

Publicity Company Cuts Ties With Iran Airline

By FRANK J. PRIAL
Ruder & Finn, the public relations company, has resigned the Iranian national airline account.

Earlier this year it was disclosed that Marion Javits, wife of Senator Jacob K. Javits of New York, had steered the Iranian account to Ruder & Finn and had later been hired as a senior vice president there at \$67,500 a year.

In a cable to A. Asghar Azizi of Iran Air, Marvin Frankel, president of Ruder & Finn International, said: "We feel that under the present circumstances, a continued association between Ruder & Finn and Iran Air would not be as productive from your point of view as we would want it to be."

David Finn, chairman of Ruder & Finn, said that the decision to drop the account, worth about \$500,000 in its first year, was entirely Ruder & Finn's. "This was not engendered by Iran Air," he said. "They did not ask for our resignation in anyway."

Possible Influenced

Mrs. Javits' relationship to Ruder & Finn became known when she registered as a foreign agent with the Department of Justice. She was criticized concerning possible influence on her husband, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, on behalf of her client.

The criticism also concerned the political implications of her work. Iran voted in the United Nations General Assembly last year for a resolution equating Zionism with racism, and Senator Javits has long supported Israel.

At first, Mrs. Javits refused to accede to her husband's request that she resign from Ruder & Finn. Later she did resign, while protesting that she saw no conflict of interest between her work and her husband's.

Worked 8 Months

Mr. Finn said yesterday that Mrs. Javits had been paid for half of the term of her one-year contract. He said that the agency had been paid for a full year's work, had worked about eight months on the account and would return the rest of

Ruder & Finn Ends Contract After Criticism of Role of Mrs. Javits

the money to the Iranian airline.

Mr. Finn insisted that the agency was not bowing to pressure, either from special-interest groups or from other clients, in dropping Iran Air as a client. He said that he, Mr. Frankel and William Ruder, president of the local company, had wanted to keep the account but had bowed to the wishes of the company's senior vice presidents.

"They had a meeting," he said, "and they voted unanimously that they'd like to see us resign the account. They noted that the press had been almost unanimous in criticizing us and that we ought to recognize this."

'Enormous' Publicity

In his telegram to Dr. Azizi, deputy managing director of public relations for the airline, Mr. Frankel also said:

"When I met with you last in Iran, I was very optimistic that Ruder & Finn would be able to continue its communications efforts for Iran National Airlines in spite of the enormous amount of publicity that had arisen concerning Ruder &

Finn's relationship with Mrs. Marion Javits.

"It is with considerable sadness that I must report to you that we have found that public feeling and controversy concerning our work for Iran National Airlines has made our task exceedingly difficult."

Asked for an example of this difficulty, Mr. Frankel cited problems that he said the agency has encountered booking art exhibits and in placing publicity.

Severs Connections

In an unrelated matter, Ruder & Finn said yesterday that it had severed all connections with Public Interst Public Relations, Inc., a nonprofit agency it had created in 1974.

In January, Ruder & Finn was sued by an aerosol spray manufacturer, A.T.I. Products. A.T.I. charged, in effect, that Ruder & Finn used Public Interst Public Relations to blackmail it into hiring Ruder & Finn to negate environmentalist claims about the harmful of aerosol sprays.

A.T.I. said that Ruder & Finn was seeking it as a client at the same time Public Interst Public Relations was arranging a news conference for members of the Natural Resources Defense counsel, a group of lawyers interested in environmental issues.

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