

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM (1) AMEMBASSY, TEHRAN

524
DESP. NO.

TO Authority THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

January 7, 1953

REF By C.C. NABA. Date 7/9/74

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IMP-FIELD OPERATIONS MISSION REQUIREMENTS
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SUBJECT: IIA: Motion Pictures: Iranian Governmental Document Proposing Mobile Unit Operation Changes

The Embassy Film Section recently acquired a document drafted by the Iranian Department of Propaganda and now filed there pertaining to the USIE mobile unit operation in the provinces. The document was acquired through informal channels and has not as yet been brought to the attention of USIE in an official form.

The changes and limitations proposed in this document have not been considered seriously by the Film Section and no counter action can be taken until the proposed changes are officially brought to the attention of the Film Section.

The document was prepared by Mr. Soltani, an official of the Department of Propaganda who oversees the operation of the mobile unit program for Mr. Bashir Faramand, Director of the Department of Propaganda. The content of the document is being transmitted for the information of the Department and may indicate some of the difficulties of negotiation and compromise under which the Film Section must endeavor to carry out a mobile unit operation. The existing arrangement was more fully described in Embassy Despatch 947, March 4, 1952, following extensive negotiations early last spring. The desire of certain Iranians to 'take over' the operation and eliminate American control and the constant search by the Film Section for a more satisfactory operation in terms of American interests has resulted in a situation that is never stationary and requires constant negotiation. Until the various restrictive clauses of this report are put into effect by the Iranian government no action will be taken. The tenor of this document does illustrate the type of Iranian thinking which is the basis of some of the difficulties in implementing an efficient USIE mobile unit program.

In view of the extensive length of this report the Despatch author has arbitrarily assigned Roman numeral and alphabetical designations in the margin to the various portions of the report. These designations may be of assistance in future reference to the report. The most important portions in terms of restrictions on the scope of activities are the following:

II. A. Direct control of units.

Units should be placed under control of Department of Propaganda in every aspect. Department of Propaganda to be the only agency

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authorized to send out units and thus eliminate USIE's joint operation with the Ministry of Education and the Gendarmerie.

B. Eliminate mention of the U.S.

Eliminate any mention of American effort in supplying the films and re-narrate the films to eliminate mention of American aid or friendship.

F. Eliminate Americana.

Do not show films depicting the United States or conditions in the United States.

G. Additional allowance.

Increase the allowances paid to compensate for unhealthy areas.

H. Retention of reports and editing for USIE.

Original reports to be retained by Department of Propaganda. Report to be edited and only specific portion in turn to be submitted to USIE.

I. USIE employee projectionists under Iranian supervisors.

Would place USIE employee projectionists under control of government supervisor instead of under direction of USIE as now exists.

M. Divorce Point IV association.

Eliminate any implied association with Point IV.

N. Distribute no publications publicizing the U.S.

Do not distribute USIE publications that contain American propaganda.

P. Use non-diplomatic gas coupons to eliminate inference of American operation.

Do not use gasoline coupons that might give the public an idea the program is American sponsored.

S. No direct contact with units by USIE.

USIE not to correspond directly with units without contact through Department of Propaganda.

III.D. Eliminate connection by inference with Point IV.

A reiteration of the suggestion to eliminate any implied connection with American operated Point IV.

E. Useful publications without American propaganda.

Units should carry useful publications without American attribution.

H. USIE employees subservient to government supervisors.

Placement of USIE employees under government supervisors' control.

V. Last paragraph and fifth from last paragraph again reiterate proposal that units and supervisors not maintain direct contact with USIE.

"REPORT - Submitted to the Director General

I. Introduction

"Now that the first part of the educational programs, carried out through the roving film units, has come to an end and a new program is to begin, it was deemed necessary to bring to your attention points of interest from the past experience-achievements as well as short-comings.

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Effect

"Apart from few trivial occasions, the program in general has given very good results and in some cases even more than it was expected. The supervisors have everywhere performed their programs with great success and the people have always welcomed them. By film-shows in the fields of education, agriculture, and sanitation they have enhanced their spectators' thinking level and have familiarized them with usage of equipment already at their disposal. Commending letters and requests received by our office prove the usefulness of the programs. I can assure you that, although the work done by these units is in its preliminary stage as yet, we have been able not only to attract the people but also help them in their grasp of new ideas. It gives me a great pleasure to say here that the Department of Press and Propaganda is proud of the work of some of its units.

