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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : AMEMBASSY, TEHRAN

1023
DESP. NO.

May 29, 1953

MAY 25 1953

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

AIR POUCH
PRIORITY

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SUBJECT: Attaching Memorandum Entitled "Report on the Use of Anti-Soviet Material Within Iran During Period Covered by Last Two Years"

I have the honor to attach hereto a memorandum prepared by Mr. C. Edward Wells, the Public Affairs Officer of the Embassy, under date of May 28 entitled "Report on the Use of Anti-Soviet Material Within Iran During Period Covered by Last Two Years".

In view of the unfair and distorted criticism which has at times been made of the failure of the USIS office in Tehran to combat communism I have asked Mr. Wells to prepare this memorandum. I may add that Mr. Wells does not endeavor to incorporate in this memorandum all the activities of the USIS section of the Embassy and of other sections of the Embassy against international communism during the last two years. Practically all of the personnel of the Embassy engaged in substantive work have been unobtrusively, yet persistently and continuously, taking advantage of every opportunity to expose the fallacies of communism and to warn Iranian officials, editors, professors, business leaders and other Iranian nationals of the dangers to Iran from international communism. The Embassy personnel have engaged in literally hundreds of conversations on this subject and I believe that their activities have had considerable success. It should be pointed out, however, that any struggle against communism on the part of the Embassy must be carried on discreetly. The members of the Embassy cannot flaunt either their activities or their accomplishments in this regard. The Iranian Government has made it abundantly clear on a number of occasions that it will not permit that Iran shall become the scene of an ideological war between countries maintaining correct relations with it. While I was Ambassador in India both the Indian and Pakistan Governments received complaints from the Government of Iran because their respective Embassies in Tehran were engaged in a propaganda war. Similarly on numerous occasions members of the Iranian Government had indicated to members of the Embassy that it would be extremely unfortunate if the Embassy should use facilities accorded to it by the Government of Iran in order openly to attack the Soviet Union or the Soviet Satellite States. They frequently refer to an Imperial Iranian Decree dated September 25, 1949 which reads as follows:

"No embassy, legation, consulate, or foreign representative in Iran has the right to distribute any publications in which policy of Iran, situation of the country, support of certain definite groups or opposition to another group are discussed. Nor have they the right to distribute publications which make Iran a center and place of political propaganda against a third government."

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

In view of this situation the Department will understand why the Embassy is not in a position to advertise its efforts to combat international communism in Iran. I may add that I am confident that there is not a member of the Embassy staff who is pulling his punches in the struggle against communism because of any secret sympathy or tolerance for communism or for the ideology and policies of the Soviet Union and the Soviet Satellite States.

There is also attached to this despatch an envelope containing in single copy nine exhibits relating to the efforts of the USIS section of the Embassy to combat communism.

Respectfully,

Loy W. Henderson
Loy W. Henderson
Ambassador

Enclosures: *9*
Memorandum
Exhibits

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MEMORANDUM

To: The Ambassador
From: C. Edward Wells
Public Affairs Officer

May 28, 1953

Subject: Report on the Use of Anti-Soviet Material within Iran During Period Covered by Last Two Years

Before launching into the factual report I should like to present herewith a little background information.

For a long period, but certainly during the last four years, the Iranian Government has consistently and firmly taken the attitude that they are neutral in the cold war and various Iranian heads of government as well as chiefs of the Division of Press and Propaganda have served informal notice upon the principal officers of the Embassy that, in consideration of Iran's position, they could not tolerate an out and out propaganda war between the United States and the Soviet, or for that matter, between any other countries. In this connection they sighted the fact that when India and Pakistan began to wage a propaganda war against one another within Iran they quickly stopped both sides by prohibiting their use of any of the media within Iran.

The basis on which we have been warned to be careful of our output is, in an Imperial Iranian Decree dated September 25, 1949, reference #10263. This decree consists of four articles. Following quote is a translation of article #2:

"No embassy, legation, consulate, or foreign representative in Iran has the right to distribute any publications in which policy of Iran, situation of the country, support of certain definite groups or opposition to another group are discussed. Nor have they the right to distribute publications which make Iran a center and place of political propoganda against a third government." (See Emb. Desp. 326, Dec. 14, 1949)

We have not been able to operate freely. The restrictions have always been in the background; therefore, in planning our program, although we have made every effort to use as much anti-Soviet material as possible, our output has been tempered through our constantly keeping in mind the fact that if we did go too far, restrictive measures would be used.

