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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : USIS, Baghdad

70

August 17, 1954

DESP. NO.

DATE

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

AIR POUCH
PRIORITY

REF : None

SUBJECT: NAJI MUSA

File
AUG 21 1954
NAVY-3
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CIA-7
USIA-10
UNA-4
ARMY-4

Among those killed in the Baghdad riots of November 1952, was a younger brother of Naji Musa, an Iraqi medical student at Montpelier, France. In January 1953, impelled by a feeling that "something was wrong" at home he returned to Iraq on leave and found that his brother, an innocent bystander, had been felled by a police bullet.

Mr. Musa approached USIS stating that he was very bitter against the Communists who had been responsible for his brother's death by fomenting and exploiting the disturbances. He wanted very much to do something to counter Communist influence on Iraqi youth. After long hours of discussion with the Acting Public Affairs Officer, Frank Magliozzi, as to the best way to do this, Mr. Musa stated that he would be willing to write and sign a short pamphlet in the form of an open letter which USIS would disseminate at its discretion. The "letter" spoke of his brother's death and cautioned Iraq students and others against following the communist leadership.

USIS accepted the letter and sought ways to disseminate it without attribution. USIS felt that such distribution would increase its effectiveness.

Arrangements were finally made with the help of Rufail Butti, who then was the Minister of Information to disseminate the letter through a nationalist youth organization.

At USIS request, NERSC produced several thousand copies of the letter on a classified basis and forwarded them to Baghdad. Another copy of the letter was given to Mr. Butti late in November 1953, a few days before the anniversary of the riots, nicely packaged and a box containing 2000 copies was ready for delivery in the car of the Assistant Public Affairs Officer. Mr. Butti promised albeit without great enthusiasm, to give immediate attention to the problem of dissemination of the letter but the box was not pressed upon him at the moment and later that evening was stolen from the car. Discreet efforts to trace it were unsuccessful.

Nothing more was heard of these pamphlets until this month

DDNewsom; FFMagliozzi

REPORTER(S)

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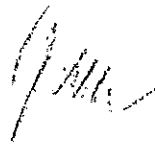
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when Naji Musa returned for the summer from Montpelier, to report that very shortly after November 1953, copies of his letter were brandished in his face by some of the Iraqi students in France, and he was accused of being in the pay of the imperialists. This was in Paris where he was mocked at frequently as being on the losing side. He told USIS officers that most of the 50 Iraqi students in France are Communists, even the sons of the rich. Since his pamphlet was "discovered" he has been more or less ostracized by most of his Iraqi student friends. This has merely increased his desire to fight the Communist movement and he has again offered his services to USIS for this purpose.

The loss of these pamphlets was an unfortunate occurrence, but the entire incident illustrates the difficulties of arranging for unattributed local distribution, the lack of security within the Iraq government and the rapid Communist facilities apparently available to the Communists in this part of the world.


David D. Newsom
Public Affairs Officer

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