

INCOMING TELEGRAM

Department of State

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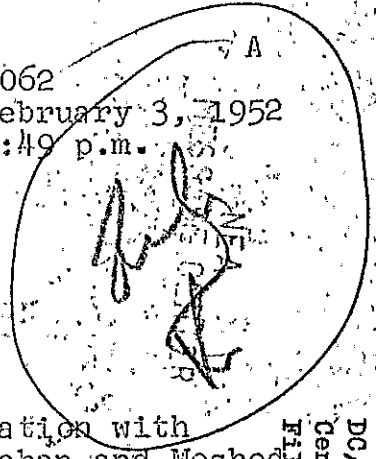
TELEGRAPH BRANCH

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Control: 1062  
Rec'd: February 3, 1952  
4:49 p.m.

FROM: Tehran  
  
TO: Secretary of State  
  
NO: 2923, February 3, 7 p.m.



NIACT.

1. Shortly after noon today during conversation with Kazemi, MFA, I told him govs in Tabriz, Isfahan and Meshed had indicated to our Consuls those cities that in pursuance of circular instructions recd from the Min Int to all for cultural institutions in provs such as Voks, Brit Cown and USIS must close but that in subsequent press conf Busheri, press spokesman for govt, had denied that instructions of such character had been issued (EMBTTEL 2900, Feb 1). I added there were no (rpt no) independent USIS offices in these cities; that at suggestion of local authorities and after convs with interested ministries in Tehran Consular offices had been instructed enlarge their scope to include certain USIS activities. In opinion US Govt activities in question were for benefit Iran and contributed to strengthening understanding and promoting more friendly relations between US and Iran; nevertheless if Govt Iran considered such activities not (rpt not) beneficial to Iran and desired them terminated US Govt wld do so immed. I was sure it had no (rpt no) desire engage in activities unwelcome to Iran Govt. I wld like to know what desires Iran Govt were.

2. Kazemi seemed somewhat embarrassed. He said his min had known nothing about matter until press reports appeared. It seemed Educ Min had addressed communication some time ago to Min Interior inquiring if latter ministry desired strict enforcement of 1949 decree of Council of Mins prohibiting for cultural activities in points outside Tehran; that Min Int had replied in affirmative and sent copies its reply to govs provs who had set about taking action. He did not (rpt not) know as yet what attitude of govt wld be in this matter. He wld like talk with PRIMIN before answering my inquiry. He wanted me to know however regardless of decision which might be reached; there were no (rpt no) criticisms against activities USIS. Some for cultural institutions in provs had, however, engaged in activities contrary to interests Iran and it might be difficult bringing these activities to end without giving blanket effect to 1949 decree.

3. After

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-2-#2923, February 3, 7 p.m., from Tehran.

3. After this conv I had chat with Aram, chief Amer sect FONOFF, who maintained his office had not (rpt not) been kept informed re govt's attitude towards fon cultural institutions in provs. His office somewhat embarrassed because it had been holding in its own files communications recd during recent months from Emb informing FONOFF of departure USIS personnel to provs. Neither MFA nor Council of Mins had therefore been officially informed of opening USIS branches in US Consulates. His office had not (rpt not) circulated these communications because it had been afraid that if they shld come officially to attention Council of Mins that body wld object to inauguration new activities this kind.

4. Some 2 hours after my talks with MFA, Busheri called PAO Wells to his office and, in presence Alavi, Min Justice, outlined Iran Govt position re cultural and info offices in provs. Busheri stated 1949 decree of Coun of Mins restricting such offices to Tehran had been inoperative but that govt was now (rpt now) determined enforce it. Accordingly he wld make statement at press conf Feb 4 to effect fon cultural and info offices in provs must be closed. This wld include offices of Brit Council Russian Voks and USIS.

5. Busheri appealed for coop of Emb, stating closing order aimed primarily at Brits and Sovs. He hoped Emb cld assist in explaining matter to US Govt so that "necessity of step wld be clearly and sympathetically understood" in US.

6. Busheri suggested that Iranian Dept Propaganda might be able help in distributing some US material and that some USIS functions might after lapse month or so be resumed as corollary to Point Four activities. He said USIS personnel in Tabriz, Meshed and Isfahan shld be removed from those cities; but that USIS quarters and equipment might be left in anticipation of later use. Wells recd impression Busheri not (rpt not) aware my convs with Min Fon Affairs, and as so frequently happens here that ministry had been short-circuited. Altho we assume statement Busheri to Wells reflects final decision of govt, we shall take no (rpt no) action to close USIS branches in provs until we receive confirmation thru FONOFF. In case order confirmed we propose assign 3 Amer personnel concerned to duties Tehran pending further decision as to their use. I wld strongly oppose transferring activities USIS offices in provs to Point Four since in our opinion Point Four will eventually get into trouble if in prevalent atmosphere it shld become involved work this kind. Some these activities can be carried on by USIS in Tehran thru provincial apparatus pertinent Iran

ministries;

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-3-#2923, February 3, 7 p.m., from Tehran.

ministries; some can be carried on by Consulates; and some shld be terminated at least temporarily. Recommendations will be made by despatch after appropriate studies.

7. I venture suggest until Dept receives further communications from Emb it reply to press inquires that it has no (rpt no) official confirmation that Iran Govt desires closing for cultural and info offices including USIS in provs altho it has recd reports from Emb that matter appears to be under consideration by Iran Govt. I might add all of us concerned with this matter have impression Iran Govt in gen friendly to USIS and does not (rpt not) like idea of requesting that its provincial offices be closed. On other hand if it is to request closing of Voks in Tabriz it does not (rpt not) dare permit USIS to continue to function in provs particularly at time when there is swelling volume protest from north that presence Point Four personnel so close to Russian frontiers. USIS prog during next few months in Tehran so important we consider it wld be wise effect closing provincial offices in manner which wld strengthen Iran good will for USIS.

HENDERSON

AB:EW

NOTE: Mr. Ferguson (GTI) notified 6:40 p.m. 2/3/52 CWO/FED.

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