

August 26, 1948
**Memorandum of Conversation [Approved for
Release, March 2009]**

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<https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/114321>

Summary:

CIA, State Department, Defense Department, and OPC officials discuss establishing a philanthropic organization to sponsor radio broadcasts and other activities of Eastern European émigrés.

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26 Aug. 1948

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Present at Conference: Admiral Hillenkoetter, Messrs. Kennan and Thayer,
Colonel Yeaton, and Messrs. Wisner, Barnes,
Ruddock, and [redacted]

Maynard Barnes

1. It was generally agreed to consider as [redacted]

a. The establishment of a democratic, philanthropic organization in New York under some such name as the American Committee for Free Europe which in turn would

b. Organize a committee of responsible foreign language groups now in the western Zones of Germany and provide them with facilities for communication with their homelands.

2. As presently envisaged this New York Committee would make available to the refugee organization in Germany: funds, radio equipment, and certain printing facilities to disseminate information to each of the eastern European countries represented in the refugee organization. (The importance of Poland and Czechoslovakia was stressed.) Such information presumably would include news of developments within each country, discussions of the internal problems of each country, and material designed to undermine support for the existing regimes. The offer of this opportunity to communicate with their homelands would serve as the catalytic agent in creating unity among the presently disunited refugee foreign nationality groups in western Germany.

3. Interested refugee groups (or the New York Committee) would approach General Clay and ask him under the existing international agreements guaranteeing freedom of communication, etc., to permit the foreign language groups to broadcast to their homelands. It would be pointed out that the New York organization had offered the necessary facilities.

(The above plan envisages providing the foreign nationality groups with radio facilities for reaching their homelands openly. An alternative, as discussed, would be to provide the emigres ostensibly with facilities for maintaining communication with each other but which in fact would be sufficiently powerful to be heard in their homelands. In such event the refugee organization would ask Clay to permit their use of radio facilities for freedom of communication among foreign language groups in Germany. In either event while the content of the broadcast material would vary from grey to white, it could in certain instances be broadened to include black at OSP initiative.)

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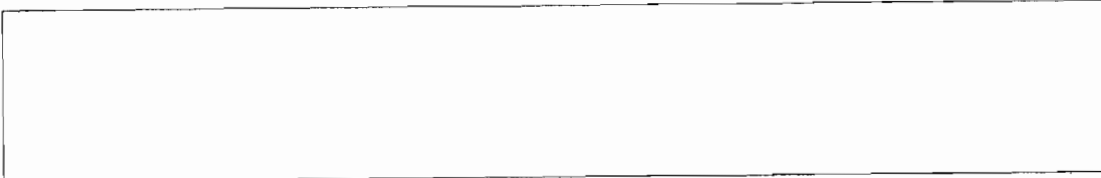
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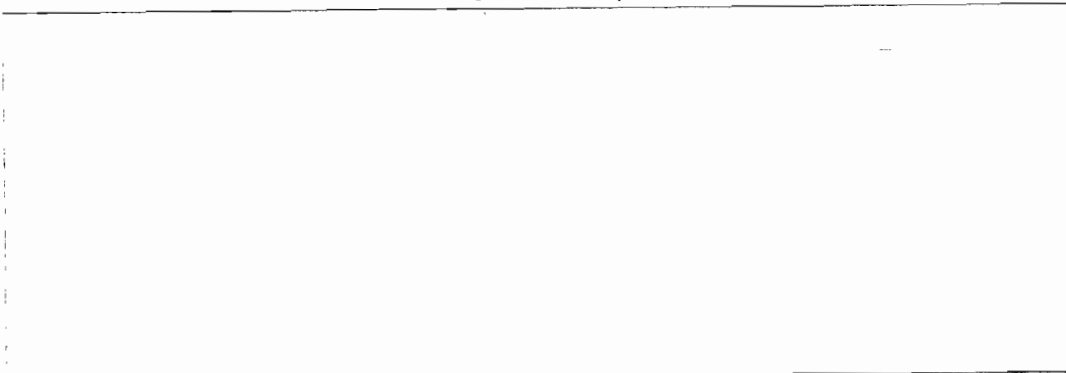
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4. Besides funds and equipment, the New York Committee would provide direction to the refugee committee in Germany, making arrangements for emigre leaders now in Western Europe and the U. S. to participate in the informational activities of the refugee organization. The refugee committee would operate the radio and printing facilities, providing all necessary technical personnel.

5. In addition to covert financial and material support, the Office of Special Projects would establish and maintain the following controls:



b. A survey would be made (presumably under the auspices of the New York Committee) of the existing foreign language groups in Western Germany to determine which are suitable for membership in the proposed refugee committee there. The conclusions of the survey would be made available to the New York Committee and OSP for guidance.



6. The principal problems discussed in connection with the implementation of the above plan were: (a) anticipated Soviet reaction; (b) U. S. response to Soviet reaction; (c) the allocation of wave-bands to the refugee committee; (d) the countermeasures to be taken to minimize the effects of Soviet jamming; and (e) precautions to protect OSP and the U. S. Government from any attributable connection with the New York or Germany organizations.

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