

February 21, 1949

**Memorandum for Mr. Wisner, 'Notes on Discussion
of New York Committee with Mr. George Kennan,
February 18, 1949' [Approved for Release, March
2009]**

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Summary:

George Kennan, State Department official Llewellyn E. Thompson, and Office of Policy Coordination director Frank Wisner agree that influential private citizens organizing the Free Europe Committee (FEC) require approval for the project from Secretary of State Dean Acheson and thereafter responsibility for dealing with East European émigré leaders will shift from State to the FEC.

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MEMORANDUM FOR MR. WISNER

SUBJECT: Notes on Discussion of New York Committee with
Mr. George Kennan, February 18, 1949.

1. The following persons participated: Messrs. Kennan, Wisner, Savage, Joyce, Davies, Thompson and Barnes. The discussion was on the basis of OPC's memorandum of February 17 and attached documents.

2. Mr. Kennan began the discussion by stating that he agreed in principle to all contained in the memorandum of February 17. He said that he might wish later to suggest certain changes in the proposed "public announcement".

3. The urgent need for a similar clearance of the New York Committee project by the Secretary of State himself was brought to Mr. Kennan's attention. It was pointed out to him that prospective members of the Free Europe Committee, of its executive group, and of the Free Europe Foundation were of a calibre to insist upon knowing that the project had been cleared by the Secretary of State and, therefore, that OPC could not go further in the matter until it was in a position to give an affirmative reply to the query on the part of any key person as to whether the project had the Secretary's secret approval. It was also urged with Mr. Kennan that time is an important factor; that commitments are already being taken with respect to headquarters in New York and the incorporation of both the Free Europe Committee and the Free Europe Foundation. Mr. Kennan agreed to all that was said and at the close of the meeting called General Carter to arrange for an early meeting between the Secretary, Mr. Kennan, Mr. Wisner and Mr. Joyce.

4. On conclusion of discussion of the suggestions recounted in Paragraph 3, Mr. Wisner mentioned other matters outside the scope of the New York Committee which he felt should be laid before the Secretary personally by himself and Mr. Kennan. There was an agreement on this point.

5. The relationship of refugee political and intellectual leadership with the New York Committee, with the Political Divisions of the State Department, and with OPC was discussed at length. An agreement was reached as follows:

- a. With the establishment of the New York Committee, political desk officers and their superiors in the

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Department would as rapidly and as effectively as possible restrict their dealings with the refugee political and intellectual leaders in the United States to the collection of political information (i.e. informational conversations and interpretive comment by ER's on political developments), and to normal statements of this Government's overt policies.

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- b. Exiles and refugees would be referred to the New York Committee for all matters of an operational nature, including the provision of support and facilities for themselves and their activities.

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