

Resource Sheet #4

FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

SECURITY: CONFIDENTIAL

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Authority NND 832913
By CC. NARA. Date 7/9/92

PRIORITY: AIR POUCH

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TO: Department of State

511.885/5-1650

FROM: AMEMBASSY, Tehran, 5-16-50

REF: Department's circular airmgram of January 18, 1950, 8:20 a.m.

SUBJECT: MOTION PICTURES. The film TWO CITIES

The film TWO CITIES has been received and screened by responsible officers at the Embassy. It is the consensus that it would be inadvisable for the Embassy to grant this film wide circulation at this time. However, the Embassy would like to retain this print for showing to selected audiences. It is possible that in the event Soviet propaganda opens out into direct attacks on the U.S.A. within Iran, the Embassy will find use for this kind of film.

The treatment this subject matter receives in TWO CITIES is rather heavy-handed, and the propaganda content is fairly obvious. The film's value of course would be extremely limited with only an English sound track. If this film is to be put to use in Iran it would be necessary in some way to provide a Persian language commentary. With this in mind, the Embassy would appreciate it if the Department would forward a copy of the English script of this film.

The Embassy would like to suggest that if the Department is considering the production of films of more obvious propaganda type, that a short motion picture, probably of ten minutes duration, that pokes fun at the communist system without mentioning it as such, would find an appreciative audience in Iran. Further, if this film were done in the style of Disney using his technique with the familiar Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, Pluto, and so forth, the reception would be further enhanced. The Embassy wonders if, in the light of the increasing tempo of the cold war, Mr. Disney as a patriotic duty could be interested in preparing such a film that could be used to defend democracy where the communist system is being touted loudly. The Iranian people like clever satire and the Disney style is known and liked here, therefore the combination of the two would provide a very strong media for putting across our message. A technique of lampooning the communist system without mentioning it as such would be better received than the heavy-handed technique evident in TWO CITIES.

The Embassy would like to make a further suggestion in connection with anti-communist motion picture material. Very good use would be made of newsreel clips of approximately 100 feet in length (35mm) showing various Soviet acts that are undemocratic and express the amor views of the Soviet system. These newsreel clips would be without comment and be strictly factual reporting. For example, scenes showing

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JLHamilton:kjd 5-16-50

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refugees coming out of the satellite countries into the western zones of Germany; a scene showing the walkout by a Soviet delegation at the U.N.; the Russian fliers who escaped to the U.S. testifying why they prefer the American way; scenes of the wreckage of the plane that was shot down in the Baltic; blockade of the trucks at the Soviet border in Germany.

Upon receipt of this material in short lengths of film, the Embassy could distribute it to the local cinemas for showing in conjunction with the regular newsreels. Although it would be best to provide this material with Persian language sound track, it would be perfectly satisfactory to us the old silent film technique of captions in Persian. The latter method would get the films to the Embassy faster at a lower cost. We believe this kind of film material would be more useful at this time than the film TWO CITIES.

For the Charge d'Affaires ad interim:



G. Edward Wells
Public Affairs Officer

A Memo from the American Embassy in Tehran to the Department of State, January 18, 1950.
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