

contact of CIA's Berlin Operations Base.⁶⁰ He applied to join OPC in April 1949, while briefly in the United States. 25X1

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the following September. (S)

In Josselson's hands, the still-amorphous Fischer plan began to take specific shape. Where Fischer had proposed an essentially political gathering, Josselson advocated an explicitly cultural and intellectual conference to be called the "Congress for cultural freedom" [*sic*], which would seize the initiative from the Communists by reaffirming "the fundamental ideals governing cultural (and political) action in the Western world and the repudiation of all totalitarian challenges." A sponsoring committee of American and European thinkers would organize the event and formally invite the participants. In addition, the congress could be used to bring about the creation of some sort of permanent committee, which with the right people and "a certain amount of funds" could maintain the congress' momentum. Josselson's proposal reached OPC Headquarters on or about 25 January 1950.⁶¹ (S)

Josselson's interest in the congress idea gave Lasky all the encouragement he needed. Lasky, though unwitting of OPC's interest in the plan, forged ahead while Headquarters deliberated. In late December, he sent a proposal of his own to Sidney Hook, apparently presenting roughly the same proposal that Josselson had sent to Washington. Hook liked the idea.⁶² Lasky's free-lancing, however, was not all for the good. As an employee of the American occupation government, his activities on behalf of the congress struck more than a few observers, both friendly and hostile, as proof that the US Government was behind the event.⁶³ (U)

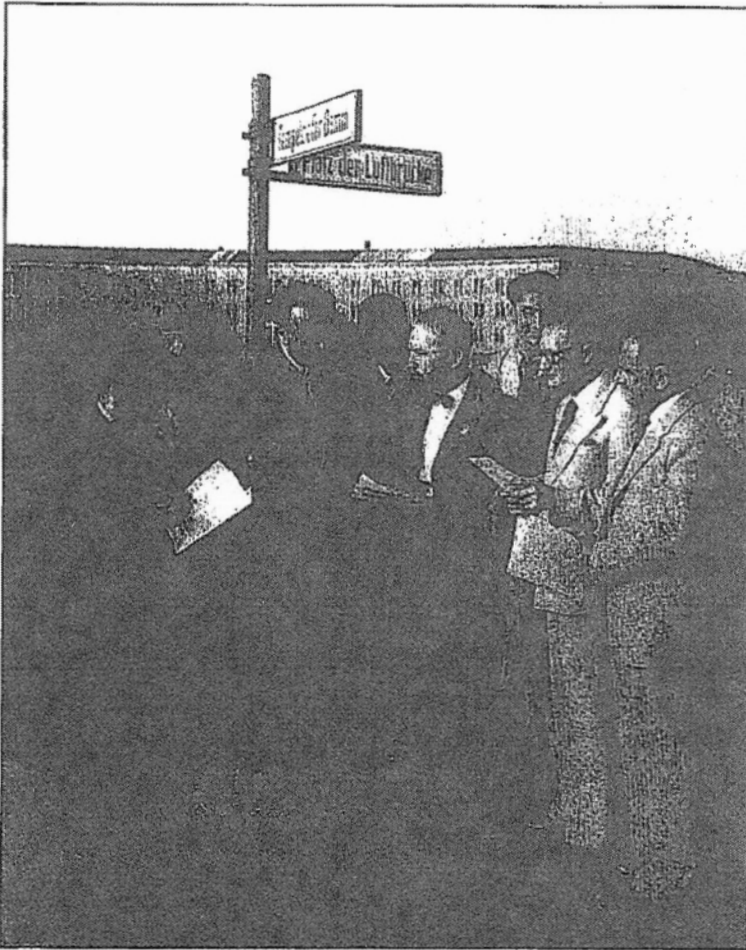
⁶⁰ Dana B. Durand, "Report on Berlin Operations Base: January 1946—March 1948," 8 April 1948, republished as Clandestine Services Historical Paper CSHP-24, 22 October 1966, CIA History Staff, p. 58. (S)

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⁶¹ Hook, *Out of Step*, p. 432. Hook replied to Lasky on 11 January 1950. A copy of Hook's letter somehow reached OPC's John E. Baker, chief of Area III of the Operations Division's Foreign Branch B, before the Josselson proposal arrived from Germany. 25X1