Incidents

"In some places the inhabitants had never seen any movie picture and they first thought our projectionists were wizards but gradually they realized the meaning of their work and liked it. With this in view, it is understood that the people, movie as a novelty for them, were only charmed during the first one or two shows with little attention paid to the real subject. In order to get better results from our film-shows it is desirable that in each locality several shows be given one after another so that the people may have a chance to learn more.

"A remarkable warm welcome is being given to our units now that the people have learned more about the nature of their work. In very few places have they been confronted with opposition on the part of the people. In one or two places some opposition was first seen from a religious point of view but when our projectionists gave some explanations there was no more trouble.

"In some villages when the people saw some film-shows on methods of disease prevention they told our supervisors that they didn't have bread to eat how could they afford to have mosquito nets and some other necessary means. They said it would be far better had the government sent them some bread rather than undertake to spend so much money sending them films. In some places the inhabitants asked for doctor and medicine rather than films but when our projectionists explained to them that first they had to acquire some knowledge and learn how to deal with a sick person and when they were told that the government had already the matter of doctor and medicine under consideration they looked to be satisfied. In some sections of the country where there is some labor force the workers asked for film-shows depicting labor life and its problems and I believe their request is a just one. It is necessary that a number of such films

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be prepared (presenting the work and the life of the industrial labor, etc.) and be put at the disposal of those projectors who go to those sections of the country.

Recommendations

A. Feature Films

"Another point which I would like to bring to your attention is the matter of some entertainment films which will have a moral value as well. I think, in addition to educational film-shows we must have some shows which will more or less be a pleasant pastime mixed with some moral lesson.

B. Far From American Scene

"From report sent in by our supervisors, it has become evident that the people especially liked our film on the subject of why children die and how can we prevent dysentery and the reason for that is because the subject matter falls in their everyday life. In other words the more the films are connected with their lives and the farther they are from odd scenes of American and European large cities, the better the people will like and realize them.

C. Climatic

"From our past experience we have learned that it would be more desirable were the country divided into two regions namely winter region and summer region. This has become actually necessary because of the extremely divergent climatic conditions in various parts of the country which sometimes make the work impossible. For example it is virtually impossible to carry on film shows during the hot summer in Bandar Abbass and equally impossible to work at Ardabil or in its surroundings at winter time. Furthermore, the people can hardly be brought together. It is, therefore, advisable to send the units during hot weather to northern region and at wintertime to hot regions. In this manner operation can go on very easily throughout the country round the year.

D. Supervisors

"Contrary to the past practice, the unit supervisors must not be changed. Each supervisor must be appointed by a written order and as long as he discharges his duties in a satisfactory manner he must stay on his job. Supervisors are trained for their jobs and there is no reason to justify their change unless they are incompetent and not suitable for the work. It is suggested, therefore, that those who are suitable be picked up and be appointed by written orders (not temporarily) and as long as they do all right stay on the job. This will save us a lot of trouble in calling back the people and making new assignments. Some object to the per diem of the unit supervisors. I would say that that attitude is unfair. It is not an easy job to run a unit. To make speeches, to attract people, to deal with different classes and categories, to be able to take up some matters

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with government authorities - all these functions need men of quite high caliber. In addition to these, there are some hardships in the routine of the work which not everyone would tolerate such as travel on rough roads month after month, staying overnight at places where no food can be obtained not to say about insecurity. It is the intention of the government to give shows at such localities rather than in towns. Therefore, it is quite essential that we have such supervisors who would not only be well-qualified for the job but also be prepared to meet such difficulties rather than work for per diem.

