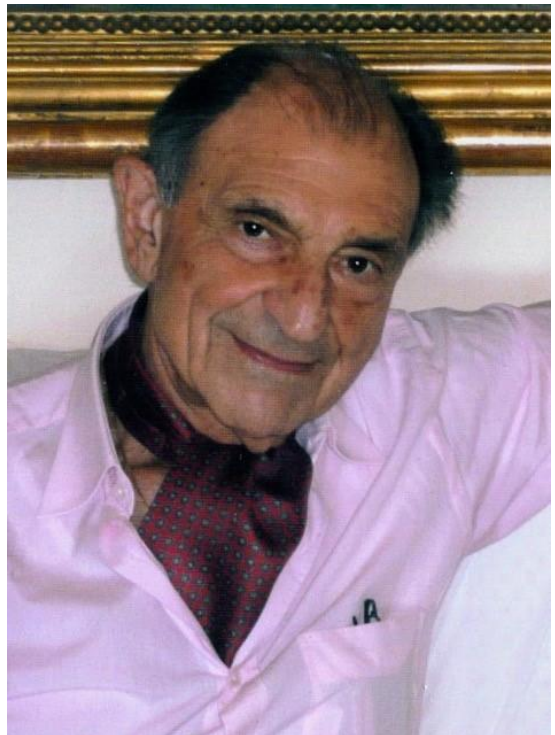


## Iran Belongs to its Youth

*" We should always give some of what we have received."*

In an interview published on the 17<sup>th</sup> of January in **BILAN** magazine, Switzerland, Ambassador Ardeshir Zahedi, former Minister of Foreign Affairs and a close confidant of the Shah expresses his opinion on the future of the country. He insists that Iran belongs to its youth and particularly women who now have begun to realise the revolution they hoped would bring freedom and democracy was stolen from them by the ruling mullahs. *"This new generation, young, educated and patriotic will be the sole architect of our future."*



Bilan is Switzerland's principal and most popular magazine basically devoted to economy and politics. It is published in French and since 1989, when the publication was first introduced, it has continued to mount in popularity and extend its audience.

The Swiss magazine, in its January issue, covers an extensive analysis of the present situation of Iran and its decisive role in the region. It explains the problems that Donald Trump is facing with the marked return of Teheran on the international scene and the rising influence of the well trained and experienced Al-Gods forces.

The writer adds that opposition of Trump to Obama over Iran is something that should not have surprised anyone. Obama wanted Iran to assume its historical role and become a strong regional power to counter-balance the growing influence of Israel and Saudi Arabia. He followed his ideological convictions and adopted a policy the

consequences of which were probably not evident. Trump wants exactly the opposite, at the risk of intensifying regional divisions, without being able to avoid the explosive situations that he inherited.

Olivier Grivat who interviewed the Ambassador and commented his views, is a well-known writer and journalist considered to be a specialist of Swiss international relations. He visited Iran and published several articles on a country that has always attracted him.

Grivat's interview with Ambassador Zahedi is published in "Geopolitics"



section of Bilan. He writes:

“Somewhere between Montreux and Chillon, Villa les Roses in Veytaux, lives the former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Shah who was also Iran’s ambassador to Washington and London. From his lake-side observatory, Ardeshir Zahedi meticulously follows the developments of the Middle East. He feels and shares the dreams of his nation for changes. “The Iranian people are proud of their traditions of thousands of years and their highly educated youth. Today, Iran has a million. We only had thirty five was in Iran in the 60’s. This is a population. 28 per cent are under and women dream of a western liberties and openness to the fifty major universities and million students with a



population of 81 million when I very young the age of 15. Men type of society, its world. Iran has more than 4.5 considerable

*number in departments of advanced technology."*

*Warm, with a welcoming smile, Ardeshir Zahedi lives in his father's house. General Zahedi was the Prime Minister of Iran from 1953 to 1955 and then the Iranian Ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva till his death in 1963. "He discovered the region while driving across Europe in a long journey of exploration. Being a military man, he was fascinated by the organisation of the Swiss army."*

*Now in his late eighties, he will be ninety this coming autumn. In his residence he is surrounded by the photos of the great leaders and personalities of the world with whom he has been associated: several Popes, Kings and Queens, heads of states, cultural figures. A friend of Henry Kissinger, he regularly visited Charlie Chaplin who lived in his neighbourhood at Corsier.*

**He was my friend, My Sovereign:**

*Once the son-in law and always a trusted friend of the Shah, Ardeshir Zahedi was by his side when the king was suffering from Cancer to the moment of his last breath, the 27<sup>th</sup>. of July 1980 in Cairo. "He was not an arrogant man, he was in fact very shy. I worked with him for many years and at times it happened that I expressed views that were different from his. Whenever he realized that someone was right, he accepted his ideas without hesitation. He had a good and solid education in Switzerland and was familiar with principles of a democratic, open society. He was Francophile in mentality with an open mind deeply attracted to the French culture. He liked Switzerland, the country that developed his personality. He was my friend, my king and my boss."*

*Ardeshir Zahedi married Princess Shahnaz Pahlavi, the elder daughter of the Shah from his first marriage with Princess Fawzieh, sister of King Farouk of Egypt. They had one daughter, Princess Mahanz. Ardeshir was twice Iranian Ambassador to Washington and worked with several US presidents from Eisenhower to Bill Clinton including President Carter whose administration abandoned the Shah and even considered the possibility of delivering the dying king to Khomeini in exchange of the release of the American hostages. He shows no affection for Giscard d'Estaing nor for the BBC whom he considers having at the time been "the two most trusted allies of Ayatollah Khomeini."*

*Ardeshir was arrested and tortured under the government of Mohammad Mossadegh, a doctor in law from the University of Neuchatel who was*

*overthrown by Zahedi's father in 1953. Ardeshir was subsequently condemned to death in absentia by the mullahs.*

*The resident of Riviera follows the shifts of the American policy and Trump's efforts to wipe out all traces of the Obama diplomacy towards the region and Saudi Arabia. The new president changes the rifle of his shoulder following the lucrative armament deals; he decides on the isolation of regime of Tehran, regarding it marked by corruption inherited from the regime of Rafsanjani. Here, Zahedi interrupts me to say: " **Talking of corruption is one thing, sanctioning it is another. One must have sufficient evidence. Today Iran's problems have economic origins. The country is rich. It has considerable reserves of natural gas, copper mines, precious stones etc. A barrel of petrol was at 1.6 dollars before 1973. Today the market price is somewhere around 63 dollars. But the country needs to sell 25.000.000 barrels a day to keep its economy going and the current export is ten times less. We should not forget the effects of nearly four decades of economic sanctions and the confiscation of billions of dollars of Iranian assets that continues without any legal basis. This money belongs to the people of Iran and a good part of it is what we had paid before the revolution to buy technical and military material, goods that the Americans never delivered.**"*

*In the name of the community and its citizens, Pierre Salvi, President of Region named Ardeshir Zahedi the honorary citizen of Switzerland and decorated him with medal of recognition for the contributions he has made to the resplendence of the Riviera region. Zahedi is regularly present at great charity manifestations and continues to help the needy with his legendary generosity." **We should always give some of what we have received,**" he concludes.*