

FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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TO : Department of State

1 Enclosure

DCR

JAN 22

FROM : AMEMBASSY, Tehran, 537, January 12, 1951

511.88/1-1250

XR 511.884

REF :

SUBJECT : NOTES ON EXPANDED PROGRAM FOR IRAN

RECEIVED ACTION INFORMATION

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The Ambassador returned to Tehran just before Christmas. He was very busy immediately following his return; however, he was good enough to arrange an appointment on December 28 at which time we had a serious talk concerning the entire USIE program. Attached herewith is a copy of the memorandum which I prepared in advance which sets out the program along very broad, general lines. Portions of it were discussed in much greater detail. scm

Providing that we can get the concurrence of the Iranian Government, the Ambassador has given his approval of the entire program with the exception of all of that portion which has to do with radio. The radio program is not disapproved, it is simply left in abeyance pending political developments within Iran. Providing the oil question is settled in the near future, the Ambassador believes that discussions can then take place regarding the relaying of the VOA and the development of other programs occupying radio time up to a period of two hours.

Following the conversations with the Ambassador, a meeting took place (Mr. Yekta, Mr. Heravi and Mr. Wells) at which time the broad, general outlines of the program were discussed with the Foreign Office. At this meeting the Iranian side expressed great interest in the program. Mr. Yekta stated that the implementation of the program under the aegis of the Iranian Government was the only possible way it could be done in order to avoid pressure on the Iranian Government from other foreign powers. A second meeting has been arranged for Monday, January 8, at which the under-secretaries of the Ministries of Education, Agriculture, Health, and Mr. Shahrokh of the Department of Press and Propaganda, will be present. The Embassy plans to have a political officer accompany Mr. Wells to this second meeting. It is not anticipated that full agreement and final approval will be reached until a third meeting. In the intervening time, the under-secretaries will have the opportunity to discuss the matter with their Minister and so be prepared to take final action.

DC/R Central Files

511.88/1-1250

CEWells/rs
Enclosure:
Memorandum, January 12, 1951

Stamp: PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND AFRICAN AFFAIRS, NEA, MESSAGE CENTER, FEB 16 1951, DEPARTMENT OF STATE, JAN 24 1951, 2/18, 3 39

JAN 15 1951

ACTION COPY — DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The action office must return this permanent record copy to DC/R files with an endorsement of action taken.

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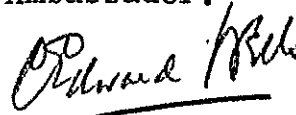
The program put forward by the Embassy on July 6, despatch no. 10, which Mr. Damon helped prepare during his stay in Tehran, is the basis of the present program, however it must be kept in mind that the situation within Iran has changed considerably since July 6. U.S. prestige has suffered a considerable set-back and, although we still enjoy excellent cooperation with Iranian Government officials, we do not have the same freedom to openly implement our plans. The Soviet can bring considerable pressure to bear on the Iranian Government and if pushed hard enough, it is within the bounds of possibility that the Iranian Government would order the complete cessation of our work here. This is not likely at the present time, but it should definitely be kept in mind.

The most practical method of implementing our program, excepting the media of press and radio, will be to develop the program as an Iranian Government venture. In other words, we would supply all the material, equipment, personnel, plan the program, collaborate with Iranian officials in the development of the program, and have the various equipment such as mobile units, posters, photo displays, etc. bear the name and insignia of the Imperial Government of Iran. If in this way we can carry on a campaign to develop better agricultural methods, improve public health, create further interest in education, we can accomplish a great deal towards promoting political and economic stability within the country. In addition, working in this manner, it will be possible to reach a larger proportion of the rural population more speedily,

The lot of the large proportion of the rural population is a miserable one and the people feel that their condition could not be any worse under any government. Therefore, they are not at all impressed or even interested in out and out anti-Soviet propaganda. However, there is a good possibility that we can gain considerable prestige and good will for the U.S.A. by approaching this problem in terms of the immediate needs of the people and even though the program would be designed to appear as an Iranian Government program, the news gets abroad that it is subsidized and more or less controlled by Americans. This fact has been demonstrated by the films program now in operation. This portion of our program has to do with the rural areas and is designed to reach a major proportion of the population. It is a long range program and no appreciable results can be anticipated in a period less than two years. It would be carefully coordinated and, in fact, at the higher level and the