- E. Training "Another matter which needs due consideration is the matter of training the supervisors which, by your permission, will have to be done after they are selected.
- F. Opposition to DDT "In the end, as you may see it advisable to inform the Ministry of Education, our supervisors have reported that almost everywhere in the country the inhabitants are dissatisfied of the DDT spray work. They say, contrary to previous years, spraying now has no effect whatsoever: it causes a lot of trouble and the insects are not killed. In some cases those responsible for the spraying job are thought to be involved in some fraud. Should this situation continue, it is afraid the work will be confronted with severe opposition on the part of the people.
- G. Turkoman Music Via Radio "Also, one of our supervisors reports that the Turkomans of Turkoman Sahra complain why doesn't Radio Tehran play some Turkoman music. Most of the Turkomans listen to programs which are broadcast from the other side of the border. Those programs are broadcast in local Turkoman dialect and are very influential and effective.
- H. Effect of Film "It must be added that in one or two places first the people refused to have their homes sprayed but when they saw the film show on the subject they submitted.
- I. Jealousy of Other Agencies "The units belonging to other offices mostly have been showing films in large cities whereas the units which belong to the Press and Propaganda have carried out their duties in remote villages. As it has been reported, one of the Gendarmerie units in Khorassan did not treat the people politely and that misconduct was attributed to our office.
- J. Conclusion "The rest of the points which must be discussed with the Information Section together with a copy of the duties and conditions regarding the supervisors is being submitted herewith for your perusal and instruction.

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II. "Matters to Be Discussed With the Director General"

- A. Direct Control of Units "1. For some reasons it is advisable that all the film units be managed, inspected and sent out by the Press and Propaganda Department. As approved by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs no film unit should be sent out unless its supervisor is appointed by the Press and Propaganda Department.
- B. Eliminate Mention of U.S. "2. No direct propaganda be done in favor of a foreign country such as 'this film is presented by the Information Center of the American Embassy' or 'U.S. Government film.' At the beginning of film-show such announcements or announcements like 'fighting locusts and increasing foodstuffs by Americans and America's friends and their aid to Iran, etc.' which are absolutely undesirable for the people be left out. By experience we have learned that the people in remote areas are frightened of foreign propaganda and dislike it no matter whether it is American, Russian or British. A sort of suspicion arouses in their minds which is not desirable if good result is to be obtained from our work.
- C. Opium and Alcohol "3. A film-strip be prepared on harmfulness of opium and alcohol.
- D. Factory Workers "4. As a response to the request of the workers it is suggested that a film be prepared on the living conditions of the workers and how they work in factories.
- E. Entertainment Films "5. Some entertainment films, with moral aspects stressed, be prepared and put at the disposal of our supervisors. Such films will be of great interest to the people.
- F. Eliminate Americana "6. The films which are shown be as simple as possible and close to the way of life of the farmers and peasants of Iran. For example, sometimes films which show American cities or depict the modern farming are not very much liked. When they see such films they become rather disappointed and murmur that such films and such methods of work are only good for America and Europe and not for Iran.
- G. Additional Allowance "7. Bad climate allowance be paid to all those who are sent to unhealthy areas.
- H. Retention of Reports and editing for USIE "8. Original of the reports sent in by the supervisors be retained at the office and only a copy of portions requested be sent to the Information Center.
- I. USIE Employee Under Iranian Supervision "9. From an administrative point of view technical Projectionists personnel should discharge their duties under the supervision of super-

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- J. Additional Equipment "10. Whenever possible let the units carry the following equipment:
a - Loud-speaker for announcements and speeches.
b - Radio receiving set needed for listening to news from Tehran and obtaining urgent orders from Tehran.
c - Gramophone and recording set intended to record local music and songs and sometimes to record a statement made by a native influential person or description of some films in native dialects.
d - Some first aid medicines.
- K. Clarification of Mossadegh was reclaimed. Film "11. The reason why the film on Dr. Mossadegh's journey
- L. Seasonal Travel "12. It is advisable to make arrangements for winter and summer programs, as explained in the report.
- M. Divorce Point IV Association "13. Make arrangements so that the work done by these units may not be taken by mistake for that done by Point Four units - (reason will be given privately).
- N. Distribute No Publication Publicizing U.S. "14. Supervise the printing job of pamphlets and pictures intended for distribution by the units and see that no foreign propaganda is printed in those.
- O. Protection From Incidents "15. To insure the units and supervisors against incidents and occurrences.
- P. Use Non-Diplomatic Gas Coupons to Eliminate Inference of American Operation "16. To use non-diplomatic gas coupons instead of diplomatic coupons because in small areas as soon as people hear that the units use diplomatic gas coupons rumors go around that they are sent by foreign quarters. It is also suggested to extend the validity of the coupons to three months.
- Q. Extend Mobile Unit Signs "17. To write on both sides of the units 'Roving cinema unit of the Press and Propaganda Department of His Imperial Majesty's Government' instead of 'Roving cinema unit of the Press and Propaganda Department.'
- R. Produce Film of Demonstration Farms "18. It is thought advisable to take films of the
- S. No Direct Control With Units by USIE "19. No circulars or instructions be sent to the supervisors or technical personnel of the units without informing the Press and Propaganda Department.

