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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

786d.001/11-1653  
XR 9/11/63

FROM : AMCONSULATE, KUWAIT

147  
DESP. NO.

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

November 16, 1953  
DATE

REF : Kuwait Despatch 50, August 25, 1953

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	11-27		CAW-5	105-3	P-1

SUBJECT: NEWSWEEK MAGAZINE REPORT ON COMMUNISM IN KUWAIT

*DIST one to each post indicated on page 2*

The Department will have noted the "Periscope" report in Newsweek for November 9 entitled "New Soft Spot" in which it is asserted that the Communists are now shifting their attention to Kuwait and that a Kuwait union organizer by the name of "Ashra Kamel" attended a recent WFTU conference in Vienna.

In despatch 50 referred to above, the Consulate had reported fully on its knowledge of Communist activity in Kuwait, and since then it has of course been thoroughly alive to the possibility of Communism in Kuwait. The Consulate has no knowledge of any changes in the situation which would alter its estimate of August 25, 1953. However, as a result of the Newsweek report, the Consulate immediately requested officials of the Political Agency, the Kuwait Oil Company, the American Independent Oil Company as well as its various other contacts in Kuwait for any information they might have recently acquired on Communist activity in this country. The Newsweek report was specifically mentioned in this connection, and the Consulate specifically requested any available information on the identity of "Ashra Kamel". As of this date, the Consulate's varied sources all agree that unless "Ashra Kamel" can be identified as a pseudonym for some other person in Kuwait, there seems to be no evidence of increased Communist activity in Kuwait - or for that matter of any Communist activity at all in the country.

The oil company officials, the Agency, various individuals in Kuwait State, and other contacts of the Consulate have been unable up to now to confirm that anyone from Kuwait has been recently in Vienna, or that there are any "union organizers" in this country. In its own contacts the Consulate has found two possible leads which are still being followed closely, and it will immediately inform the Department if these leads are productive. However, it is extremely unlikely that even if one of these persons was in Vienna his presence in Kuwait or Vienna is significant enough to have warranted the emphasis in the Newsweek article.

The General Manager of the Kuwait Oil Company and a British official in the Kuwait Government have pointed out the similarity between the Newsweek report and a Soviet broadcast picked up by a monitoring service (not identified) two to three weeks ago. The KOC General Manager in fact stated to the drafting officer that it would appear that Newsweek had printed the Soviet radio report without examining it and from it alone had established that a "new soft spot" exists in Kuwait. He did not scout the possibility that someone might have "represented" Kuwait at a WFTU conference, but he seemed to resent the distortions which would be inevitable in the casual reader's

HMSymmes/bc

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mind after reading the Newsweek article.

The Newsweek article even if it proves to have had no foundation in fact may have done some immediate good so far as Kuwait is concerned in that the Director of Public Security appears to have been enough frightened by the article (which was translated to him) to have decided he will accept long-standing British advice that he should have a British security expert to set up an anti-subversives department in Public Security. The Consulate is hopeful that the Director of Public Security's agreement for this adviser will soon be formally obtained. A cooperative British adviser would be an invaluable contact man for the Consulate for exchange of information and would also be important in the prevention of the development of subversive activity of any sort in Kuwait.

*H M Symmes*

Harrison M. Symmes  
American Consul

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