Cultural Section

The Cultural Section has made its contribution to the anti-communist campaign through the distribution of strongly anti-communist publications such as Postmarked Moscow, Conquest by Terror, Brain Washing, etc. These books have been presented by members of the Cultural staff to Iranian nationals of some prominence who could be classified as leaders. In addition, through cultural

connections with university groups, officials of the Ministry of Education, members of the Iran America Society and others. The staff of the Cultural Section meets these people socially, in casual encounters, and in small groups and quite often discuss the question of Soviet Russia. Social encounters provide the best possible opportunity to explain and justify America's position and to point out the contrast with Russia's intransigent policies.

Library

A device to feature the display of anti-communist books in the Library was worked out by placing a special shelf in a prominent position in the Library, which shelf is labeled as follows:

"IN VIEW OF INQUIRIES RECEIVED, THIS SHELF IS RESERVED FOR PUBLICATIONS EXPOSING THE AGGRESSIVE OBJECTIVES OF COMMUNISM AND THE METHODS EMPLOYED BY INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM AND BY ITS AGENT IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES."
(see exhibit.#1)

A survey of the circulation of these books taken after they had been in use for six months showed that they had been borrowed by over one hundred individuals who fell into the following principal classifications: students, government workers, teachers, merchants, accountants, engineers, military officers and health workers. The most popular titles were David Dallin's RISE OF RUSSIA IN ASIA and Walter Bedell Smith's MY THREE YEARS IN MOSCOW.

A much more subtle anti-communist activity has been carried on through the weekly music programs. No opportunity to point out how Soviet Russia controls her creative artists is overlooked in the music program notes.

The Library also displays photo exhibits arranged by the Exhibits Section which occasionally and usually indirectly point to the advantages of the American form of government over the communist state.

Under the Presentation Program we have used for limited distribution such books as THE GOD THAT FAILED, THE ORGANIZATIONAL WEAPON, and WORLD COMMUNISM TODAY and, on order to be presented are A RELUCTANT TRAVELLER IN RUSSIA and STALIN'S HOAX ON THE COMMUNISTS.

Publications

The Publications Section distribution of anti-Soviet leaflets, brochures, etc. originated and produced outside of Tehran approximates 570,000 per year. In addition, the following titles were originated and produced by USIS Tehran Publications Section during the last eighteen months:

1. Commissar! Commissar! 8-page cartoon leaflet, 4" x 5½", 2-color, designed by Publications Section USIS Tehran, and produced in Tehran. Brochure was produced as a rebuttal to Communist germ warfare propaganda. Thirty thousand copies were produced at a cost of \$341.47; only 3,000 copies have been distributed because communist propaganda on germ warfare died down and it was deemed advisable to let the matter lie unless it were revived by the Soviet. (exhibit 2)

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2. Tale of the Beautiful Red Flower: 4-page leaflet, 6" x 8", 2-color, produced by EPC for USIS Tehran; created by Publications Section USIS Tehran. The story is an allegory in which a red flower resembling the Venus Fly Trap symbolizes Soviet communism (which is never mentioned), and in which lazy and frivolous bees are lured to destruction. Illustrations accompanying the text draw a clear analogy between bees and unwary people. Fifteen thousand, four hundred copies produced; 3,000 copies distributed. The text of this brochure has been picked up as an editorial by Iranian newspapers, such as the newspaper in Tabriz which printed the text in its entirety. (see exhibit #3)

3. From Whom Is Help Coming For Me?: 4-page brochure, 6" x 8", 2-color; designed and produced in Tehran by the Publications Section in April 1952, at a cost of \$169.50. The burden of the leaflet is a comparison of the words of the Soviet Union, illustrated by a dancing bear, and the deeds of the Free World through the agency of the U.N. Pictures show health aid, food and clothing distribution, and rehabilitation training, contrasted against Soviet youth demonstrations. The brochure was produced because of the Soviet Youth Congress at Vienna in 1952. Ten thousand copies were produced; 10,000 copies were distributed on May Day 1952. (see exhibit #4)

