranian territory

is clearly a breach of the Tripartite Treaty of Alliance of 1942 and the Declaration of Teheran, by which the Allied Powers undertook to respect the territorial integrity, the sovereignty, and political independence of Iran. It is expressly stated in the Tripartite Treaty that "the presence of Allied forces on Iranian territory does not constitute a military occupation and should disturb as little as possible the administration of the security forces of Iran, the economic life of the country, the normal movements of the population and the application of Iranian laws and regulations."

(3) It is to be noted that both the United States Government and the British Government made representations to the Soviet Government in a Note of 24 November 1945 and a letter of 27 November respectively in which both these Powers stated that Iran had full freedom without interference from the Allied civil or military authorities to move its forces through Iran whenever necessary to maintain order in their own territory. The United States Government expressed the confidence that instructions to this effect would be issued by the Soviet Government to the Soviet Commander in Iran whilst the British Government stated that they were disturbed that Iranian forces had been stopped by the Soviet authorities and felt that the action of the Soviet military authorities in halting such forces on their way to Azerbaijan must be due to some misunderstanding of the position.

(4) The Iranian Note of 1 December 1945, to which the Soviet Delegation refers, was in answer to the Soviet Note of 26 November 1945, which Note was in turn a reply to several written representations by the Iranian Government that Iranian troops destined for Azerbaijan had been prevented from proceeding by Soviet military authorities. The Iranian Note of 1 December is not correctly quoted or translated from the Persian in the letter

of the Soviet Delegation. The sense has been so altered that it is exactly the opposite of what was said in the Note. It is not true that the Iranian Government as alleged in paragraph 1 of the Soviet letter to the Security Council, expressed its satisfaction in connection with the "fact that the interference of the Soviet officials is not in accordance with the facts." The Iranian Government intimated that it understood from the Soviet Note of 26 November that such incidents would not be repeated, and it was on this understanding that the Iranian Government expressed their satisfaction. The actual text of this passage is as follows:-

"In answer to the communication in which you reply that the charges made concerning the interference of Soviet officials in our internal affairs, in the northern provinces, are unfounded, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs does not wish at this time to give further explanations in this matter and to throw more light on the antecedents of the case. It takes note with satisfaction of the purport of your statements to the effect that henceforth such incidents will not repeat themselves."

Thus the text shows that the Government of Iran was expressing its satisfaction not with the fact that no interference on the part of the Soviet authorities had occurred but that in future they would not repeat such interference.

Again, the passage from the Iranian Note of 1 December 1945, quoted in the penultimate sentence of paragraph 1 of the letter of the Soviet Delegation is not correctly set out. The Iranian Government in that passage expressed its satisfaction at the assurance that the Soviet officials respected the Tripartite Treaty and the Teheran Declaration but the Note did not express any agreement with the statement that the Soviet officials had in fact respected these obligations. The text is as follows:-

"Your assurance that the officials of the Soviet Union fully respect the provisions of the Tripartite Treaty and of the Declaration signed in Teheran by the three great Powers who are the Allies of Iran, is also a source of gratification."

The Iranian Government in its anxiety to avoid any dispute with the Soviet Government were willing if these incidents did not occur again to avoid any discussion as to the matter, but nowhere in the Iranian Note of 1 December is there any agreement on the part of the Iranian Government that the interferences by the Soviet Government in the internal affairs of Iran had not taken place. In fact in two passages besides the one referred to above the Iranian Government stated that they hoped that such actions on the part of the Soviet Military authorities in the Northern Provinces would no longer take place; that the interferences on the part of the Soviet Government in the affairs of the Northern Provinces would cease and that the security forces of Iran would not be stopped from moving freely. These were all expressions of hope that in future what had taken place in the past, namely the unwarranted actions of the Soviet Government would no longer occur. A translation of the whole Iranian Note of 1 December is attached hereto to show that the Soviet Delegation did not correctly quote its terms or draw the correct conclusions from its language.

(5) As regards the statement in paragraph 2 of the letter from the Soviet Delegation, that the Iranian Government negotiated this question with the Soviet Government, the Iranian Delegation repeats that the attempts on the part of the Iranian Government to negotiate with the Soviet Government were unsuccessful. The Iranian Government in a Note of 17 November 1945, informed the Soviet Government that they were sending troops to Azerbaijan to restore law and order. In notes dated 22 and 23 November 1945, the Iranian Government notified the Soviet Government that the troops destined for Azerbaijan had been halted by Soviet authorities and requested that these troops should be allowed passage immediately.

