# Introduction of Cash Crops

The agricultural sector of Iran has suffered a curse of underdevelopment, ever since the civil war that ended with the empowerment of Agha Mohammed Khan, first of the Qajar. The relative smallness of its urban centres – especially when compared to that of its neighbours – and the end of the outward conquest campaigns has left Iran’s agricultural sector in a devolution process back into the family-sized, self-sufficient style farming that is common in the rural regions. It is not all hopeless, however. Farming at scale still occurs, primarily in latifundial operations owned by the regional nobility and the crown. And this is where the Imperial Estate intends on focusing.

Prince Abdol-samad Mizra, having studied abroad in France, is privy to some of the “open secrets” of scale farming as engaged by Europeans. He has procured plant samples of coffee, tea, sugar, and other popular cash crops. The plan drawn up by the Imperial Estate is to distribute these among the provinces of Iran, giving loans to interested nobles. This will result in a large shift to scale farming of non-food products, which will have the downstream effect of pushing previously self-sufficient farmers into adopting scale farming to compensate for the lack of food produced. Should the desired effect be achieved, the Iranian agricultural sector would experience the natural transition of scale farming as felt in Europe over the last century in about 5 to 10 years.

As it stands, the current division of labour and profit is as follows:

* Imperial Agricultural and Development Company  
  Location: Gilan, Mazandaran, and Golestan  
  Primary crops: Tea, coffee, pistachio  
  Owner: Imperial Estate  
  Controller: HRH Prince Abdol-samad Mizra
* Central Iran Farming Company  
  Location: Tehran, Qazvin, Markazi, Qom  
  Primary crops: Coffee, opium, saffron  
  Owner: HRH Prince Mohammad Taqi Mizra  
  Controller: Dr Jean-Luc Mignard
* Kurd-Luri Agricultural Partnership  
  Location: Kurdistan, Kermanshah, Hamadan, Lorestan  
  Primary crops: Cotton  
  Owner: local and regional nobility  
  Controller: HRH Prince Massoud Mizra

The Imperial Estate already has the plans drawn up and the expenses calculated. The project is expected to cost £80’000 per year for 5 years, taken from the current surplus of the exchequer, and to increase agricultural output by £150’000 per year after the 5th or 6th years.

# Administrative Reform and Census

One of the many shortcomings of the Iranian state is the lack of a unified bureaucracy. While competent enough in and around Tehran, the further you move from the capital, the worse record keeping becomes. While not deadly, this disparity often leads to difficulty in managing the interior. Discrepancies in reports, under taxing, overtaxing, ghost assets, and a lot of embezzlement.

Given the recent interest in boosting the agricultural production of the provinces, the Shah has seen it fit to reform the administrative state in tandem. With assistance from the British Embassy, several trained accountants, management consultants, and legal scholars have gathered in Tehran to begin the slow modernization of Iranian bookkeeping.

The reform plan is expected to last up to 5 years, as the changes are slowly rolled out, and incur an additional £150’000 per year in expenses. To compound this increase in the ability to effectively govern, a census will be conducted as per the usual method, which will carry a onetime cost of £10’000.

# Russo-Iranian Friendship Treaty

Reflecting the diplomatic reality of friendly conduct and good rapport, the Iranian Shah and the Russian Tsar have agreed, facilitated by their ambassadors, to the following articles of this treaty:

1. Permanent Embassies  
   The establishment of standing embassy buildings, in a permanent fashion, in Tehran and Petrograd, staffed by clerks of the respective countries and interior perimeters guarded by soldiers of the respective countries, no more than 5% of total embassy staff.
2. Border Arrangements  
   The clarification of border boundaries along the mountains and rivers of the Azerbaijan Region, in a fashion of equal distribution, with a non-zero sum exchange of territory, for the purposes of establishing well defined border lines.
3. Normalization of Trade  
   The normalization of trade relations in an equal fashion, the lowering of bilateral tariffs and lifting of restrictions, the opening of investment routes for Russian citizens, and an ease of visa requirements for trade and commerce.

These points agreed, HRH Nasser al-Din Shah, and HRH Tsar Alexander Nikolaevich, and the plenipotentiary ambassadors, sign and co-sign this document to confirm its official status and signal the beginning of its enforcement.

# Industrial Investment Arrangements

Following talks between the relevant authorities of each nation, France and Iran have agreed to establishing the necessary infrastructure for future investment into the country. The following points, being the primary focus of the agreement:

1. General investments  
   To facilitate French investments into Iran, the lowering of bilateral tariffs on industrial goods, the lowering of taxes on capital gains, the lowering of restrictions on foreign investment, the facilitation of commerce and trade permits.
2. Particular investments  
   Under the rules of general investment, the particular is made with the creation of a company and the building of a factory for the production of preserved saffron and other spices, for sale in France and the rest of Europe, with the division of responsibilities and benefits as such:
   1. The Imperial Estate of Iran, for providing 50% of the upfront capital costs, and receiving 30% of future profits;
   2. The French investors, for providing 50% of the upfront capital costs, for gathering the engineering expertise, for advising and training local operatives, and receiving 70% of future profits.

These points agreed, the Imperial Estate and the French Investment Group sign and co-sign this document to confirm its official status.

# The IMIDRO

Iran is rich in minerals, this much is known, but it has never made much use of that wealth. The Imperial Estate, knowledgeable that industry is hard to come by without the pre-requisite raw materials, is establishing the **Iranian Mines & Mining Industries Development & Renovation Organization**, a new state-owned holding company with the express purpose of facilitating the effective exploitation of Iran’s mineral resources. Either through partnerships with other private interests or through subsidiaries, the IMIDRO will perform or co-invest in surveying, mining, drilling, employee training, and the implementation of modern techniques and western machinery.

