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Authority *MAD 745023*

By *J.P.* NARA Date *2-29-08*

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In reply

July 11

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002226 refer to

Serial N-1998

B-7 orig

MEMORANDUM TO:

J.I.A. Reception Center, Washington, D. C.

MIS (APP) (2)

SUBJECT:

Transmittal of Documents.

MIS (AB) (3)

JA-3

1. Forwarded herewith reports, documents

JA-2

and/or for proper dissemination:

JA-4

Copy of secret report dated June 10, 1943 from Commanding Officer, Tunisian Detachment to The Hon. Robert D. MURPHY, American Minister, on subject: "TUNISIA".

Op-16-11

Report No. A-113 dated June 17, 1943 on subject: "POLITICAL PRISON CAMPS - NORTH AFRICA", from EXP. DET. G-3.

Copy of Report dated June 4, 1943, source O.S.S., on subject: "CONDITIONS IN ITALY AND IN GERMANY".

Distribution: ONI (Capt. Wharton, Op-16-B-7)
File (less all enclosures)

J. M. Major
612 E. M. MAJOR
Captain, USNR

FREDERICK D. SHARP
Colonel, G.S.C.

8-11-43

AB (Show me, SE/CE)

Air

ABF

AEF:

G-2

G-3

Lend-Lease

Sec + Int.

CIE

gm

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General was fortunate one. He has handled a number of delicate problems capably. However, the fact that he is awaiting the arrival of General Mast as permanent Resident General has undoubtedly led to the postponement of many pressing organization problems.

Generally speaking the central administration is not very efficient but it is felt that this situation may correct itself when permanent officials are in office. More detailed information will have been supplied by the Consul General.

II. Arabs.

The Arab problem is not thought to represent anything new but rather to be the same old problem intensified by German propaganda carried out during the period of occupation. The Destur group has for years asked for equal political and economic rights for the Arabs. The Germans told the Arabs that these demands and more would be given to them. The Germans put the Arabs into positions of authority, treated them as social equals, and paid exorbitant prices for their goods. All this, based as it was on years of propaganda before the war, was bound to have a great effect. The vast majority of the Arabs do not in any way consider this their war and will give their temporary support to whatever side they consider strongest and likely to do the most for them. Many Arabs not only felt friendly towards the Axis forces but also actively supported them by sabotage, by supplying information, and also unquestionably by murdering soldiers of the Allied forces. How much of this active support was based on a desire for an Axis victory and how much on the payment of money is difficult to say. It is thought that the Arabs would have committed many of the same acts in favor of Allied forces if they had been paid for such "services". At this point the

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important place taken by Colonel Allen's Arab markets in counter-acting Axis propaganda among the Arabs can not be overstressed.

The French in general state simply that all Arabs are bad and it is feared that this feeling may break out in mass reprisal. This is particularly true in areas under the control of such men as Colonel Tribot-Laspierre and the importance of placing men of the caliber of Colonel Schmaltz in charge of the Arabs is again stressed. It is thought that in a large part the Arabs acted in a manner which was to be expected and to show surprise at their activity at this time is not realistic. The number of Arabs who have felt loyalty towards the French is probably small and the French must have known that the Arabs would turn toward any power which they thought would help their position. Those Arabs who actively supported the Axis should be apprehended immediately and shot or otherwise severely punished. Mass reprisal would only intensify a problem that is not new.

A good part of the effect of the German propaganda has unquestionably been dissipated by the very direct proof that the forces of the Allies are stronger than those of the Axis. A program now of firm but just treatment along with the reestablishment of Caids and other Arab officials friendly to the Allied cause, it is thought, would go a long way toward settling the Arab problem as far as it effects the war. The long term problem of how the French and the Arabs are to live together is another question.

The actual strength of the Destur movement is not known. Its various branches undoubtedly have quite a large nominal membership but the Active membership is probably small.

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III. Jews.

The position of the Jews in Tunisia is unquestionably somewhat difficult. They were required to pay large fines by the Germans and their normal employment as clerks, shop keepers, tailors, and such has largely disappeared with the war. Anti-Jewish feeling is also strong among both the French and the Arabs.

In considering the condition of the Jews it is to be remembered that a good portion of them are so-called Tunisian Jews who have always lived on about the same economic level as the poorer Arabs. Thousands of Jewish families, however, both among the European and Tunisian Jews are close to the point of destitution. These people must have some assistance but it is thought that direct relief by us would be the wrong way to handle the problem. For one thing, it would unquestionably antagonize the Arabs and while we may deplore the Anti-Jewish feeling of the Arabs it is thought somewhat difficult to attempt to change this feeling over night. There is a great deal of work to be done in rebuilding the ruined cities of Tunisia and the Jews who are without employment or means should be offered employment in this reconstruction work. The work, unfortunately, is mainly of a manual type which most of the Jews are not accustomed to doing but with real work needing to be done we would not be justified in inventing work simply so that these people would have a more congenial type of employment. Those few who are unable to work should be taken care of by the various Jewish Relief Organizations now in existence and if necessary these relief organizations should be given the required amount of assistance by us.

IV. Italians.

The problem here is the many small farmers and fishermen who are neither fascist or anti-fascist and who are merely trying to eke out a bare living. All Italian property will be sequestered or con-

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trolled. Friendly Italians are supposed to act as their own sequestrators and the sequestration is used merely as a means of freezing transfers. Only the property of unfriendly Italians is to be confiscated and care must be taken that the dividing line is observed. The group of Italians who are suffering the most at the present time are the fishermen. These people have always lived on a very low economic level and as they are now forbidden to fish by the British their situation is close to being desperate. It is thought that the vast majority of these people are perfectly reliable and the possibility of permitting some of them at least to fish within a half mile of the coast is now being discussed with the British.

V. Food and Civilian Supplies

Food and other civilian supplies that were shipped into Tunisia were divided between Lend-Lease goods and Tunisian Stockpile supplies. We, at first, maintained control of the stockpile goods but at a very early date most of these supplies were also turned over to the French, for distribution subject to our control. Supplies were located at various strategic points around Le Kef, Souk-El-Arba, Tebessa and other towns with the idea that needed food and clothing would be rushed in as soon as an area was liberated. Certain supplies were immediately brought in on our trucks but the bulk of the supplies were to be brought in by the French. The French distribution system did not work and as late as June 1 only a few carloads of supplies had arrived for the Medenine, Gabes, Sfax, Kairouan and Sousse areas. Supplies for the Tunis area, however, did arrive close to schedule.

When it became apparent that the distribution system by train planned by the French was not working, steps were immediately taken to obtain trucks which the French could use to bring supplies into the various areas and to distribute such supplies locally within

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