operations would be an integral part of the Point IV program. As it is designed to be more direct than the program of the Point IV Commission, its impact on the population would be very much quicker. It is granted that the majority of the rural population which we will try to reach are almost inarticulate at this time. However, they do represent a strong negative force which is gradually growing towards becoming a positive force -- witness the oil question. There is no doubt at this time that the government and the Court would like to conclude the oil agreement, particularly as they are in dire need of money, but the comparatively few deputies (National Front) who were actually elected by the people have stirred up so much popular feeling against the agreement on grounds that it is inequitable that the Majlis does not dare to force the matter through. We would do well to carefully ingratiate ourselves through a program of demonstrating to the people how to improve their home conditions through our media (films, publications, posters and photo displays) and then supplement this by the factual presentation of topical news through the rural areas through the media of press, bulletins and radio. Our short range program, having as its objective the orientation of Iran towards the free nations and the development of prestige and good will for the United States, should be in the main directed to the Tehran audience (the Court, government, intellectuals, wealthy landowners, etc.) who actually control the destiny of the country. The media employed in order of importance follows: radio and press, publications, exchange of persons and library, all of which media should be employed to give the widest possible coverage to our side of world developments. If skillfully handled, anti-Communist material in fairly large doses can be administered to this audience, however, it must be strongly emphasized that this can only be done on an ideological basis and that no direct reference can be made to the Soviet Union, its satellites, or Soviet personalities.

For the Ambassador:



C. Edward Wells
Public Affairs Officer

Enc. att.
gmw

Enclosure to Despatch No. 537, January 12, 1951

M E M O R A N D U M

January 12, 1951

The scope of the USIE program was put forward by the Embassy on July 6, Despatch No. 10. This program was developed in response to a request from the Department. Mr. Damon came out from Washington to assist in the planning. The Embassy has had every indication of the Department's interest and active support. Supplies and equipment have come forward at a rapid rate and our budget for personnel and operations has been doubled and a very large increase is projected for Fiscal '51. Meanwhile, new factors, resulting in the main from the political situation within Iran, indicate the need for a reappraisal of the program and a determination of its practicability.

The Iranian Government and, to a degree, the Iranian press, have become super-sensitive to criticism, direct or implied, of any aspect of internal affairs or of Iranian personalities. In addition, because their northern boundaries adjoin those of the Soviet, they have a real fear of the consequences of any criticism of Soviet policies or personalities. As the implementation of our program entirely depends on the willing cooperation of the Iranian Government, these factors are of primary importance.

At this time the Iranian Government may be expected to cooperate fully providing we do not embarrass them in their relations with the Soviet Government by a blatantly large program or through the assignment of additional American personnel in the northern areas. An obvious way of avoiding the possibility of Soviet pressure on the Iranian Government is to have the program appear to be an Iranian venture. This will mean that the major portion of the program would have to be in the educational field, developing knowledge of better agricultural and public health methods. The Iranian Government would reap the public credit for our program while our benefit would be realized through helping to raise the standard of living and thereby a certain measure of political and economic stability would be the result. In addition, the successful penetration of the country on this level would ultimately provide a sound foundation for the dissemination of information about the U.S.A. and its policies.

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The media to be used would be mainly visual; films, film-strips, posters, photo displays and exhibits supplemented by radio, press and educational books and pamphlets.

It would be a long range program closely integrated with all the plans for economic development. In scope it would be designed for the entire rural population of Iran. The mental attitude of this large rural population complicates our task in Iran. As a whole, they have a deep and abiding hatred and distrust of the ruling class which leads them to the belief that our economic and military aid programs are designed to further strengthen the ruling class whom they regard as their oppressors. Every effort must be made to mitigate the strength of this feeling which is definitely encouraged by the Soviet.

It will be possible to not only continue but to strengthen our short range program which is designed to have an immediate influence on the thinking of the group comprising the ruling class. The media of most importance in the work are the radio and press supported by the exchange of persons, films, library and book publications. The danger of embarrassing the Iranian Government is greater in this phase of the program than in the longer range aspect. However, a great deal can be accomplished in the orientation of Iranian thought toward our policies through the factual reporting of world news. It would even be possible to attack the fallacies and shortcomings of the Soviet regime providing such attacks are carefully kept on a strictly ideological basis taking care not to identify the Soviet Government or its personalities by name.

