

INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

*O 2005  
Columbia University  
Russian Institute*

FROM: AB

DATE: February 27, 1945

TO:

RFE		<i>RES</i>

COMMENTS:

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SUBJECT: Columbia - Russian Institute

The Columbia University proposal for a Russian Institute is impressive because

- (1) it is planned to give thorough training;
- (2) sets high standards for its work;
- (3) offers a rounded out set of courses;
- (4) builds upon competences already at the University.

The plan takes account in history, economics, government and law, and ideology of old Russia, and Imperialist Russia, thus grounding the student in the framework which produced the modern Russian era. If its work in language and literature can complement these fields, there is a chance for preparing to understand the Foreign Relations of Russia as well as preparing for exploring further, by research, the Russian development.

To me, it is the most encouraging proposal which has come to us in study of a foreign country - in this case, one of major interest. At present, perhaps wisely, the program puts strong emphasis on training.

There is a special timeliness in developing a center which will prepare by training and research for varied needs of the future in dealing with Russian problems. The plan for training is conceived in intensive terms over a period of not less than two years.

At this stage the research may well be subordinate to training. One would hope that if an Institute were supported for five years, its second period might need less aid for teaching and that the research aspects of the program would be stepped up as younger men from the training begin to be ready to do exploratory work.

Mr. Stevens, who seemed to be impressed with the quality of the proposed work, suggested that it would be helpful to know more of the present library resources on Russia and would hope that Columbia would make a commitment for the absorption of the teaching work at the end of the second period.

The items that need elaboration are:

- (1) The research program
- (2) The personnel likely to be added (in general, of course)
- (3) The present support being given by Columbia both directly and indirectly
- (4) The extent of the commitment which Columbia can make at the end of the period of RF interest
- (5) The scope of the Library
- (6) The faith of Mr. Stevens in the language training
- (7) Any consideration by RF in financing of fellows who go abroad, assuming, of course, that other fellows, if any, come from SSRC

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