

INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

900  
P+P

*Propaganda*

FROM: BW (*Bryce Wood*)

DATE: June 3, 1947

TO:	JHW		<i>JHW</i>
	<i>RBZ</i>	<i>JUN 13 '47</i>	<i>RBZ</i>
	<i>PEM</i>		<i>PEM</i>
	<i>MZ</i>	<i>JUN 13 '47</i>	<i>MZ</i>
	<i>DAA</i>	<i>JUN 13 '47</i>	<i>DAA</i>

COMMENTS: *I like this; it seems sound to me.*

*saw 6/9/47*

*NOV 10 1947*

*xcis RF-P+P-V*

*and  
Russian  
Fellowship*

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National Security*

SUBJECT: Some comments about RF and counter-Russian propaganda (John Foster Dulles luncheon, May 27th)

This is in response to your question as to whether I have any ideas about the suggestions offered by JFD about the role which RF might play in countering the propaganda drive of the Soviet Union, particularly in Western Europe. The U. S., said JFD, was being pictured abroad as a capitalist productive machine with imperialist ambitions, while in fact the U. S. is not imperialist, but stands for a society in which the individual may possess a maximum of freedom. This latter conception of the U. S. should in his opinion be promoted outside our borders by every possible means, and he felt that RF ought to have a share in such promotion. JFD did not suggest specific techniques, other than fellowships, but he said that the "Voice of America" was not doing an adequate job and gave the impression that RF might do something beyond its fellowship program.

This suggestion raises an issue whether RF should undertake in any fashion to defend the American way of life in other countries, particularly Russia. On principle, RF declines "to support propaganda." Is it propaganda, it may be asked, to promote the acceptance by other peoples of the basic ideas of the only type of society which provides those freedoms without which RF itself could not exist? The question here seems to be one of techniques rather than of substance, for it would be certain that if RF should support endeavors to persuade Western Europeans to choose democracy instead of communism, such support would be considered abroad as propaganda. It might be called cultural relations or something similar over here, but it would appear to foreigners to be associated with or supplementary to the program in persuasion carried on by the Department of State. RF ought not to find itself in a position where the defense of its policy need be based on semantic niceties. Influencing the choice of Frenchmen and Italians in this field is clearly a political job which is recognized as such by the Department of State and now apparently also by Congress. This is the kind of job, however, which under present conditions of international relations is expected to be done by the Government. There will remain other jobs which the Government cannot or will not do and which lie within the traditional field of RF interests and concern and where RF resources can make a relatively greater contribution. It is important in this regard that RF should exercise such care in departing from its traditional policies because when people are sensitively suspicious about political influence they may be expected to seek political interpretations. The most solid refutation of such interpretations would be the maintenance of RF's already well-established

operating groups.

On another level of discussion, RF can offer evidence of the variety and freedom which are alone possible in a democracy by remaining free from any connection with propaganda activities. If it took part in such promotion it might appear abroad that this was good evidence of gleichschaltung in our democracy. RF can remain not only as a symbol, but as specific evidence of democratic concern for the advancement of knowledge and scholarly endeavor in a time when the process of politicizing is progressing. If we are our own best model for democracy, then the continuance or even expansion of the European fellowship program would offer a means for the promotion of democracy as in line with JFD's thinking and one which would be completely consistent with RF policy. Fellowships should, however, still be made available on qualifications comparable to those required in the past, and their geographical distribution ought not to be such as to give grounds for promoting criticism.

BW.

BW:MK