The Iranian Government in the middle of December 1945, went so far as to offer that the Prime Minister of Iran should go with the

Minister for Foreign Affairs to Moscow to discuss these matters, but the offer was ignored by the Soviet Government.

As stated above, the Soviet Note of 26 November admitted that passage had been refused because the Soviet Government did not consider the presence of Iranian reinforcements advisable. In the Iranian Note of 1 December referred to above the request was repeated that all obstacles be removed in the way of detachments of Iranian troops which had been halted since 20 November by the Soviet forces. Such request has never been granted. Finally on 15 December 1945, the Iranian Government in a Note addressed to the three Powers asked that foreign military forces should abstain from impeding the free movement of Iranian forces.

As the Iranian Government clearly has the right, both under international law and under the Tripartite Treaty of Alliance and under the Declaration of Teheran to send these forces to Azerbaijan, there can be no question of any negotiations with the Soviet Government other than the agreement by the Soviet Government to the request of the Iranian Government that the forces should be allowed to proceed. The Iranian Note of 1 December repeated the request already urgently expressed to allow uninterrupted passage to these troops; it cannot therefore be maintained in view of the categorical refusal contained in the Soviet Note of 26 November that the question was negotiated as intimated in the letter of the Soviet Delegation.

The Iranian Government has not tried to use the presence of foreign troops in order to represent this fact as a breach of Iranian sovereignty but has maintained that their continued presence without a *raison d'être* together with the conduct of those troops in indulging in unwarranted interference in the internal affairs of Iran in definite breach of the Soviet Government's treaty undertakings, is a direct cause of the

instability of the Iranian Government to restore law and order in Azerbaijan. The Iranian Government in its letter to the Security Council has not raised the question of the withdrawal of the Soviet forces. The Delegation feels however, that it should be stated that the Iranian Government in their Note to the Soviet Government holds the view which was expressed by the United States Government in their Note to the Soviet Government of 24 November that the *raison d'être* for the presence of foreign troops in Iran has disappeared and that it is desirable that all foreign troops should leave Iranian territory immediately, thus following the example set by the United States Government as regards their forces. The Treaty provides that foreign troops may remain until six months after the end of the war but does not require that they shall do so. The Treaty of 1921 to which the Soviet Delegation has alluded is not relevant to the presence of Soviet troops in Iran. The provision of the Treaty as to the entry of Soviet troops on Iranian territory is not only contrary to the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, but apart from that is only meant to apply to the case where Iran is occupied by a hostile power and by reason of this fact Iranian territory becomes a base of aggression against the U.S.S.R., and in that event only if the Iranian Government could not eliminate this danger by its own action, is Russian intervention allowed. There can be no question of the Treaty being invoked in the present instance since no hostile third parties exist and the Iranian Government is able to deal effectively with any situation that has arisen if it is allowed by the Soviet authorities to send its troops and officials to the disaffected areas. Further, the Treaty has no bearing on the Soviet troops stationed at present on Iranian territory since the Treaty of Alliance of 1942 expressly provides for their withdrawal without any reference being possible to the Treaty of 1921.

However, the withdrawal of the Soviet troops is not the question before the Security Council. The present dispute with the Soviet Government arises out of the fact that the Iranian authorities have not been allowed by the Soviet authorities to carry out their duties of administering law and order in the areas in which Soviet troops are stationed. The Iranian Government requests that these troops and officials should be given free passage and that Soviet authorities should be instructed to place no obstacles in their way.

(7) The Iranian Delegation denies that there is any propaganda hostile to the Soviet Union of Iran or that it has been encouraged by the Iranian Government. Even in spite of the violent propaganda on the part of the Moscow press and radio against the Iranian Government there have been no similar polemics on the part of the Iranian press. It is true that the Soviet authorities in Iran have sometimes disingenuously characterised opposition to the interferences of the Soviet authorities in Iranian internal affairs as anti-Soviet activity. Attack is the best form of defence! In order, however, that there should be no possible grounds of disagreement on this score between the Iranian and Soviet Governments the Iranian Delegation invited the Soviet Government to furnish all details of such propaganda, which details have not so far been given, in order that full enquiry may be made as to any unjustified propaganda activities or abuse of the right of free speech.

