

In reply refer to
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By ey NARA, Date 6/4/17

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October 27, 1952

Dear Mr. Smith:

The purpose of this letter is to provide guidance for Franklin Publications, Inc., in its publication and distribution of works in Arabic using funds granted by the State Department. All of the following suggestions are, of course, subject to modification as you and we gain experience in actual operations.

I. General character of psychological and ideological problems faced by the United States in the Arab area.

The Arab area, for many centuries the most powerful military and economic force and the most advanced cultural center of Mediterranean civilization, remained isolated by political, economic, linguistic, and religious barriers from Western Europe during the centuries in which the latter area developed modern forms of governmental and social organization, empirical scientific methodology, industrial technology, and modern military organization and techniques. Stagnation and foreign conquests led to economic decline, political and military helplessness, cultural and technical deterioration, and inbred and sterile intellectual life.

In the late nineteenth century began a slow awakening that brought an awareness of the disparity of Arab and European development and a burning determination to recover at least in part former Arab greatness. This in turn led to an intense nationalism originally focussed, like South American nationalism of a century earlier, not so much on individual states as on a regional independence from foreign, in this case primarily Ottoman, control. During the first World War, Arab participation on the Allied side was identified with British support of Arab independence.

While some of the Arab world received formal political independence as a consequence of that war, the decisions were considered generally unsatisfactory and brought subsequent unrest to Egypt, Lebanon, Palestine and Iraq. British and French, to some degree Italian and Spanish, political control exercised through a variety of channels, enlarged its power and replaced Ottoman dominances. No

Arab state

Mr. Datus C. Smith, Jr.,
President,

Franklin Publications, Inc.,
14 East 28th Street,
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Arab state except Saudi Arabia enjoyed a genuine and free political independence.

The economic life of the region, unsupported by either capital resources or advanced technology, the twin bases of Western economy, and constrained by feudal pattern of agriculture, has remained at a low level; and its weaknesses were brought to sharper realization by closer contrast with the relatively high economic level of Europe and America. The discovery that this region held a rich share of the world's known resources of petroleum aggravated rather than solved the problem. The lack of capital and skill and the political weakness of the Arab states laid these resources open to Western exploitation through gigantic enterprises that often appeared to be foreign enclaves in the Arab economy.

The second World War exacerbated Arab feelings and those of the Middle East generally. Military necessity dictated intervention into the territory and affairs of Middle Eastern countries (e.g., Egypt and Iran). The war also demonstrated Western dependence on Middle Eastern oil and weakened the ability of the Western powers to maintain their traditional political hold over the area.

These events gave the spur of bitterness and the enticement of prospective success to an intensely nationalistic, indeed a fanatical, drive to be free of Western control, a drive to which patriotic, racial, religious, and economic motives alike impelled nearly all classes. Final intensity was given this drive by the explosive Arab reaction against Western and particularly American support for the partition of Palestine and the creation of Israel.

The primarily negative reaction against the West with which we need to deal therefore revolves around the belief that the West has over a long period sought to exploit the people and the resources of the Arab world for its own purposes, that this exploitation has involved the deliberate continuation of a quasi-colonial political status, and that it has produced or at least perpetuated and aggravated the poverty of the area. Envy has reinforced suspicion, and helplessness and frustration have made it irrational. To this set of attitudes has been added a hostility arising from religious sources - perhaps no longer primarily a zealous detestation of the infidel but rather a resentment of the contempt or indifference with which the West is thought to view Islam and Islamic civilization, coupled with a conservative aversion to what are thought to be the materialism, godlessness, and immorality of Western and particularly American life.

This conviction

This conviction that the West contemns the Arab world and is prepared to "use" it for its own ends has particular relevance to international relations, since twice in a generation the Arab area has been the theater of hostilities between Western powers in which Arabs have felt they had no stake or were defrauded with respect to the stakes they had. The support of Israel they construe as another evidence of the willingness of Western, and especially American, political leaders unconcernedly to sacrifice vital Arab interests for temporary domestic political advantage. Similarly, efforts to promote a joint defense to the Middle East against Russia are viewed cynically as schemes to use Arabs in the defense of resources and routes vital to the West rather than as evidence of a genuine desire to protect the Arabs themselves against totalitarian enslavement.