4. Which Way To Prosperity and Peace?: 4-page brochure, 6" x 8", 2-color, produced by EPC for USIS Tehran; designed by the Publications Section USIS Tehran. The illustrated story tells of two young Iranian boys who are faced with the choice between communism (the supposedly fast, easy way to peace and prosperity) and patient study and industry (the slow, sure way). The one who chooses communism suffers early and violent death in a street demonstration. The other boy leads a productive life beneficial to his country. Twenty six thousand copies produced; 14,000 distributed. (see exhibit #5)

5. Voices of God: 4-page brochure, 2-color, 6" x 7"; produced by EPC for USIS Tehran; designed by Publications Section USIS Tehran. Mosque on cover; text is composed of illustrative quotations from Koran, Hafez, Jesus Christ, the Prophet Isaiah, Mo-Ti, Buddah, Bhagavad Gita, Abraham Lincoln, and Mahatma Gandhi; 53,350 produced; 12,000 distributed. (see exhibit #6)

6. Plan For Disarmament: 8-page, 9 1/2" x 7", 2-color, produced by EPC for USIS Tehran; adapted from IPS pilot model by Publications Section USIS Tehran. Text sets forth U.N. plan for international disarmament; 53,100 produced; 12,000 distributed. (see exhibit #7).

In addition to this we have prepared and arranged for publication in Mehr Magazine the following anti-Soviet articles: (Mehr has a yearly circulation of 42,000):

Issue

- 7 - 8 "Iran on the Brink of a Precipice" - series of articles by Movaghar exposing dangers to Iran from communism - made possible by the misuse of authority in the ruling classes.
- 9 "Road to Salvation" - article by Movaghar

- 10 "Social Relations from Beginning of Man to the Present" - by Movaghar. Article compares present social relations as exist in the free world and iron curtain countries.
- 11 "The Pleasant Scent of Love" - by Vedad. Article exposes false attractions of communism; written by Publications Officer.
- 12 "Capitalism, Democracy, Socialism, Communism" - by Dr. Faryar - series of articles on various political ideologies.
- 13 "Contrast between American and Russian Methods in International Affairs" - article by Movaghar.

Press Section

Attached as Exhibit #8 is a list of 260 articles, features, editorials and commentaries which have been placed in the local Tehran papers, as well as provincial papers, on anti-communist subjects.

Film Section

The Film Section is restricted in the distribution of anti-communist film information primarily by the limitation of using that which is produced in the Department and distributed on a global basis. The extent of use of those items is listed statistically below.

IRANIAN COMMUNIST PROBLEM

However, when USIS had access to local production facilities prior to their transfer to TCI, a 20 minute film was prepared locally dealing with what might be termed a phase of the communist problem specifically in Iran. The film, AZERBAIJAN DAY, opens with information about the Russian occupation and Democrat party activity in Azerbaijan following World War II. Several front pages of Iranian newspapers printed during this time are also photographed. Actual scenes of H.E. Hossein Ala's stand in the UN regarding Azerbaijan follow, and this in turn is followed by footage of the Russians leaving Azerbaijan. The remainder of the film deals with the yearly Azerbaijan Day celebrations designed to commemorate this day and give evidence of Iran's strength and unity.

AZERBAIJAN DAY Times shown: 485; total audience: 227,942; Persian language.

KOREAN COMMUNIST PROBLEM

Four films have been received from the Department, two of these in the Persian language, dealing directly with the Korean problem and related communist activity.

ONE YEAR IN KOREA Times shown: 12; total audience: 2,482; English language

WHY KOREA Times shown: 28; total audience: 7,787; English language

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IN DEFENSE OF PEACE—Times shown: 28; total audience: 2,482; English language
 U.N. AIDS REPUBLIC OF KOREA Times shown: 18; total audience: 20,360
 Persian language

U.S. PRONOUNCEMENTS

Three films relating to U.S. foreign policy speeches (in addition to President Eisenhower's recent speech which is now being readied for local distribution) have also been shown.

