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Lebanese delegation, 1947.

MEMORANDUM

To Dr. Abba Hillel Silver

Date July 29, 1947

From Eliahu Ben-Horin

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

In a recent report of Eliahu Epstein to you about his conversation with Dr. Awad he wrote that he intends to discuss again the question of Lebanese activities in this country with Makarzel, the publisher and editor of Al Hoda. Furthermore, it appeared that Epstein intends to condition to some extent our support for the Lebanese here on Makarzel's attitude. This seems the more likely in light of Epstein's practices in the past year or two, when he constantly refused to help Awad in his mission under the influence of Makarzel.

I doubted the wisdom of this policy of Epstein's all the time, especially as the Al Hoda never said a good word for us, whereas Awad and particularly the people higher up whom he represents in this country, did us many good turns, even at considerable risk to themselves. Today, moreover, I was shown a copy of Al Hoda dated July 28th, in which an editorial appears openly hostile to Zionism and attacking the ex-President Edde for his pro-Zionist statement before the United Nations Commission in Beirut. It is needless to say that under the present circumstances any reliance on our part on Makarzel and any further flirtations between Epstein and Makarzel are not only useless but may do a great deal of harm. I do not know whether it would be advisable for me to tackle Epstein directly on this subject. I rather doubt it. I think that you could question Epstein on this point and then draw your own conclusions, by which Epstein will have to abide.

You have undoubtedly noted the abovementioned testimony of Edde as well as that of the Maronite Patriarch. The political value of these statements cannot be overestimated. You will also be interested to know that an article by Awad on the question of Lebanon will appear in the forthcoming issue of the Catholic Weekly, Commonweal. It is a long time since the Commonweal published anything favorable to us.

You may also be interested to know that the Assyrians and their representation in the United States are to be associated with the mission on which Awad is going to Europe. The idea is that when the delegation from Europe will come here the Assyrians will officially participate in it. A little conference to discuss this problem is to take place tomorrow evening with Dr. Awad, Assyrian representatives and myself participating. I will report to you about this conference.

Best regards.

EBH/lb

MEMORANDUM

To Dr. Abba Hillel Silver

Date July 31, 1947

From Eliahu Ben-Horin

CONFIDENTIAL

1. The following has been done in connection with the Committee of 19 of the House of Representatives; (a) A letter to our people in various states, under the signature of Shapiro, has been sent out today; a copy of one of the letters is herewith enclosed. (b) I spoke to Leo Sack, asking him to watch the appointment of personnel of the Committee. (c) Next week, I am going to visit with Buxton, and I will ask him to approach Congressman Herter, the Vice-President of the Committee who will be in actual charge of operations.

2. The conference with the Assyrians and Dr. Awad, which I mentioned in my previous memorandum, took place last night. The Assyrians were represented by Mar Eshai Shimun, the Patriarch of the Church of the East, Mr. Henry Durna and Mr. David B. Perley, the leaders of the Assyrian National Federation in America.

I have met Durna and Perley before, but this was the first time that I saw their Patriarch who is both the religious and national leader of the Assyrians in the world. I must say that I was greatly impressed by the personality of the man. He is a young man, of about forty, of Biblical handsomeness, speaks an excellent English, and is very cultured and dignified. He is the personification of a "Prince of the Church".

The purpose of this conference was to explain to them Awad's mission to Europe and the plan for a representative Lebanese delegation to the U.S.A., and to get them to associate themselves with this initiative. Mar Shimun raised the obvious question with regard to the geographic realities (The Assyrians are located mainly in Iraq and Iran). I explained to him why a stand made by the Christians of the Lebanon would eo ipso provide the platform for airing the grievances of all the Christian and non-Christian minorities all over the Middle East; that each of us separately faces the same adversary (Great Britain) and the same instrument of suppression (the Arab League), and that only by uniting forces - openly or secretly - do we stand a chance to win in the end. With this argumentation Mar Shimun and his colleagues fully agreed. If Awad succeeds in bringing his delegation to the States, the Assyrians will come along.

3. I phoned Epstein and spoke to him about Makarzel. He was greatly surprised when I informed him of the latest Al Hoda editorial.

Best regards.

EBH/lb

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