

JUN 2 1954

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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : AMEMBASSY TEHRAN 779
TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.
REF : CA-5858, April 15, 1954.

DESP. NO.

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SUBJECT: EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE: U.S. Specialist Program.

The Embassy has read with interest the suggestion in the referenced instruction of Mr. Solomon McCombs for a U.S. Specialist.

The suggestion is very interesting, but in order to make full use of his visit here a considerable amount of build-up would be necessary. Iranians know very little about American Indians except for certain highly-colored films that have found their way to Iran. Unlike Europeans, the young people of Iran seem to be quite unfamiliar with James Fenimore Cooper. Unfortunately their chief information about the Indian problem is gleaned from one book which has had recent and wide circulation, especially among leftist groups. This book is The Last Frontier by Howard Fast, which was translated into Persian and published here at a low price with the backing, it is believed, of an unfriendly power.

In the judgment of the Embassy it would be unwise, if Mr. Whitfield is going to be sent as an athletic representative from the U.S., to have two such visits of representatives from minority groups come so close together. A similar situation exists in connection with the Negro problem as presented to Iranians.

The chief impression of Negro life in America comes from the works of Erskine Caldwell, all of which have been translated into Persian and published here, probably under the same auspices as the Howard Fast book.

Under the circumstances it seems unwise to urge that Mr. McCombs be sent, since too much emphasis on our minorities would probably be misconstrued.

For the Ambassador:

G. Edward Wells

G. Edward Wells,
Public Affairs Officer

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NND 85 2213
7/9/92
MARA Date

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