PRESIDENT TRUMAN'S U.N. SPEECH Times shown: 3; total audience: 690; Persian language
 PRESIDENT TRUMAN'S SAN FRANCISCO SPEECH Times shown: 2; total audience: 73; Persian language
 PRESIDENT TRUMAN'S KOREAN SPEECH Times shown: 7; total audience: 3,532; Persian language

PARTICIPATION IN KOREA

Five films are now being distributed regarding the participation of nations other than the U.S. in the battle against communist aggression in Korea.

TURKISH TROOPS IN KOREA Times shown: 55; total audience: 18,288; Persian language
 GREEK TROOPS IN KOREA Times shown: 2; total audience: 268; English language
 PHILIPPINE TROOPS IN KOREA Times shown: 1; total audience: 150; English language
 THAILAND TROOPS IN KOREA Times shown: 3; total audience: 54; English language
 ETHIOPIA IN A FREE WORLD Times shown: 8; total audience: 4,033; Persian language

EUROPEAN COMMUNISM

One title pertains to the division of Europe between the communist and free world.

PARTNERS FOR FREEDOM Times shown: 9; total audience: 3,382; Persian language
 Times shown: 3; total audience: 215; English language

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CHINESE COMMUNISM

The brief cartoon film dealing with conditions in China before and after communism is also available

WHEN THE COMMUNISTS CAME Times shown: 4; total audience: 55; English language

Times shown: 2; total audience: 11; Chinese language

BURMESE COMMUNISM

Excerpts from the stage play, THE PEOPLE WIN THROUGH, are incorporated into another film dealing with the communist problem in Burma.

THE PEOPLE WIN THROUGH Times shown: 2; total audience: 28; English language

Even wider distribution of all of these titles are limited by the extent to which censorship permits are granted for public showings. The Film Section naturally exerts every effort to achieve favorable action by the commission; an organization which is equally as pressured by the Russian Embassy film staff.

Individual Iranian governmental offices are also induced to sponsor the various titles, as apart from direct USIS presentation. As an example: AZERBAIJAN DAY has been shown publicly both by the Ministry of Education and the Imperial Iranian Gendarmerie while the Department of Propaganda has refused to take part in the sponsorship of the film.

No close record has been kept of our production of anti-Soviet material and we have not felt it necessary to make an exhaustive study of the files. Material listed above is material that has easily come to hand. There is a great wealth of material, a certain amount of which has been reported through despatches to the Department, of a negative type, best illustrated by the following direct quote of a leftist paper, Bang-Mardom, of April 10, 1953.

"What does it matter to USIS if our northern neighbors do not help us? Hasn't the Soviet Union always supported us in the United Nations; always come to our assistance when we needed support - like when we struggled for freedom and nationalization of our oil industry? Was it Americans who defended and supported us or was it the Soviet Union? Who is there that does not know that the U.S. and Britain have always been plotting against our freedom, independence and national integrity? Who is there that can deny that fact that were it not for the Soviets - our powerful socialist brothers - warmongering imperialists would have long since enslaved us and divided our country between themselves? Who is there that does not realize that the Soviet Union is the only government which respects our freedom and independence?"

"By what right is the USIS trying to provoke hatred between Iran and the Soviet Union? Why doesn't the Iranian Government stop such activities?"

Doesn't all this clearly show that our so-called national government is working hand-in-glove with the blood-thirsty executioners of the poor Koreans . . ."

In addition, if it is required, we can dig out a wealth of letters, of which the following letter is a fair example:

Newspaper Haq-i Jam
Tabriz, Iran
May 14, 1953

The United States Information Service
Tehran, Iran

Dear Sir:

I wish to thank you for the two stories you sent us. Both have been used in our paper.

It is our policy to fight communism in this country with everything we have. It will be deeply appreciated therefore, if you will send us other such articles, cuts, pictures, cartoons, etc.

Very truly yours,
Hoseini (Chief Editor).

Attached:

9 Exhibits