In contrast, though most Arabs dislike Russia and detest Communism, they are inclined to dismiss the Soviet threat as one remote and unfamiliar in comparison with what they hold to be the known and present evils of Western control. Though few Arabs are prepared even to consider the acceptance of Communism for themselves, there is still a reckless willingness in many quarters to consider it as a desirable counterpoise to the West in the creation of a balance of power within which a neutral Islamic third force may have room to bargain itself into a genuinely independent position of power.

These considerations of international relations are complicated by internal factors. Economically, the Arab area has steadily fallen farther and farther behind the West; and there exist now few conditions for rapid economic growth. The income of the area permits only minimal subsistence, not capital formation. Technical education does not meet the demands of technical development. Psychological attitudes and traditional social structure alike impede economic change. While blind nationalization dreams of immediate industrialization and the management of enormous oil enterprises, equally blind class interest opposes the changes in land tenure and credit arrangements essential to the attainment of even modest improvement in the standards of living. The consequence is disparity between rich and poor and ever more acutely unbearable misery among the people generally that make unstable and undependable every possible political or military arrangement within this area. It is not, of course, our responsibility to deal with this economic situation directly, but insofar as its causes and consequences are psychological, they lie within our sphere.

A second internal factor is the similar political instability. There is almost no political authority within the Arab world which enjoys the legitimacy of long tradition or overwhelming acceptance.

The peoples

The peoples of none of the Arab countries, unless possibly it be the Lebanon, have been drawn together into any functioning body politic capable of according any meaningful consent of the governed. Naked power, narrow class interest, corrupt self-seeking have characterized most Arab governments. Assassination is likely to be the source as well as the fate of authority. This absence of stable and responsible political authority has enormously complicated the task of the Western powers in working out understandings with the Arab world. Especially has it imposed obstacles to Western cooperation in achieving indispensable economic reforms.

Finally, political and economic instability has been coupled with a rigid and traditional religious system which has reinforced the fanatical and irrational elements in Arab attitudes and made difficult if not impossible any reasonable course of compromise.

The pessimism of this picture is by no means unrelieved. The power and the wealth of the West and especially of America have created respect as well as envy and suspicion. Individual Americans are likely to be well regarded and American educational and missionary enterprises have won both prestige and affection. The gravity of the Soviet menace is being more clearly seen. There is a growing if reluctant realization that only the West has the resources of capital and technical skill necessary to the development of the Arab world and that collaboration with the West is inescapable. Optimists may view the chaos of the last year or two as involving a revulsion against the worst in the present situation and a groping toward responsible government. At least the promise of the initiation of essential economic reform is in prospect. And finally, within Islam itself there are important, if as yet minority movements, toward the reconciliation of traditional faith with contemporary empiricism and pragmatism.

This all too summary view, which omits highly important distinctions of class and country, nevertheless emphasizes that American and Western interests have more immediately to fear from the negative collapse of the tenuous economic and political order of that area than from the positive success of Communist doctrine. Unless it be imposed by force from without, Communism is unlikely to come to power except as a means of resolving chaos. It is desirable that Arabs have a healthy awareness of Soviet Communism as the implacable enemy of all of their aspirations in order to provide a stimulus toward prompter association with the West in measures of common defense. But an even more urgent psychological objective is the establishment of such attitudes toward the West and towards the internal problems of the area as may permit a close collaboration

between

between the West and the Arab area in strengthening the economy of the latter, in aiding it toward the achievement of political stability, and in establishing a joint defense of the area.

II. Objectives of Franklin Publications.

The various psychological objectives of the United States in this area can be achieved through varying media. Those to which we believe the IIA-financed operations of Franklin Publications should be particularly addressed are:

1. Minimizing the difficulty of Arab-Western negotiations by reducing Arab ignorance, suspicion, and resentment of the West and particularly the United States and by emphasizing the candor, integrity, and friendliness of Western and particularly American motives in the area.
2. Creating a realistic and comprehensive world-view in which Arabs can see a secure and respected role for themselves, their countries, and their culture.
3. Aiding in the acquisition by Arab literate groups of insights into the character of responsible government, of sound social and economic policy, and of effective economic organization.
4. Establishing an understanding of and sense of communion with the central themes of Western thought, with especial emphasis on those most eloquently stating Western ideals of the dignity and freedom of individual men.