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III. "Points which I will have to discuss.

- A. Simplified Explanations by their audience such as 'estehmam.' "1. The announcers should avoid using terms not heard
- B. More Frequent Shows "2. Shows be given with shorter intervals to enable the people to connect the subjects.
- C. Several Shows in Larger Villages "3. In larger villages and towns shows be given in different spots for several nights.
- D. Eliminate Connection by of our units may not be taken by mistake for the Point Four Inference units and films be of different kinds. with Pt. IV
- E. Useful Publication With American Propaganda "5. Usefulness of magazines and other publications, especially agricultural, provided no foreign propaganda is inserted in them.
- F. Caliber of USIE Projectionists "6. Technical personnel should meet the following requirements:
 - a - They must be well-qualified and learned.
 - b - They must not be opium smokers or drunkards.
 - c - They must not be low and degraded characters.
 - d - They must not be lazy nor show lack of interest in their work.
 - e - They must avoid discussing any religious matters.
 - f - They must not give way to any criticism as far as their conduct is concerned.
- G. Replacement Parts "7. All necessary spares and accessories for the units be made available in the units.
- H. USIE Employees Subservient to Govt. Supervision "8. Technical personnel should work under the supervisors of the units.
- I. Parking Location of Units "9. Technical personnel avoid stopping the units overnight in front of tea-houses or other undesirable places. It is suggested that they park their units, at Press and Propaganda offices or other government offices.
- J. Generator Operation Time Limits "10. The minimum time limit for running the generators of the units must be fixed. This is necessary in order to eliminate difference of opinion between the supervisors and technical personnel.

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K. Supervisor
Select Show
Site

"11. It is up to the supervisor to appoint the place and locality of the film shows.

IV.

"The supervisors of the units should, in addition to the conditions which are mentioned in the Regulations, take into consideration the following points:

"1. Their behavior should be such that the Press and Propaganda Department will feel proud of them. They must secure the goodwill of the people in every case.

"2. They must possess dignity and a good deal of personality and their conduct must be of such nature as to impress the people as well as government authorities and local dignitaries.

"3. They must possess ability to make speeches and enough knowledge to give correct and detailed explanation and be able to impress the people.

"4. They must be able to make their speeches reasonable and logical.

"5. They must have no immoral weak points.

"6. They must be able to realize the people and win their sympathy.

"7. They must possess a good deal of initiative and be able to know and realize aspirations of the people of each locality and arrange suitable film-shows.

"8. They should have enough self respect not to sacrifice their own dignity or that of the office for their selfish ends.

"9. They should not be drunkards, opium smokers or possess immoral reputation.

V.

"Duties of the Supervisors

"A - Arrangement of Programs

"1. Immediately after arrival at places where they intend to arrange film-shows they should inform the Tehran office of their mail or telegraphic address so that connections can be maintained.

"2. In cases when they intend to go around and give shows at various places they should leave enough data regarding their whereabouts with some reliable persons through whom they can be reached without loss of time.

"3. Immediately after arrival at the central town of an Ostan the supervisor should get in touch with the local government authorities (army or civilian especially the governor, for whom he holds a letter of introduction, and

inform him of his plans and after consultation arrange and execute a program for 26 days (a copy of his program approved by the government agents be sent to the person mentioned in article two).

"4. The 26-day show program should be in such a manner that one show will be given at each place. It would be more desirable if several films could be given in one night at several places.

"5. Proper care should be taken of the unit as far as tire, gas, etc. are concerned. Tours must be planned with great care to avoid useless waste of petroleum.

"6. After each night's show the supervisor should make his report. He must not wait to make his reports after he is through with his 26-day program.

"7. At the end of his 26-day show tour he will return to his Ostan headquarters; will reply to letters received; have his unit served and after a 4-day rest set out for another direction with the approval of the Ostan's governor.

"B - Way Program Should Be Executed

"1. Immediately after arrival at the place of his program the supervisor should get in touch with the local government agents and explain to them his plans and in cases when needed he should get the approval of religious leaders of the place with regard to his film-shows.