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⁶² Communist organs would indeed accuse Lasky, on the eve of the Congress, of being an agent of the US Army and "the American secret service"; "Paper in Soviet Zone Hits Culture Parley," *New York Times*, 25 June 1950, p. 5. (U)



Melvin J. Lasky (with beard) meets the press, June 1950. (U)

OPC officers liked Josselson's plan. A group of them, including Offie, met on 6 February and gave Josselson the green light to proceed while Headquarters produced a formal project proposal.⁴⁴ James Burnham, on leave from New York University, worked as a consultant to the planners. Time was of the essence, although Headquarters soon realized that

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the congress could not be held before May or even June. On 7 April, Frank Wisner approved the \$50,000 project, adding that he wanted Lasky and Burnham kept out of sight for fear that their presence would only provide ammunition to critics of the conference in Berlin.⁶⁴ (S)

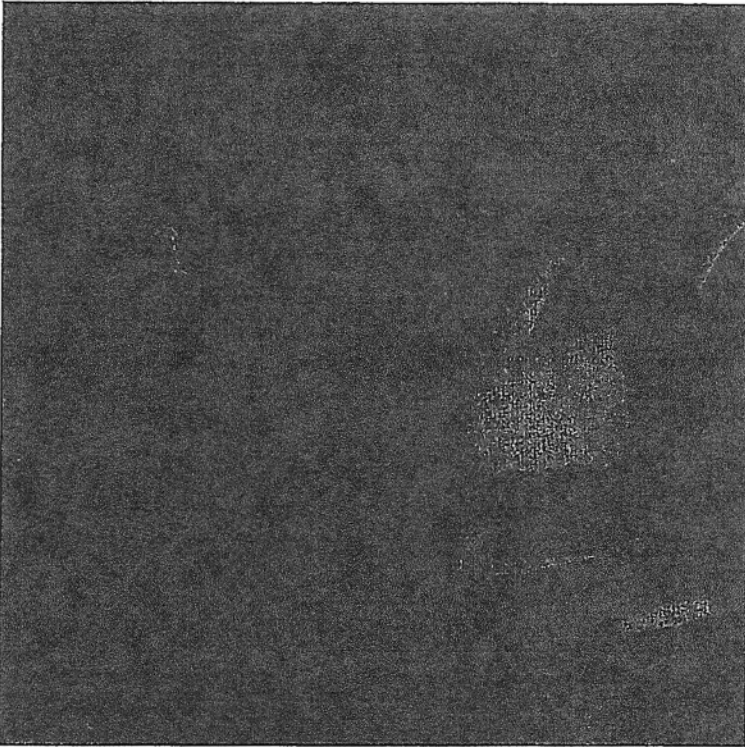
Meanwhile, Lasky had appointed himself the driving force behind the event. When informed of Wisner's wish that Lasky remain inconspicuous, Josselson defended Lasky, informing Headquarters that Lasky's name as General Secretary on the event's masthead had been largely responsible for the enthusiasm that the upcoming congress had generated among European intellectuals. "No other person here, certainly no German, could have achieved such success," cabled Josselson.⁶⁵ This disagreement between Josselson and Headquarters would cause a problem later in the year and presage other disputes during the long life of the Congress for Cultural Freedom. (U)

The upcoming congress in Berlin rolled ahead, gathering sponsors and patrons. Lasky and his Berlin Committee easily gathered five internationally known philosophers to lend *gravitas* to the event as its honorary co-chairmen.⁶⁷ Sidney Hook and James Burnham took charge of the details for the American delegation, working with Department of State officials (in frequent contact with their OPC colleagues) to arrange travel, expenses, and publicity. OPC bought tickets for the American delegation, passing most of the funds through the National Committee for Free Europe and Jay Lovestone's Free Trade Union Conference.⁶⁸ The Department of State in particular proved an enthusiastic partner in the enterprise. The Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs Edward Barrett's aide, Jesse MacKnight, thought highly of the Congress participants and their potential for debunking the Communist peace offensive; before the Berlin conclave even took place, he urged the CIA to sponsor the congress on a continuing basis.⁶⁹ (S)