III. Basic character of operations and relations with Arab officials and institutions.

It is obvious that Franklin Publications will have an important effect on Arab attitudes by the character and tone of its operations as well as by the content of the books it publishes. Three things should always be borne in mind in this connection: The deeply felt suspicion, or even conviction, that the Arab people are merely the object of Western policy used by the West for the latter's ends; the cynical suspicion of "propaganda;" and the primacy among your objectives of aiding to establish attitudes that can facilitate Arab-Western collaboration. It is therefore of the utmost importance, not merely in selecting titles for use, but also in the character of your local contracts and arrangements that all other considerations be subordinated to the establishment of reciprocal good faith in its broadest sense.

Specifically, this means:

1. You should on the one hand avoid the kind of association with American political and information activities that would aggravate the suspicion as to your motives that will undoubtedly be encountered in any case.

2. You should, on the other hand, be prepared candidly to admit that the operations of Franklin are aided by contributions from the State Department. This should be pictured in the same terms as State's aid to the Institute for International Education or the United States Book Exchange - as a desire by the Government to forward a worthy effort at international understanding.

3. You should open negotiations with cultural and educational officials and leaders on the basis of seeking to determine what kinds of publications can be most effectively useful to the mutually shared ends of the United States and the Arab area. These negotiations should be and can be carried on in entire good faith, since it is the case that basic Arab and American objectives in the area are very largely identical.

4. In this connection it should be borne in mind that a genuinely close working relationship with the effective foci of opinion formulation and dissemination in the area, such as ministries of education and universities, can open the way to returns incomparably more important to the United States than any that can be achieved by operations that will incur their resentment and distrust.

5. Similarly, close cooperation with and utilization of local publishers, printers, and distributors is desirable as a means of assuring their good will and avoiding resentment or suspicion that the Corporation is an instrument of competitive commercial intrusion. Other aspects of cooperation with the local industry are dealt with below.

6. The Corporation should plan its operations not only as an instrument for communication between the West (especially the United States) and the Arab area, but also as an instrument for helping in the solution of the grave problems of internal communication within the Arab world. That is, insofar as they contribute to the objectives previously defined it should endeavor to aid in providing channels of expression for the sane, constructive, and progressive elements of the Arab world itself and cooperate in meeting the needs of the Arab states for educational and similar materials.

IV. Relations to United States embassies and legations in the area.

Though, as noted above, it will be desirable both in your present trip and in any field operations Franklin Publications may maintain in the area to avoid the degree of association with the Embassy which would tend to establish Franklin Publications in local eyes as a mere tool of the State Department, it will be necessary to maintain a close liaison with the public affairs officers in the missions concerned. Each public affairs officer will be very helpful to you in reviewing current psychological problems in his country and in giving you information about the local nationals with whom you will be dealing. The views of every public affairs officer should be solicited in detail and given the fullest consideration in developing the program. No publication should be produced or distributed in a country against the wishes of the public affairs officer for that area.

As you know, public affairs officers at most major posts have had allocated to them in the past sums of money with which they have been enabled to make contracts with local publishers for the production of desired translations. In the Arab areas large allotments have gone only to Cairo, and, as you already know, a very limited translations program has been carried on in that area thus far. However, shortly before the close of the last fiscal year the Embassy at Cairo negotiated contracts with five or six Egyptian publishers calling for the translation and publication of some fifty books, the titles to be subject to later determination and agreement between the Embassy and the publishers. These and other contracts or commitments in being will, of course, be executed and should be taken into account in your program. Until Franklin's plans could be more definitely formulated, we have not yet made allotments from fiscal 1953 funds to public affairs officers in the Arab area for translations projects. But we will be able to make modest allotments in that area in order to enable public affairs officers to maintain working relationships which they think desirable with local publishers; to enable them to arrange for the production of books which it is unwise to have produced through the Franklin channels; and to avoid an abrupt cessation of existing translations activities which would call undesirable attention to Franklin's association with the Department. The amount in each case can be fixed after the public affairs officer has been able to determine his needs after discussion with you. It will be assumed, however, that Franklin Publications will take on the bulk of translations activities in this area, not replacing the public affairs officers' activities in this field but rather affording him a more efficient instrument for accomplishing them than he has. Similar instructions will have been given the public affairs officers prior to your arrival.

You should make a special point of familiarizing yourself with the plans and operations of the reproduction center at Beirut, which produces for the International Press Service pamphlets, leaflets, cartoon narratives, and similar

and similar materials. Though these materials complement rather than in any sense duplicate anything that Franklin will propose, they should be taken fully into account, and there should be the freest exchange of information between any future Franklin Publications field office and the reproduction center.

