Despite efforts by the Communists to create anti-American feeling, the United States is popular in Iran, according to C. Edward Wells, until last month public affairs officer for the U.S. Information Agency in Tehran.

Mr. Wells, whose home is in White Plains, New York, took charge of the information program in Iran in 1949.

As public affairs officer for Iran, Mr. Wells traveled throughout the country. He does not think the American taxpayer need worry as to whether or not U.S. aid is appreciated. On the contrary, he found such appreciation frequently embarrassing. "As an American," he says, "I never could grow accustomed to having my hand kissed. And yet the people, men and women alike, could think of no other way of expressing their gratitude."

Mr. Wells feels that the friendliness which he found throughout Iran is based fundamentally upon a long history of U.S. Missionary activities. That friendliness, he says, persists despite efforts of the Communists to create and foster anti-American feeling. Then, too, the identification of communism with the USSR has not encouraged the spread of the former. The Iranians have good memories and sound historical reason for not trusting Russia, their near neighbor, Mr. Wells said.

The communists, he warns, however, are always busy and seem to be supplied with inexhaustible funds. Their hopes lie in Iran's besetting weakness, poverty. The communists make their greatest appeal to young intellectuals impatient with the slow processes of reform and to the underprivileged masses.

The isolation of Iran, Mr. Wells believes, explains the country's tendency toward neutralism. That attitude, however, is changing and will change more rapidly as the technological gap between the people and the 20th century is bridged.

The people are highly intelligent. The country is rich in natural resources, although largely untapped. Given time, the Government, with help from outside, can raise the standard of living.

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of the people and defeat communist efforts to make trouble. Time, however, is the something the communists are determined the Iranians shall not have and therein lies the country's greatest danger.

Speaking of the people's intelligence, Mr. Wells mentioned the "tent" schools established by the Iranian Government, with US aid, for the children of Iran's nomad population. Originally many doubted if these schools, literally held in tents and moved every few days, could accomplish much in the way of education. However, the keen-witted tribal children have shown an ability to learn that actually surpasses that of their settled cousins. In one migratory school the classes swept through 3 years of school work in seven months. Teachers found that ten-year-olds were returning to the family tents at night to pass on what they had learned to their parents. The "tent" school program serves Iran's Kurds in the north and Qashqai in the south.

The Information Agency's library in Tehran is one of its most popular activities. Land And Hope, a rural magazine published in the language of the country, has a circulation of only 45,000 but Mr. Wells points out that the statistics do not tell the story. Individual copies are read by dozens of people and the information passed on by word of mouth to far greater numbers. This is true also of the Agency's wall newspapers, only 6500 copies of which are printed. But, posted in village squares, they are read aloud by the few who can read and the news again transmitted orally. The people are about 80 per cent illiterate but what one man reads, or hears, he tells another and the information quickly spreads.

Mr. Wells is awaiting re-assignment to a new Information Agency post.