

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Your transmittal of May 11, 1961 requests Agency comments on Senate Joint Resolution 77, "To establish a Joint Committee on Foreign Information and Intelligence". The resolution proposes a joint congressional committee to make continuing studies of activities of United States Information Agency, Central Intelligence Agency, and other intelligence and information agencies of the United States.

We are opposed to the enactment of the resolution to the extent it is applicable to the functions of this Agency. We are convinced that the passage of the resolution linking United States Information Agency with the Central Intelligence Agency would harm the effectiveness of this Agency and its international informational-cultural programs. We recommend that all references in the resolution to United States Information Agency be deleted.

The resolution states in part that the Joint Committee shall make continuing studies of:

- "(1) the activities of each information and intelligence agency of the United States,
- "(2) the problems relating to the foregoing information and intelligence programs, and
- "(3) the problems relating to the gathering of information and intelligence affecting the national security, and its coordination and utilization by the various departments, agencies, and instrumentalities of the United States."

Section 2 (c) of the resolution defines the term "information and intelligence agency of the United States" as...."the

The Honorable  
J. W. Fulbright  
Chairman  
Committee on Foreign Relations  
United States Senate

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United States Information Agency, the Central Intelligence Agency, and any unit within any of the executive departments or agencies of the United States conducting foreign information or intelligence activities (including any unit within the Departments of State, Defense, Army, Navy, and Air Force, but not including the domestic operation of the Federal Bureau of Investigation)."

The implication of the resolution is that the operations of the Central Intelligence Agency and the Agency are similar, and that United States Information Agency is involved in espionage and covert operations. Such implication is not correct.

This Agency has experienced a certain degree of misunderstanding of its functions in countries where the word "information" translates into "intelligence". There also exists among some foreigners a suspicion that United States Information Agency personnel, particularly in politically sensitive areas, perform certain intelligence functions. The enactment of the resolution would lend substance to such misunderstandings and suspicions in the minds of foreigners who already harbor them.

The United States Information Agency's objectives are to promote a better understanding of the United States in other countries and to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries. These objectives are promoted by all means of communications. Much of the program is unilateral in that it is operated exclusively by the Agency, using its personnel and facilities. Such programs include, for example, direct broadcast by the Voice of America, operation of information libraries and centers, and the showing of films portraying aspects of American life and culture.

A major part of the program, however, is conducted in cooperation with, and under the auspices of, foreign national and foreign institutions. For example, the Agency produces package radio and television programs which are used with or without attribution by local stations. Our wireless file and other informational materials are made available to editors and publishers for use in the local press.

Foreign universities are induced to establish chairs of American studies, conduct seminars in American history, affiliate with universities in the United States, and to participate in exchanges of professors and students.

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Local government and community leaders are encouraged to participate in various cultural interchanges with the United States and to organize autonomous binational organizations to promote mutual understanding between the United States and the country. Such leaders are also encouraged to participate in the exchange of persons program and in the President's Special International Program.

The above illustrative activities and other cultural and educational activities--concerts, book publications, film showings through local indigenous groups, English teaching, etc., require the cooperation of, and active participation of local leaders. In fact, such programs are effective only to the extent that there is local participation. The Agency has been very successful in securing local cooperation and participation, even in areas and during times of political difficulties between the United States and the foreign government. In Iraq, English teaching programs were continued after the 1958 Revolution when our other activities were suspended. Students from government ministries, business, and from the professions continued to attend courses. Similarly, in other troubled periods, the Agency has been successful in varying degrees, in maintaining the cooperation of important segments of the local population.

If the proposed Joint Resolution should be enacted linking United States Information Agency and Central Intelligence Agency, we are convinced that cooperation and participation of foreigners in Agency programs would be drastically curtailed. Many people abroad will be unwilling to assume the risk of cooperating with the program for fear of being associated with United States espionage. Certainly, in Iron Curtain countries and in areas of political tension the inhibiting effects of the resolution may be disastrous.

To date, most foreign governments have permitted Agency activities with a minimum of supervision or censorship. Such operational latitude would not be permitted if the Agency is considered somehow allied with, or engaged in, covert or espionage functions.

Finally, enactment of the resolution could result in undue personal risks for Agency personnel in certain countries if United States Information Service activities are equated with military intelligence.

For these reasons we believe it essential that the proposed resolution be revised to exclude the United States Information

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Agency and its activities. On the one hand there is little logical basis for combining in the resolution the collection of military intelligence and the open dissemination of information abroad about the United States. The enactment of the resolution as proposed, on the other hand, could have a very damaging impact on the United States Government information effort abroad.

This Agency would not object to the creation of a joint congressional committee, or any other appropriate congressional body, to review its activities -- in fact, we would welcome such a development. Our only concern is that the terms of reference of such a body clearly reflect the sole responsibility of this Agency to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries.

The Bureau of the Budget advises that it has no objection to the submission of this report from the standpoint of the Administration's program.

Sincerely,

Edward R. Murrow  
Director

(copy)

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NO. 4

Approved For Release 2005/08/24 : CIA-RDP71B00364R000600080016-7

Bureau of the Budget  
**ROUTE SLIP**

TO \_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. John S. Warner  
CIA  
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- Take necessary action
- Approval or signature
- Comment
- Prepare reply
- Discuss with me
- For your information
- See remarks below

FROM J.F.C. Hyde, Jr. DATE 6/6/61

REMARKS

I assume that the general line taken in the attached would not conflict with the approach you are trying to work out on the bill from your standpoint.

JSW  
6cc  
J60  
J.F. Conrad