"2. Before he begins with his film-show he must ask the governor the mayor or some local dignitary to give a brief talk in local dialect and explain to the people the educational value of the programs.

"3. After that the supervisor should give a brief account about the film explaining its instructive importance in the fields of education, sanitation, etc. and in places where his audience are unable to understand him he should have a tape recorded in local dialect or language.

"5. It is advisable that the supervisors invite the local officials dignitaries to their film-shows.

"6. The supervisors must stress in their talks the government's and the Shah's goodwill and His Imperial Majesty's aspirations regarding the welfare of the people and should encourage them to unite in their support and by no means should they mention any party, religious or political questions.

"7. Supervisors must always take into consideration the fact that in some places the people haven't seen any film-shows thus far, hence it is too difficult for them to grasp the subject of the shows. In such cases the supervisors should request help from those familiar with local conditions and elucidate the subject-matter for their audience.

"8. Effort must be made to give full satisfaction to the people by showing in one night as many films as possible; not less than two films must be shown in one night.

"9. Supervisors, when already familiarized with the wants and expectations of their audience, should try to select the proper films.

"C - How should they get in touch with government officials?

"1. Mutual respect is very important in maintaining relations with government officials.

"2. Respecting government officials will naturally result in more help and cooperation from them since the local government officials are more familiar with prevailing conditions in their areas.

"3. Supervisors should inform the Tehran office regarding those government officials who help and guide the units so that they may be recommended for their services.

"4. Supervisors must take care not to involve themselves in internal matters of the local government agents.

"D - How the supervisors should behave themselves among the people

"1. The supervisors should keep in mind that the people look to them as their teachers, hence they must always behave themselves properly.

"2. They must not mix in the domestic and private affairs of the people unless when some guidance is needed in health and educational matters.

"3. If, however, should in some cases the people refer any cases or complaints to the supervisors, as government officials, they should not interfere directly or pass judgment; they must rather mention the case to the government official agents indirectly and give them some friendly advice and let them decide what to do. Supervisors are requested to send their report in such cases to the Tehran office.

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"4. Any respect shown by the people will be taken as respect extended to the Press and Propaganda Department, thus the supervisors should do their best to assure such a respect.

"5. The units should only serve the purpose in mind and the supervisor, while performing his duties in the unit, must regard it as his work in the office.

"6. Films are shown free of charge and supervisors are not even expected to accept any private invitations.

"7. Should the people refuse to go to film-shows the supervisor of the unit must convince them of the usefulness of the programs by speeches, etc. He might also in such cases ask local dignitaries to help him.

E - How the supervisors should deal with government agents

"1. As already mentioned, supervisors are expected to carry out their duties at the hours which they are supposed to and rest of their time they can spend for their personal affairs.

"2. Technical personnel should work under the supervisors and matters such as arrangement of programs, place of shows, films, hours of shows, speeches and contacts with government agencies will be taken care off by the supervisors.

"3. As far as mechanical work is concerned, such as repair of the unit, the machines, etc. the technical personnel are independent.

"4. The supervisor must not interfere in technical affairs of the unit which is strictly the job the unit technician.

"5. The supervisor should not hold the unit technician responsible for his free time.

"6. The supervisors, in case should they have any complaints against the technical personnel, must report in writing to the Press and Propaganda Department and give reasons for their complaints. Supervisors should not send reports directly to the Information office.

"7. Generally speaking, it is advisable that the supervisor and the unit technician be friendly with each other.

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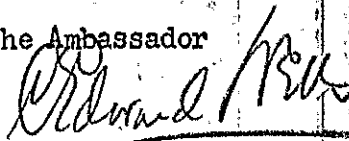
"8. The supervisors should always protect their personality and try to influence the government officials.

"9. Supervisors should not argue on political and religious matters.

"In the end it should be stressed that the supervisors must not maintain any contact with the Information office. They must send all their reports to the Press and Propaganda Department."

In forwarding this report to the Department, the Embassy wishes to emphasize the fact that this is an internal report, prepared by a major Iranian official for his chief. It is intended to serve as a guide to current official Iranian thoughts on the mobile unit operations. It is most unlikely that any attempt will be made to implement all of the recommendations. However, it is almost certain that attempts (in the nature of probes) will be made to secure our agreement to some portion of the suggested revisions.

For the Ambassador



C. Edward Wells
Public Affairs Officer

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