V. Business relations with local publishers.

Though as pointed out earlier, it is highly desirable to make the maximum possible use of local publishing, manufacturing, and distributing facilities in order to avoid commercial competition, it should be borne clearly in mind that a principal reason for the establishment of Franklin Publications is the inadequacy of existing facilities for those purposes. Much of our aim would have been defeated if the operations of Franklin Publications did not result in an enlargement and improvement of existing publishing channels in the country concerned. This can be accomplished by a number of means. With the prior approval of the Department in each case advances of working capital can be made to local publishers. Equipment can in some cases be provided. Technical assistance and advice should be freely available. The facilities of Franklin Publications can be used to make possible the distribution through all the Arab states of publications produced in any of them. New channels of distribution can be developed just as reprints came to be put on sale in drug stores in this country. Educational institutions and organizations of all sorts can be developed as a means of distribution. The success with which this sort of thing is accomplished will be in large part a measure of the success of the project itself.

VI. Establishment of the field office.

I think it would be essential to establish the field office of Franklin Publications, which, though it may have only limited editorial responsibility, will need to have a great deal of freedom in business matters. I hope you will be able to get this lined up while you are in the area. There seems to be a definite consensus in the Department that Cairo is the appropriate place for such an office.

VII. Types of books to be produced.

A. Audience

Franklin Publications should be aimed, I believe, at a broad audience that excludes at the one extreme the highly sophisticated Western educated intellectual who has a fluent command of one or more

Western

Western languages and at the other extreme at the semi-literate and illiterate masses. Of perhaps special importance are:

1. college and university students
2. the white-collar class generally
3. government officials and employees
4. the conservative intellectual community who have received a traditional Muslim rather than Western education

B. Types of publications

Attention should, I believe, be concentrated on textbooks, reference works having a political, social, and economic content, and trade books in inexpensive format. Pamphlets, magazines, cartoon narratives and the like will not be produced with the funds granted by the Information Center Service. In all of the classes of books enumerated below to which this consideration is relevant, it would be desirable, I think, to conceive of three possible levels, one aimed at the university student and middle level government official, one at the high school educated clerk level, and one at the juvenile level.

C. Subject matter and themes

The subject matter of publications that would be most useful for our objectives is to some extent defined by the four objectives set forth earlier in this letter, and the various themes are here grouped under those four headings.

1. Related to minimizing the difficulty of Arab-Western collaboration by reducing Arab ignorance and resentment of the West.

a. The first (not necessarily first in either importance or timing) should be works aimed at making Westerners and particularly Americans more familiar and understandable. The simple novel and simple poetry may be the best instruments. Emphasis should be given to the egalitarianism of American life, to family stability, and to its moral, idealistic, and cultural qualities. Obviously not all publications of the types described can be financed with the available IIA funds, and individual projects will, of course, require Department approval before their actual initiations. It is in the following fields, however, we believe projects can be most fruitfully developed.

b. A second category should be aimed at emphasizing the specifically liberal, democratic, and humane aspects of American

government and economic order. The writings of the Revolutionary period, selections from Jefferson, Lincoln, Wilson, and Roosevelt, simple American histories, biographies of national heroes, an account of TVA are examples.

c. A third should emphasize the independence of American economic development from imperialism. A simple account of American relations with the Philippines might be in order.

d. A fourth should emphasize persistent American friendliness for and interest in the Arab world. Accounts of American philanthropic activities in the area, Wilson's support of self-determination, the growing interest in Arab history and civilization, the Point Four program, are all suitable themes. An especial effort should be devoted to publications that emphasize U. S. neutrality between Israel and the Arabs, an awareness of Arab rights in the controversy, and a determination to help the whole area achieve stability and prosperity.

2. Related to helping the Arabs achieve a sound and comprehensive world picture in which they may play a respective role may be mentioned:

a. Brief encyclopedias and other reference works.

b. College texts in the general field of world history, contemporary international affairs, economics, and related matters.

c. One category of this general group would be works on contemporary history that would help place the Arab world in its proper framework. Perhaps a journal of reprints from Western journals like Foreign Affairs, Pacific Affairs, the Middle East Journal, etc., would be desirable, as well as a thoughtful but simple written series of books.

d. Similar general works on population and food would be useful. Castro's The Geography of Hunger comes to mind, as do the economic surveys of ECOSOC and FAO. Resources for Freedom (the recently issued report of the President's Materials Policy Commission) is another example to be considered. Any work placing the Arab economic situation in its realistic world frame would be desirable.

e. Essential in this category is material clarifying current Russian tyranny and imperialism, especially as it affects the Middle East, Islam, and the opportunity for freedom and national self-development in nations it controls.

