

June 20, 1961

Free Europe Committee Proposal to Exploit Berlin Crisis

Citation:

"Free Europe Committee Proposal to Exploit Berlin Crisis", June 20, 1961, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Obtained and contributed to CWIHP by A. Ross Johnson. Referenced Ch3 p127 in his book Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, CIA mandatory declassification review request C95459055 <https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/115044>

Summary:

FEC Directors C. D. Jackson and Whitney Debevoise discuss with State Department officials their ideas on using RFE to pressure the Soviets during the Berlin Crisis

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Blavatnik Family Foundation

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

SECRET

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: July 20, 1961

SUBJECT: Free Europe Committee (FEC) Plans.

CIA HAS NO OBJECTION TO
DECLASSIFICATION AND/OR
RELEASE OF THIS
DOCUMENT: 16-Feb-2011

PARTICIPANTS: Mr. W. Alasia Johnson - O
Mr. C. D. Jackson, Board of Directors, FEC
Mr. Whitney Debevoise, Board of Directors, FEC
Mr. W. J. Barnsdale - EE/P

COPIES TO: O - Mr. Johnson
EUR - Mr. Kohler
Mr. Davis
SOV - Mr. Guthrie
Mr. Klein
EE - Mr. Vedeler

EE - Mr. McKisson
Mr. Tins
Mr. Barnsdale (4-2 cc held)
P - Mr. Nickels
U - Mr. Curtis

Messrs. Jackson and Debevoise called today at their request on Mr. Johnson to discuss the memoranda "The Mission of the Free Europe Committee" and "Free Europe Committee and the Berlin Crisis" which were forwarded by the Free Europe Committee under cover of a letter dated July 3, 1961 to the Secretary.

Mr. Jackson referred to the call made on the Secretary by Mr. Ernest Gross, Chairman of the Board of the FEC, and Mr. John Richardson, President of the FEC, on June 17, which concerned FEC activities, and to the above-mentioned memoranda. He explained that the purpose of today's call was to discuss the FEC views set forth in the memoranda. Mr. Jackson described the FEC and Radio Free Europe (RFE) as a good instrument, and an instrument in being, which can be used to make the enemy say "ouch". Mr. Jackson said that he did not feel the suggestions included in the memoranda were inflammatory, but that they constituted political warfare designed to remind Khrushchev of an area about which he has not recently had to feel apprehensive. He expressed the view that Khrushchev could not afford a nuclear war, which the US would survive but which would send Khrushchev's world "down the drain". For these reasons Mr. Jackson felt that Khrushchev is not prepared to fight and that in Eastern Europe we have a place and an instrument (the FEC and RFE) for taking the initiative--a program designed to create Soviet concern in Eastern Europe and to make Khrushchev think twice before pressing the Berlin issue.

SECRET

Dept. of State, ISS/IPS, Margaret P. Grafeld, Dir.

Release () Excise () Deny () Declassify ()
Exemption (b) (), E.O. 13526, 25x () ()

() Declassify after
With concurrence CIA obtained
IPS by [Signature] Date 7/15/11

105

SECRET

Mr. Johnson said he would examine the FEC memoranda and consider the views expressed by Messrs. Jackson and Debevoise.

Mr. Jackson stated in closing that his views and the views expressed in the memoranda have been communicated to the White House (Mr. McGeorge Bundy and Mr. Walter Rostow), the Pentagon (General Maxwell Taylor) and the CIA (Mr. Allen Dulles).

SECRET