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TELEGRAPH BRANCH
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FROM: Tehran
TO: Secretary of State
NO: 2870, January 30, 4 p.m.

[Handwritten signatures and notes]
Tehran
11/31/52

1. Dept will notice from Tabriz 66 January 27, 67 January 28 Meshed 28 January 28 and Isfahan 12 January 24 that in compliance with instructions by Min Int Tehran all for info and cultural centers outside Tehran including USIE offices being ordered closed.
2. It wld appear that this measure aimed primarily against branches Brit council but it is being applied also to Sov and Amer cultural and info offices outside Tehran. Altho GOVGEN in Isfahan has personally indicated he wishes USIE continue its good work there we have no (rpt no) reason believe that an exception will be made re that office. In our opinion PRIMIN Mosadeq who is actively in charge Ministry of Int is determined at this juncture to carry out decision of govt made originally more than 2 years ago that "cultural relation societies will be established only in Tehran" and "cannot open any branches or have any activities in the provinces." It is believed he is already pledged to close offices of Brit council and it wld be polit impossible for him to do so in present atmosphere without applying law equally to Amers and Russians. He is at present under fire from both left and right opposition for not (rpt not) having closed US Consulates.
3. On number occasions in past Russians have been ordered to close their VOKS office in Tabriz. They have either ignored these orders or have closed temporarily reopening again after period of rest. Irans apparently hesitate to take firm measures against Russians altho at one time they went so far as to cut off electricity from Voks office in Tabriz. Brit council offices will undoubtedly close and Voks may shut down temporarily. Question arises as to what we shld do. Our recommendations are as fols"
 - (A) We shall informally inquire thru Mins who most value USIE activities, that is, Mins of Educ, Health and Agric, whether in their opinion govt is really serious in its demand that USIE provincial offices shld be closed and also whether it wld serve any useful purpose to take matter up with Mosadeq.
 - (B) If in opinion these Mins some useful purpose might be served in discussing matter with PRIMIN we shall go direct to

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-2- #2870, January 30, 4 p.m. from Tehran.

him.

(C) In case in opinion of these Mins it wld be preferable to close these offices at least temporarily. We shall do so quietly with minimum amt publicity. There will of course be some publicity but we can point out these offices were established with cooperation Iran authorities and in view present policies Iran Govt it was decided it wld be preferable to suspend our activities at least for time being.

4. If I thought it wld serve any useful purpose I wld have no (rpt no) objection going at once to PRIMIN with regard this matter. If we find out however from exploratory convs with mins friendly to USIE that PRIMIN's mind is fixed it wld seem useless approach him at present. Furthermore, I do not (rpt not) like putting ourselves in position of arguing case for Russia and Brit. In case PRIMIN seems determined it seems to be it wld be preferable for us quietly to suspend operations with hope that after elections have been concluded and present state natl hysteria somewhat subsided we may be able quietly and unostentatiously to resume operations.

5. We shall take no (rpt no) further steps at this time re opening USIE office in Shiraz or elsewhere. It is our intention in case we do suspend activities in 3 cities mentioned above to transfer as much as possible of info activities to friendly Iran Govt institutions. Some of this work, of course, can be handled from Tehran. Therefore, the USIE office here shld have added to its staff Amer USIE personnel at present in provinces.

Dept will be kept informed re developments.

HENDERSON

AB:RVW

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