

Iraq Government

PLEASE RETAIN
ORIGINAL ORDER

Ucar

UN ARCHIVES

SERIES 0527
BOX 263
FILE S-1309-0000-0015
ACG.

4(5)

File

4(5)/2

original deleted

14 June 1944

TO: James T. Patterson
FROM: Alvin Roseman
SUBJECT: Possible uses for UNRRA contribution from
Iraq and Iran

A recent cable from Washington includes the question of what practical benefit we could make during Balkan operations or in the camps of the operating contribution to be made to UNRRA by Iraq and Iran.

Since Captain Johnston has been in Iran, would it be possible for him to check into this situation confidentially to see what possible surpluses could be drawn out of those two countries which would be useful in our program? We should also try to get information as to the national income of these two countries and Johnston might talk with Hoddinott about this problem. Mr. Kelsey should also be consulted about this matter.

ARoseman/gfb

CONFIDENTIAL

No. 13264

MOSUL

Office of Strategic Services
U. S. Army Forces in the Middle East

IRAQ

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC

American Failures in Meeting Local Situation

BUFFED

- I. American investigators to date have been typical children of the machine age. Their first reaction to a visit in this area is machinery and more of it. Machinery in here is fine if the machine has a man to run and maintain it, but not otherwise. Right now sitting in the Armenian refugee village of Hoveri, there is a Case harvester, some gang plows, discs, harrows, a reaper and a binder, that have sat there for years because some of our American enthusiasts in a mis-guided spirit of philanthropy sent them to the refugee Armenians to help with the crops. The refugees, being folk who had never run a piece of equipment like it, naturally did not use it, and all the perfectly good farming material lies rusting. It is also to be noted that the Arab government that has similar machinery in use in Baghdad, did absolutely nothing along the lines of education, but will ship its machines from Baghdad with drivers and mechanics so that Sfuq of the Shawmar can plow his land.
- II. Our investigators seem also to miss the point that there is grain in abundance in the area, if only the government will stop messing around with Pan-Arab aspirations and pay a little attention to its own housekeeping. The so-called rationing of this year's crop has been so mucked up that very little is going where it is required and the farmer, due to the suspicion that someone else is making a 1000 percent profit, is not planting at the usual rate. The trucks given the government for grain distribution have been used in the lamentable and unnecessary Mulla Mustapha affair and a fair proportion are engaged in private hauling. M.E.S.C. would do a good job if they sat on and took control of the food distribution and rationing. In this case, however, their popularity would set a new low record that will stand for years to come.
- III. We often do not realize that these folk are not absolutely hopeless because they will not leap at every suggestion made and acclaim it as the idea of the century. They are hard conservative peasants, and compare well in progressiveness with many of our own people. It was not so long ago that there used to be pretty hot debates in our own country on the merits of the horse-drawn plow as opposed to the tractor. Yet many a Bureau of Animal Industry man has been run off an American farm with a shot gun due to his activity in eradication of hog cholera, and hoof and mouth disease. The O.W.I. in this regard could do a lot of good by employing a circulating "county agent" type to instruct and assist farmers. Local Americans have unofficially constituted themselves such, with good results in this year's corn crop and apples, in at least one village, but the job requires men with more specialized knowledge than they possess.
- IV. The chief thing that needs doing at present is the proper and rapid distribution of the grain on hand, using the equipment allotted that job. This is fully within the scope of MESC power and should be insisted upon.

Distribution:

MESC/FEA

OWI

Lon

Wash

Files

Date of Information: Nov. 30, 1943
Cairo : Dec. 23, 1943
Source : Ibex
Evaluation : C-2

CONFIDENTIAL
equals British CONFIDENTIAL