August 01, 1949
Letter, Frank Wisner to DeWitte Pool [Approved for Release May 6, 2019]

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Summary:
Frank Wisner counsels FEC executive secretary DeWitte Poole that the FEC, private but largely government funded, should consult closely with OPC and the State Department on issues of policy, budget, and personnel vetting.

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English

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Dear Delitto,

Recent conversations and communications between you and Fred Delboeuf on one side and myself on the other have led us to make the following comments in the interest of continued harmonious and effective cooperation among us all:

1) The National Committee for Free Europe, though partially private, is an integral part of a governmental project and as such is almost exclusively political. The work of NCFE constitutes one of the activities connected with CPU, which is considered a vital and confidential government agency. CPU was created to serve as an instrument for the realization of basic, official policies of the highest order, and is directly responsible to the highest-ranking government officials.

2) In view of the pronounced official character of the enterprise in which NCFE is engaged and due to the fact that a large part of the funds at the Committee's disposal are from the government, NCFE must be closely guided by government organs, especially by the State Department through CPU.

3) As you yourself have often taken pains to point out this does not mean that the distinguished directors and sponsors of NCFE are "stooges". It means that all their decisions and acts must be kept within the framework of government policies and plans. Naturally, there is no desire to discourage the activity or initiatives of your directors and sponsors. We feel deeply grateful to you for playing such a part in attaching such men to the Committee. Their interest, participation and active backing will add much-desired momentum and prestige to our undertaking.

4) For that reason we are pleased that you are planning to launch a drive for funds as soon as feasible after Labor Day.

5) In view of the main source of our funds, of the fact that though sufficient they are not unlimited, and of the definite political aims which the government expects to attain in expending them, it seems to us advisable for New York and Washington to cooperate in working out final drafts of the major budget items. Among major items we consider the National Committee budget, for example. We are pressing to make this suggestion, not because of any disapproval of any budget decision...
made by NSF but because the prospective activities of certain committees, or activities covered by certain committees, may on occasion be of a confidential nature the modifications of which can be initially known only to Washington.

Also certain persons attached to the committees, or activities considered by the committees may have an unfavorable to the U.S. Government. The Committees are closely connected with thousands of refugees in Europe, in which the U.S. Government is interested. Some of these refugees are useful; others are Communists agents still others are fascists. Consequently, some projects require a certain amount of screening by representatives of vital government agencies.

Nothing mysterious or of a "sens and secret" nature is intended in this explanation; we are only saying that in the great complexity of vital U.S. government activities, with which NSF is closely connected, we believe continued close consultation with us on major budget items will be helpful to the project.

6) As a corollary to this, it would help us in planning if you

a) could tell us each month what your expenditures have been and

b) if you'd continue to notify us of each new Committee, commit-

ant involving the continuous expenditure of any appreciable sum.

7) In view of the necessity of close cooperation we shall endeavor not only to get authoritative answers from the proper government sources to any policy questions you may raise but shall send you periodic reports on policy developments. With this we do not wish to give you the impression that any delay we can immediately get policy information directly from top sources. We go through well-defined channels which reach to the necessary sources. Usually the channels work well and ordinarily policy information is given promptly after policy decisions have been made.

8) It is self-understood that we want to cooperate most closely with you in our contacts with the exile leaders. Before discussing any matters involving R.O.C.P.R. with members of the National Committees, whether in Washington or New York or anywhere else we shall endeavor to see one of you, as to assure a common point of view. We hope you will feel assured that none of us is acting on his own in relations with members of National Committees or in any matter concerning NSF and if you should get that impression, please tell us of it.
9) We are engaged in a difficult, complex task, partly private but predominantly governmental; many persons, nations, states, governments and U.S. government agencies are involved; our chance to do something useful for our country is unique; opportunity for misunderstanding and cause for feelings of frustration abound. For these reasons, we consider a continuation of our close cooperation and consultation in essential.