



June 09, 1952
State Department and Office of Policy Coordination
Discussion of Radio Liberty

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Summary:

State Department and Office of Policy Coordination officials discuss differences among émigré groups and hostility of the exile Ukrainian Congress to the American Committee for Liberation.

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MEMORANDUM FOR: THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Conference with Mr. Walmath Barbour, Chief of the State Department's Eastern European Division

1. On Thursday, 5 June 1952, there was a meeting in the office of Mr. Walmath Barbour to discuss in an informal way several matters connected with the plan of the American Committee for the Liberation of the Peoples of Russia to transmit radio broadcasts to Soviet occupation personnel and to the Soviet Union itself. Present were, for the Department of State, Mr. Barbour, Francis Stevens, and David Henry. From this Agency there were present, in addition to the undersigned, the following members of the staff of ED-3:



2. The meeting opened with a general and informal discussion of possible alternatives to the sponsorship of those radio programs which the Committee has been trying to establish: sponsorship of the Mixed or Internationality Commission with equal representation on the part of Great Russian and nationality groups. It was made clear that there is at least an even chance that the various groups may be unable to resolve their differences. Mr. Barbour, in response to a direct question whether in this event the Department desired any radio program at all (other than VOA), limited himself to the statement that the Department would not necessarily oppose a Russian language radio under different auspices than originally conceived. It was agreed with the aid of Mr. Stevens we would develop different concepts for the radio sponsorship and that particularly we would prepare a list of names of individuals who might be chosen by the Committee for sponsorship purposes.

3. There was a discussion of the constant pressure the American Committee is under to defend itself against the unending attacks which are launched against it by its several enemies, especially in the Ukrainian Separatists' camp. Mr. Barbour thought that the Committee would be fully justified in issuing a regular bulletin or news release explaining its position on leading issues in a factual and dignified, but not argumentative, manner. Mr. Barbour fully agreed with representatives of this Agency that the Committee should not use its funds to subsidize groups in this country for the purpose of battling politically with groups which raised their own funds to win a following in American public opinion.

4. The last subject discussed was the annual conference or convention of the Ukrainian Congress Committee, which is scheduled to be held in New York City on July 4th or 5th, 1952. Richard Davis of the State Department had told me some time ago that the Department had declined an oral request to have a speaker address this meeting.

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I had suggested that it might be well to reconsider the subject and Davis had suggested that the Ukrainian Congress submit a formal invitation in writing, whereupon the Ukrainian Congress had invited Hamilton Sargent to address it on the subject of Genocide. Davis had learned that Governor Denny and Senator Ives had agreed to speak. Nevertheless Davis and Harbair continued to feel the Department should not have a speaker at the conference. I protested strongly that the Department appeared to me to be making a mistake. I reiterated my concern that Ukrainian groups in this country appear to be building up a case that the Government in general and the State Department in particular is deliberately neglecting the nationalism of some of the peoples of the USSR as a political fact which should be exploited for psychological warfare purposes. I stressed that every time the Department turns down what appears to be an invitation to present its point of view, the suspicion grows in the separatist ranks that the Department is firmly wedded to the opinion of Great Russian domination. Both Harbair and Stevens were of the opinion that these arguments did not outweigh the danger of having a departmental spokesman at the Ukrainian Congress Committee meeting. I then shifted my approach and pointed out the danger and undesirability of having such a meeting addressed only by Republicans. I earnestly urged the Department not to aid in making reputation an American political football by declining to have a prominent Democrat address the meeting. This plea had some effect and Harbair and Stevens were inclined to agree that if a Democrat, other than a State Department official or prominent administrative spokesman, addressed the gathering, it might be desirable. It was agreed that the Department and this Agency would obtain all possible information regarding the Ukrainian Congress meeting and that a question of a Democratic speaker would be taken up once this information is at hand.

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