3. Related

3. Related to aiding Arabs in the acquisition of insights into the character of responsible government, of public, social and economic policy, and of economic organization. Here I am not thinking of publications whose purpose is to convey the actual techniques, but of those aimed at conveying the understanding of social (including political and economic) organization in terms that are viable in the present Arab situation.

a. Simple materials on democratic processes, on taxation, on social security, on land policy, on soil conservation, on labor organization, on cooperatives, on farm organizations, on government irrigation policy, on rural health services, on educational theory and practice are all desirable to the end.

b. Also useful would be a body of materials aimed at a more realistic knowledge of economics, especially the economics of development in the Point Four sense. A general work at the elementary level on economics, and others on agriculture economy, transport, and world trade would be helpful.

c. Especially useful would be works recounting the experience of similarly situated countries in achieving a stable and socially responsible governmental and economic organization. Turkey is perhaps the best example, but India, Indonesia, and perhaps the Philippines and Pakistan afford useful material. Indigenous materials of these countries is best, and should not, of course, have a tone of superiority to the Arab area.

d. Finally, works related to or embodying the central themes of Western thought from Plato onward, with especial emphasis on those most eloquently stating the Western ideals of the dignity and freedom of individual men. The most practical approach here may be through anthologies and series of selections.

a. Under this heading might be a simple general work on the history of Western philosophy, a series of selections or an anthology of Western political thought, and the texts of a carefully selected half-dozen works embodying contemporary thought.

b. Also to be included here would be some treatment of science as a mode of thought - perhaps Conant's recent work, perhaps a selection from Dewey's essays, perhaps some of Whitehead's less difficult essays.

A. somewhat

A somewhat difficult problem is imposed by the question of technical and scientific publications. It is not believed to be an appropriate use of IIA funds to sponsor the publication of such materials except in terms of their psychological significance. Funds are separately allotted to the Department under the Mutual Security Act to enable it to carry on in this area technical assistance activities that are devoted to the actual improvement of the productivity and economic level of the area. You will undoubtedly encounter a large local demand to produce a great deal of material of this sort; and there is no reason why you should not do so in those instances in which you believe, and we concur, that the proposed project will serve a psychological purpose - that is, will affect the attitudes on public issues of the people of the area. You should consult on this point very closely with the Point Four mission in the field, and it may be that Franklin Publications can go farther and produce for them materials whose primary justification is actual economic sediment. Obviously the two objectives go hand in hand, and it would be highly desirable that Franklin Publications should have a well-rounded line in this field; but I do not feel free to approve the use of IIA funds for large-scale operations the primary purpose of which is clearly technological. One possibility is cooperative undertakings in which the Arab countries themselves may undertake to defray a large part of the local production costs of scientific and technical publications which Franklin Publications could help them select, edit, and procure rights for, etc. I should be very glad to see our funds used to support this type of operation in which a close cooperation with ministers of education might be established.

There is no need to confine operations of the project to the translations of the works of American authors. The publication of suitable writings by indigenous authors should be actively developed, and an especially good use may be made of publications emanating from other countries with similar problems (e.g., Pakistan). Other Western publications may be used to whatever extent they serve our objectives.

Sincerely yours,

Dan Lacy
Director
Information Center Service

cleared in draft with IPO - Mr. G. H. Damon, who obtained clearances from OIR/CPI-Mr. L. Olom, NEA/P-Mr. Sanger and IFI/N-Mr. Fisk. Revisions suggested were made and cleared with those concerned (ie, IPO-Mr. Damon, IFI-Fisk) by ICS-Dan Lacy by phone on 10/27.

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S/S - CR
NOV 5 - 1952 P.M.

IIA:IGS:DLacy:maa
10/27/52

(Lacy)

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : DCP

DATE: November 5, 1952

FROM : ICS - Dan Lacy (*lynea*)

SUBJECT: Attached letter to Mr. Datus C. Smith, Jr., Franklin Publications, Inc.

Republication and distribution of works in Arabic

Please send the attached letter to Mr. Smith via registered mail

with "return receipt requested." Mr. Smith has been cleared by SY to receive material through top secret.

*Do not change typed date on letter.
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