



ĀZĀD, 'ABD-AL-QADIR

ĀZĀD, 'ABD-AL-QADIR (b. 1272 Š./1893, d. 1352 Š./1973), journalist, politician, Majles deputy, member of opposition groups (FIGURE 1). The son of a farmer in Sabzevār in the province of Khorasan, 'Abd-al-Qadir received his elementary education and then studied Persian literature, Islamic law and mathematics in his hometown. He was first employed at the Post and Telegraph Department and was assigned to Torbat-e Ḥaydariya (Šaji'i, p. 294). Later, he was transferred to the Justice Department, where for a while he held a juridical position. In 1302 Š./ 1923, he left that position to publish a newspaper, which he named *Āzād* (liberal, free), in Mašhad, the capital of his home province. In the editorials of this newspaper he attacked the government, and criticized the authorities severely. His paper was eventually banned by the newly-formed government of Reżā Shah Pahlavi, and 'Abd-al-Qadir, who had by now assumed the name "Āzād" after his newspaper, was himself imprisoned.

Upon the departure of Reżā Shah from the country in Šahrivar 1320 Š./September 1941, when all political prisoners were freed Āzād was among them (Hašemi, pp. 143-44). He once again obtained the necessary license to publish the newspaper *Āzād*, which appeared three times a week and was as sharply critical of the government as before (Abū-Torābiān, p. 25). In 1325 Š./1946, when prime minister Aḥmad Qavām formed a new political party, named Ḥezb-e Demowkrāt-e Irān, Āzād became a member and was elected as a deputy of the parliament from his hometown of Sabzevār (Šifta, p. 10). In the Majles, he was first of all a member of a democratic group which supported



the prime minister, but later swayed toward the opposition, who were registering charges of breaking the law against the premier, Qavām. Āzād also opposed the succeeding cabinet of Ebrāhim Ḥakimi and interpellated his successor 'Abd-al-Ḥosayn Hażir on the charges of the unlawful banning of newspapers and the suppression of freedom. Āzād also maintained his opposition against Prime Minister Moḥammad Sā'ed as well.

In 1328 Š./1949, when a number of opposition deputies, led by Dr Moḥammad Moşaddeq, took refuge at the Royal Court and charged the government with interference in the parliamentary elections of that year, Āzād was among them. This protest was a prelude to the formation of the National Front, led by Dr Moşaddeq, of which Āzād was an active founding member. In that year, Hażir, then minister of the royal court, was assassinated, and a number of people including Āzād were arrested and imprisoned (Aḳgar, p. 204). He was later released and, once again, was elected as a deputy from Sabzevār (Şiftā, p. 294). In this sixteenth session of the Majles, when Moşaddeq continued to lead the minority, the opposition to Prime Minister Razm-Ārā was severe, and Āzād was one of those who interpellated him.

In mid 1330 Š./1951 Dr Moşaddeq was named prime minister; he chose his cabinet members without consulting National Front deputies. By this time Āzād had formed a party of his own friends, named *Esteqlāl* (independence), and expected the prime minister to pick two cabinet members from this party. Moşaddeq, however, would not agree with him. Āzād left the National Front in protest and joined the opposition. One day he even fought with Moşaddeq's communications minister in the Majles.

Āzād was not elected to the seventeenth session of Majles, but used his newspaper to continue his fight against Moşaddeq's government. He also began to court Major General Zāhedi, who was secretly planning to topple Moşaddeq. When Zāhedi became prime minister in 1332 Š./1953, Āzād was given the position of chairman of the board and executive manager of Iran Carpet Company, a government-owned enterprise. He held this position for three years, during which time he was prevented from running in the elections or publishing his newspaper. This job was Āzād's last public position before his death, in 1352 Š./1973, at the age of eighty.

By his actions Āzād did not appear to be a man of principle; he was highly pretentious and self-interested, despite his inadequate provincial education; and he was regarded as an agitator in the political arena.



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