



## FALLĀḤ, REŽĀ

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**FALLĀḤ, REŽĀ** (b. 1328/1910, Kāšān; d. 1360 Š./1981, London), deputy manager of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC; Šerkat-e mellī-e naft-e Īrān), in charge of international relations and marketing, “a shrewd man of affairs, the Shah used him as a behind-the-scenes negotiator with the oil companies” (Alam, p. 37n.). Son of Sayyed Ebrāhīm Fallāḥ, a cleric and small landowner, Režā went to primary school in Kāšān; later he enrolled at Dār al-fonūn (q.v.) and completed the high school there in 1927, gaining the highest grade in Tehran in the field of sciences. In the same year he was sent on an Anglo-Persian Oil Company (q.v.) scholarship in petroleum engineering to Birmingham University, where he received his doctorate in 1932. Afterwards, he worked for a year at the British Petroleum Research Center in London and in 1934 was transferred to the Ābādān refinery as chief engineer. In 1939 the Ābādān Technical School was established with Fallāḥ as its principal (*Ta’līm o tarbiyat* 3/7-8, 1306 Š./1927, p. 371; *Keyhān-e sālāna*, 1341 Š./1962, p. 937; *Iran Who’s Who* 1976, p. 154).

After the nationalization of the oil industry in 1950 and the passage of the law requiring the replacement of foreign managers by Persian nationals, the High Council of Petroleum (Šūrāye ‘ālī-e naft), appointed Fallāḥ in December 1951 to replace the British manager (‘Aqelī, 1995, I, p. 478). Later he assumed several key positions in the oil industry, including advisor to the prime minister on petroleum affairs in 1954, member of the Persian team negotiating the new contract with the International Oil Consortium, member of the board of directors of NIOC in charge of technical and international affairs, and, finally,



deputy chairman of the board and general managing director of international affairs of NIOC in November 1974 (*Keyhān-e sālāna*, 1341 Š./1962, p. 937; *Iran Who's Who 1976*, p. 154).

From the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s, the shah divided the management of oil industry into three areas: secret oil negotiations and deals with foreign companies were relegated to FallāḤ; OPEC affairs to Jamšīd Āmūzgār, the finance minister; and administrative affairs of the company to Manūčeḥr Eqbāl (q.v.), the head of NIOC. FallāḤ, “well-known for his friendly relations with the major oil companies,” often clashed in the Persian oil negotiating team with Āmūzgār, a man of pronounced nationalistic sentiments, while the shah “was far from unhappy that these two prominent personalities failed to see eye to eye with one another” (Alam, p. 195n). During the crucial oil negotiations of late 1972 and early 1973, Asadollah Alam (Asad-Allāh ‘Alam) noted that “It’s surely rather droll that FallāḤ should be our only representative in the oil negotiations; Dr. Eqbal. . ., like our Finance Minister, has effectively been left out in the dark” (Alam, p. 251). On the occasion of the historic OPEC conference in Tehran on 22 December 1973, held in the presence of the shah and with Āmūzgār presiding, Alam reported to the Shah that neither FallāḤ nor Eqbāl had been invited. “Invite them, although Eqbāl has no say in these affairs,” was the Shah’s response (Alam, p. 347).

In late 1969, when the Shah was seeking to increase Persia’s oil revenues, FallāḤ promoted the ill-fated idea of penetrating the United States domestic oil market, which was heavily protected by import quotas (Alam, pp. 50, 55, 100, 108). In April 1970 the shah instructed FallāḤ to explore selling oil to Communist China, and in August the shah told Alam (pp. 148, 164), “I shall withhold his [FallāḤ’s] leave until he has finalized the deals with Cuba, South Africa and the Northrop company.” In May 1973 Alam (p. 294) noted that FallāḤ telephoned to report his successful negotiations with various members of the Consortium, “The agreement signed in 1954 is to be scrapped, to be replaced by a twenty-year contract for the supply of oil to the Consortium from NIOC.” In 1973 FallāḤ initiated negotiations with the Ashland Oil Company to make a joint venture with NIOC to market oil on world markets (Alam, p. 302). When the OPEC conference was convened in Tehran in December 1973, he played an important part by proposing the posted price of oil to rise to \$12.00 a barrel, \$7.00 of which would be Persian revenue (Alam, p. 348).

FallāḤ was widely respected by his colleagues and contemporaries as a



capable manager and an adroit negotiator with an analytical mind and a remarkable control of the Persian language (Farmānfarmā'īān, pp. 754-55). He emigrated to England on the eve of the 1979 Revolution and died in London in 1981.

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(BĀQER 'ĀQELĪ and EIr.)