(8) In the circumstances the Iranian Delegation maintain that the conditions envisaged by Article 2) of the Charter are present and that the Security Council should, in accordance with the terms of the Charter, investigate this dispute between the Iranian Government and the Soviet Government.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) S.H. TAQIZADEH
Head of the Iranian Delegation

The Hon. Mr. N.J.O. Mokin,

President of the Security Council, United Nations.

26 January 1946.

ENCLOSURE

Note from the Ministry
for Foreign Affairs to
the Soviet Embassy, Tehran.

No.

Date. 10 Azar, 1324.
(1 December 1945.)

"In answer to the communication in which you reply that the charges made concerning the interference of Soviet officials in our internal affairs, in the Northern Provinces, are unfounded, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs does not wish at this time to give further explanations in this matter and to throw more light on the antecedents of the case. It takes note with satisfaction of the purport of your statements to the effect that henceforth such incidents will not repeat themselves.

Your assurance that the officials of the Soviet Union fully respect the provisions of the Tripartite Treaty and the Declaration signed in Tehran by the three great Powers (and who are the allies of Iran), is also a source of gratification.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs hopes that, with the assistance of the Soviet Embassy, and with the immediate and complete evacuation of Iranian territory by the Red Army - and we expect the same of the two other friendly and allied governments - such actions on the part of the Soviet military authorities in the Northern Provinces will no longer take place. In this way the friendship between Iran and the Soviet Union will be increased.

As regards your statement that the Soviet Union cannot be held responsible for the grave consequences of the absence of Iranian officials in the Northern Provinces, we are compelled

to point out that the presence of officials in those regions can only be useful and effective if Persian security forces are placed at their disposal and if it is possible to move those forces from localities where they are not required to places where their assistance is needed. When the hands of Government officials are tied whereas irresponsible turbulent elements move about freely, and when the security forces of Iran are deprived of liberty of action and communication with the Central Government, it is not to be wondered at that the situation becomes troubled and that Government officials share the lot of the inhabitants of the Northern Provinces and are exposed to the danger of being assaulted, wounded and murdered. Such unfortunate incidents have in fact frequently taken place.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is hopeful that, in accordance with the assurance given by the Soviet Embassy, the interference in the affairs of the Northern Provinces will cease and that the security forces of Iran will be able to move about freely; only in this way can order and tranquillity be restored in those regions.

At the same time the Ministry wishes to inform the Embassy that the strengthening and reinforcement of the security forces of the country in the provinces cannot, as would seem to be the contention of the Soviet Embassy, give rise to anxiety and should not in any way afford an excuse for bringing fresh troops from the Soviet Union to Iran. Indeed, the Iranian Government's request and expectations are that the detachments of the Red Army still remaining in Iran as well as those of other allied countries shall evacuate our territory with the least possible delay and return to their respective countries so as to enable the Imperial Government of Iran to provide for the well-being and

tranquillity of all its people.

The object of the security or military forces of Persia has not been and is not to quarrel or to resort to strife with the local inhabitants, but rather to prevent incitement to disturbances and indiscriminate shooting and abuses. The purpose of these forces is to exercise vigilance in maintaining law and order.

In this way, it will soon be possible to bring about the appeasement of the Northern regions of Iran and officials of the Government will be able to attend to and investigate the legitimate requests or grievances of any individual in conformity with the Constitution and other laws of the land.

In view of what has been said, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in conclusion, requests the Soviet Embassy to be good enough to inform it of the urgent steps which the Embassy will be taking to ensure freedom of movement for the military and civil authorities in the northern provinces as well as the unhindered transportation from one locality to another of the security and military forces of Iran in general. It is requested, in particular, that all obstacles be removed in the way of the detachment which has been waiting at Charifabad with orders to proceed to the Northern Provinces.

Mr. Bayat, Governor General of Azerbaijan, was greeted by great ovation on his arrival in Tabriz (main city of the north-western province of Iran) on the 4th of Azar (25th November). He has taken charge of affairs in that region.

