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Dear Frank:

As promised, I send you herewith for your personal information a sampling of opinion in the Department from the field regarding the effectiveness of RFA broadcasts. Also attached is a script of RFA which seems to me (insofar as I can size up the situation) to risk a contra-productive effect. There is another RFA script which I read some weeks ago but am unable now to locate. This plugged the theme that there is no hope of a rift in policy between Peking and Moscow and seemed to me to be either useless or actually harmful in terms of U.S. interests.

Please see that the enclosed comments are not disseminated widely or taken as official pronouncements. I believe, however, they may be useful to you in your problem concerning the morale and future effectiveness of CFA.

Sincerely yours,

Frederick E. Nolting, Jr.

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Attachments:

As stated above.

Mr. Frank G. Wisner,
Central Intelligence Agency,
Room 1046,
L Building.

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Will communicate separately with the Pny on the other matter you raised.

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Specific comments on a number of scripts follows.

(3) 1. Answer Man Script No. 25, recorded June 5, 1952. From the Asiatic point of view this script quite obviously reflects Americans (RFA) trying to speak for Asians. The reaction must be negative, if not harmful.

2. Answer Man Script No. 25, June 12, 1952 criticizes other radio outlets and describes RFA as the only radio able to reflect other than official views and policies, and as the only one speaking for no special interest. This will undoubtedly boomerang if and when indigenous radio stations take up broadcasting for CPA.

3. Throughout most of the scripts examined the Department finds a consistent thread in the direction of telling Asians what they must be assumed to know about Asia and towards telling the Chinese on the mainland what conditions are like on the mainland. This can never win listeners. Comments from the Foreign Service, many informal and private, indicate that there is a quite uniform distrust of RFA programs where they are heard at all.

4. Overseas Chinese Commentary No. 136, July 3, 1952 describes numerous armed rebellions going on on the mainland, with local descriptions. It seems quite obvious that these facts, if they are facts, cannot be checked. Thus, if they are inaccurate, RFA is destroying its own credibility. Throughout the scripts one obtains the opinion that the content is not geared to provable facts widely known.

(2) 5. For a radio which purports to describe facts and which seeks credibility, the approach in Peoples Letter No. 11 of June 12, 1952 seems inadvisable. The spreading of scandal and scurrilous reports belongs in the field of black rather than white or grey. In this letter, addressed to Mao Tse-tung's wife, it is stated that she has been "taken into his harem."

(4) 6. The scripts examined tend to identify RFA closely with the Chinese National Government. RFA often uses National Government current slogans such as "the bogus mayor." Script No. 24 of June 17, 1952 states "while our great and patriotic leader Chiang Kai-shek fought like a lion to save China, most of us sat back and did nothing."

(5) 7. Mainland Chinese Commentary No. 18, June 18, 1952 tends directly to contradict overt American policy which is to convince the Chinese people that they are the witting or unwitting puppets of the Kremlin and that their Government has committed them to Foreign domination, i.e. by the Kremlin. This script states, "First, the world has become aware of the fact that the Communists has instructed their puppets and agents in South-east Asia to switch their terrorist tactics to the Mao Tse-tung line. In

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other words, Stalin was so pleased with Mao Tse-tung's success in gaining control of the Chinese mainland that he instructed the Communists in South-east Asia to copy Mao's tactics."

The Department believes that any propaganda directed at the Chinese mainland can be dangerous and can boomerang with a very bad effect unless it is based upon the most careful intelligence evaluation and a thorough understanding of all the ideological factors inherent in the Chinese Communist hierarchy.

6. Overseas Commentary No. 107 purports to state the position of Buddhism vs. Communism. The script is considered totally unsuitable for FS audiences. The commentary reads as a superficial propaganda piece written by a Western writer from a Western point of view. While it is true that there is something of a revival of Buddhism in Burma, it is not of paramount political significance, and under no circumstances should any attempt be made to imply or state that it is a political move. Any force of religious unity that could be created by a successful revival of Buddhism would be destroyed by identification with political motives and particularly if those political motives are in any way identified with forces outside Burma, namely, the United States. The script as it stands could in no way be construed as an Asian talking to Asians.

It is highly doubtful that Asians would accept the statement that the Burmese government is attempting to give back to Buddhism the high status it enjoyed in the "old days of monarchy," for Buddhist clergy did not enjoy a particularly high status in the old regime. It is fortunate that the script did not go into details of philosophy, for one of the main points made in the script that, "If Gautama were alive today, he would have joined our common crusade against Communism" would have been obviously a negative one. Gautama would certainly not join a crusade as suggested in the script, for the active principle of Gautama's philosophy is non-resistance.

The point made that Communist tyranny is forcing Buddhist nuns in Red China to marry is not a valid one, for the pressures bringing this about are economic rather than religious. Further, celibacy is not generally practiced by all Buddhist sects, and the comment in the script, "when Communists force them (Buddhist nuns) to marry, the Communists are guilty of religious freedom," is unintelligible in the context of the Script.

The final paragraph of the script which links Buddhism and the "Free World" as opposed to Communism is a particularly dangerous concept. The surest way to kill incipient unity through a religious movement that is only beginning to have effect is to imply political motivation. Any such implication should be scrupulously avoided.

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ANNEX NO. 3 - SUMMARY OF FIELD REACTION TO CFA

On July 17, the Department sent a circular telegram to the principal Far Eastern posts, with the exception of Pusan, soliciting information and opinion on CFA and RFA activities with particular reference to radio and printed propaganda, activities of local representatives, attitudes of local government and people, achievements, errors, or omissions and suggestions for useful activities. Replies have been received from all addressees except Djakarta.

From the replies, which vary considerably in their content and degree of responsiveness, some general principles and suggestions may be abstracted:

1. The degree of success achieved by local representatives is dependent on their personal qualities. An essential requirement in all cases is ability to work quietly and with patience.
2. Identification with local groups or individuals is essential.
3. There is speculation about possible U.S. government connection of CFA.
4. CFA should concentrate on activities not falling within the purview of existing agencies. It is particularly important for CFA to move into the cultural field.
5. One task which CFA can profitably undertake is to promote better relations between SEA nationals and resident Overseas Chinese.
6. Closer coordination with the missions, including USIS, is advisable in order to avoid needless competition and loss of cover.
7. CFA field activities should not be confined to "critical" areas.
8. RFA is not listened to except on Formosa (Taipei comments that the technical quality of radio production is good.)
9. RFA should concentrate on local production in the Far East and use medium wave outlets.
10. Certain RFA programs receive criticism as unsuitable.

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