The areas of priority funding, organized by the predominant mineral resource, are as follows:

* Coal
  + East & West Azerbaijan
  + Qazvin, Alborz, Tehran, Semnan
  + Razavi Khorasan
  + Kerman
* Iron
  + Hamadan, Markazi, Lorestan
  + Yazd
  + Hormozgan
* Lead & Zinc
  + Zanjan
  + Semnan
  + Isfahan
  + Kerman

# The Imperial Academy for Higher Learning

Not so long ago, Persia was a cultural capital of the Islamic World and Tehran was its centre but, after a century of stagnation and decline, this is no longer the case. That is not to say Iranians are inherently less intelligent; it is obvious to anyone that the main factor holding Persia back is the lack of learning opportunities. It is for that reason, then, that the Imperial Estate is announcing the creation of a new university in Tehran, to gather bright minds form the West, educate the new generations, and bring Iran up to par with the academic standard.

The Academy is to be built with both beauty and function in mind. Designed in a Islamic Classical revival style, the campus will be divided into three faculties: the Faculty of Letters, for literature, languages, history, and the arts; the Faculty of Sciences, for physics, mathematics, and other applied scientific fields; and the Faculty of Law and Commerce, for the magistrature and economic courses.

# Dreams of a Tehran Arsenal

Continuing the current drive for modernization, Prince Abdolsamad is embarking on his most ambitious project yet: the creation of a state arsenal. It will be a big endeavour, with big costs and even bigger risks, but the benefits of independent arms production outweigh those risks, in the mind of the young Prince.

The construction is set to begin this year, in a small plateau on the south side of Tehran. It’ll cost approximately £600’000 and take at most 2½ years to construct. Technical support is being offered by foreign advisors from Russia, with whom a licenced production agreement has been signed.

The Arsenal will be a boon to Iran, able to boost its arms independence and introduce new industrial techniques to the country. A grand opening ceremony is being planned, with many members of the Royal Family and the Russian Embassy attending.

# Of arranged marriages and suzerainty

The Afghan question has been one of the enduring issues of Qajar rule. Emir Dost Mohammad Khan Muir al-Mamalek, the warlord ruler of Afghanistan, is nominally a vassal of the Shah, but no formal recognition of this fact exists. Not surprisingly, this kind of relation carries little weight outside of Tehran or Kabul. Dysfunctional at it’s best, the balance of power will often reveal that Naser al-Din Shah has little to no authority over the Afghan region – outside of Herat, in any way. This situation greatly vexes the administrative wonks in Tehran, especially the English and French accountants and lawyers hired in 1860 to balance and update the Iranian books, who see the quasi-legal status of suzerainty not being enforced or taxes not being collected. But their worries may soon be fixed, as the First Chancelor Amir Kabir has concocted a plan to increase Qajar influence over the provinces.

The Shah has a daughter. Well, he has many, actually, but of particular interest is Princess Ismat al-Doulah. Young, unmarried, and often praised as a beauty, she’s the perfect chess piece to play in this Chancelor’s latest gambit for control of Afghanistan. Emir Dost Mohammad Khan is looking for a new primary wife to add to his harem. It needs to be a wife of noble birth, to shore up legitimacy and support, and this is where Princess Ismat will be inserted. She’ll be presented as a new prestigious wife to the Emir’s harem and, in exchange, the Qajari administration will move into Herat.

There’s a risk expected. Although Emir Dost Mohammed Khan has not legal footing to refuse our offer, warlords are not well known for following the legal procedures of civilized rule. Thus, to protect both the Princess’ entourage and secure our own control of Herat, a regiment of 2’500 soldiers of the Imperial Guards Division will move into Herat and two other regiments will be stationed in Khorasan. The message of these deployments is clear:

We’re in charge. Bend the knee.

# Studies of War and Warfare

Sun Tzu once said that weak leadership wrecks even the best strategies. Some of this has been a problem for Persia, occasionally. The Shah and his princes are competent enough – having grown up on the saddle, as their ancestors had – but for any other commanders of the Imperial armies, there’s no such standard of quality. Clueless nobles, non-inheriting fail sons, and even just the average retainer of the Imperial Court, the average skill of Iranian commanders leaves a lot to be desired.

To combat this, Amir Kabir, the First Chancelor of the State, is sounding the foreign powers for spare educated military officers to invite into Persia. Such officers would be contracted to train Iranian military leaders in the basics of Western-style warfare and, in turn, would receive luxurious lodging and a generous stipend. The Chancellery is looking primarily for what people in the Atlantic Americans are calling “mustangs”, commissioned officers who started their careers as enlisted soldiers or sergeant.

# 1863 Allocation of IMIDRO Subsidies and Investments

Following the great success of the surveying efforts of the IMIDRO, it’s time to allocate the necessary budget to begin operations. The allocations have been made taking into account the richness of the deposits in the surveyed locations, ease of access, size of local economy. The allocations, should nothing else change, are of £50’000, in 1863, and £150’000, in 1864. Priority is to be given to iron and coal mines, with lead and zinc following after.

# Commission of ships from British Shipyards

Resulting from a productive conversation between dignitaries, the Imperial Persian Navy has obtained permission to commission 10 new screw frigates from British shipyards. The ships in question are wooden hulled screw corvettes, costing £48’000 each.