

through Iran. In order to control this crucial route, later dubbed the Golden Bridge, and to drive the Germans out of Iran, the Allies invaded the country. In total contempt of Iranian neutrality, the attack began on August 25, 1941, the British entering from the south and the Red Army from the north. The Iranian Army showed little or no resistance. Iran fell under Allied occupation. German influence in Iran was being expelled.

It is a matter of fact that, despite the position of neutrality adopted by the Iranian government at the start of the war, most Iranians had a special predilection for the Germans and a pronounced dislike of the British and the Russians. They clearly showed their enthusiasm and cheered German military successes. Even semi-official circles in the leadership expressed hope that Germany would soon conquer the Caucasus and reach the oil fields of Baku. With that, they would establish their military headquarters in Yerevan. Of course, this mentality was the result of German propaganda spread by the numerous German agents and residents in Iran trying to draw the country into Germany's orbit, win over the people and use them to their own advantage. However, this mentality had little or no effect on the central government's policies and actions. Even before the occupation, the Turkish youth and intelligentsia in [Iranian] Azerbaijan were especially tense and excited. Dissatisfied and discontented with central government policies, they dreamed of severing Azerbaijan from Iran. And the Soviets had their own ulterior motive for encouraging that idea.