It would seem to be inadvisable to carry out the plans for the programs in Tabriz and Meshed. These areas will be reached through those aspects of the program implemented by the Iranian Government. It is possible that sufficient pressure could be applied and so force the consent of the Iranian Government, however, such consent would be unwilling and might very well result in the ultimate curtailment of our entire countrywide program.

Plans for the establishment of a branch USIE in Isfahan are well in hand. As this city is located in the central portion of the country, it is most unlikely that there will be any objection on the part of the Iranian Government. After this venture is approved by the Embassy, it is suggested that the matter be discussed informally with the Foreign Office. Suitable premises have been located, Mrs. Bracken is available for assignment as P.A.O. and a minimum quantity of equipment and supplies are immediately available.

RADIO

A. Development of network

1. Meshed
2. Tabriz
3. 5 mobile transmitting stations

B. Maintenance of network

1. Supply of maintenance equipment
2. Network engineer
3. Maintenance engineer
4. Payment for time (2hours daily)

C. Development of audience

1. 40,000 sets
2. Programming times -- Radio officer
3. Programming VOA -- " "

Agreement with Iranian Government covering following points:

- A. All material and equipment in Iran remains property of U.S. and can be recalled on demand.
- B. Control of two hours time daily.

PRESS

1. The development of news, features and photos for the local press throughout the country. The distribution of photo mats.
2. The distribution of USIE news bulletins in Persian, Russian and English throughout the country.
3. The development of six mobile news units to operate in the provinces.

Items 1 and 2 to continue current operations on a larger scale. Item 3 to be accomplished under the sponsorship of the Iranian Government. The news to be approved by the Iranian Government then broadcast at dictation speed over the radio.

PUBLICATIONS

L. The development of publications for commercial distribution (to be sold through book dealers).

- A. 4 deluxe books, subject to be of political interest, i.e. contemporary history, political philosophy or novels. (10,000)
- B. 4 books - medium price range - subject matter as above. (10,000)
- C. 2 books - low price range - as above. (10,000)

These publications would bear a publishers name and have no obvious connection with the Embassy.

2. The development of publications for free distribution.

- A. 4 booklets of approximately 96 pages well illustrated.
- B. 4 booklets of approximately 96 pages of text only.
- C. 10 to 15 leaflets - 4 to 6 pages.

Categories A and B - editions of 25,000, subjects agricultural and public health.

Category C leaflets designed to supplement film and photo program.

3. The development of a monthly magazine in the Persian language of the type and format of an old fashioned farm journal - designed for rural consumption on a low intellectual level. Articles of agricultural, health, sanitation, vocational practices and a small amount of elementary civics and topical news subjects. To be sold for 1 to 2 rials per copy. To be produced and printed at USIE, Tehran.

DISPLAYS AND POSTERS

1. Urban displays
 - A. Schools and public buildings
 - B. Shop window displays
 - C. Exhibits in public buildings.
2. Rural displays
 - A. Schools and public buildings
 - B. Posters on village walls

This program would be sponsored by the Iranian Government and would be planned and executed by the Iranian Government in cooperation with the Embassy.

All expenses to be borne by the Embassy.

The subjects publicized would be mainly in the fields of agriculture and public health and, in addition, would picture improvements as made under the economic aid program, technical assistance, and MDAP. A minor part would consist of displays covering world news.

FILMS

1. Urban showings.
 - A. 30 projectors - 16mm - 1 projector 35mm
 - B. Further development of film library
 - C. Transportation equipment
 - D. Maintenance parts
2. Rural showings
 - A. 25 mobile units fully equipped
3. Locally produced films
4. Filmstrip program.

Agreement with Iranian Government covering following points:

- A. All material and equipment to be on loan - property of U.S.A. subject to recall on demand.
- B. Scheduling of program to be joint responsibility of Iranian Government and Embassy.
- C. All expenses; personnel, maintenance of units, etc. to be borne by Embassy.

LIBRARY

1. The further development of the Library Tehran
 - A. Technical and vocational subjects
 - B. Magazines
2. The development of a new library for Isfahan
3. The development of twenty travelling libraries that will circulate under the direction of the Iranian Ministry of Education.
4. The gift distribution of books and magazines to schools, universities and institutions such as: hospitals, beggar rehabilitation centers, orphanages, etc.
5. The gift distribution of topical magazines, Time, Life, Newsweek and Readers Digest to Iranian leaders of public opinion.