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⁶⁷The five were John Dewey, Bernedetto Croce, Karl Jaspers, Jacques Maritain, and Bertrand Russell. (U)

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Sidney Hook (lighting cigarette) with James Burnham (left) in Berlin. (U)

The Threat to the Future (U)

While the Congress for Cultural Freedom gathered momentum, OPC was having less success with another of its anti-Communist initiatives. The 1940s saw something of a romance with "youth" in Europe and America. Social theorists of all political stripes made much of the then-trenchant observation that teenagers and young adults were the leaders of tomorrow and thus represented "the future." All of this attention seemed misplaced to some observers: Evelyn Waugh's novel, *Brideshead Revisited* (1944), for instance, snickered at contemporary shibboleths about "what the world owed to Youth." Nonetheless, US Government officials proved as likely as not to consider youth groups and youth attitudes essential to social stability and progress. This assumption begat a concern over the Communist Party's well-publicized hope of expanding the gains of Communism through clever appeals to young people. Using the World

Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY) as a tool in its peace offensive, Moscow sponsored giant festivals replete with pageantry and stirring political sentiments, culminating in carefully worded (and always pro-Soviet) calls for peace and social justice. (U)

College students, as a subset of "youth," were another target of Communist organizational efforts. The new WFDY soon gained a partner: the International Union of Students (IUS). Students from 38 nations attending the first World Student Congress in Prague in August 1946 founded IUS to promote worldwide student fellowship. Eastern European Communists and Soviet agents dominated the organization's secretariat, however, orchestrating programs and debates; indeed, the IUS's first vice president, Soviet official Alexandr Shelepin, later rose to head the KGB under Nikita Khrushchev.⁷⁰ (U)

From the outset, Western observers complained about the IUS's politicization. IUS leaders squelched any protests through harsh rhetoric and parliamentary legerdemain. The conferences' one-sided declarations on controversial political issues also fostered doubts among many Western delegates, who worried that such pronouncements could alienate students hoping to build national student unions at home.⁷¹ The 25 American students who attended the IUS's founding Congress in Prague agreed among themselves that American college students needed a stronger voice in international student affairs, and that the only way to win more influence at such events as the IUS Congress was through a truly representative, national student organization. (U)

More than a few American student leaders in 1946 and 1947 turned their attention to creating such an organization in the United States. Similar attempts had foundered in the 1920s and 1930s, when groups constructed on overtly political platforms received little nationwide support, while other organizations that originally were intended to be broadly representative splintered into political factions.⁷² None of these organizations had survived World War II with significant national representation or credibility. (U)

⁷⁰John J. Dziak, "Soviet Deception: The Organizational and Operational Tradition," in Brian D. Dailey and Patrick J. Parker, *Soviet Strategic Deception* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1987), pp. 12-13. (U)

⁷¹Peter T. Jones, *The History of US National Student Association Relations with the International Union of Students, 1945-1956* (Philadelphia: Foreign Policy Research Institute, 1956), pp. 12-24. (U)

⁷²Martin M. McLaughlin, *Political Processes in American National Student Organizations* (Ann Arbor: Edwards Brothers, 1948), pp. 15-23. See also Cord Meyer, *Facing Reality: From World Federalism to the CIA* (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), p. 96. (U)

The American delegates to the Prague student congress thus faced long odds against them when they tried to fashion a new, national student association. They nevertheless had two advantages over their pre-war predecessors: the enthusiastic cooperation of Catholic students and colleges, and the relative maturity of postwar student leaders, many of whom were veterans. Having interrupted or postponed their studies to serve in the military, they had returned to campus older and more experienced than most of their classmates. Both factors helped these leaders to avoid the mistakes of previous student organizations.⁷³ Their careful planning bore fruit in August 1947 at the University of Wisconsin, where Catholic students led the delegates in founding the United States National Student Association (NSA), a confederation of student governments and college student councils. Catholic and liberal student leaders fought back attempts by the leftist minority to politicize the new association. Instead, these students founded a relatively stable organization dedicated to the interests and concerns of "students as students."⁷⁴ (U)

NSA's left wing never came close to co-opting the Association, but the NSA's foreign policy orientation remained a battleground for several years. Catholic students comprised only a minority of NSA delegations and offices. One of their leaders, Martin McLaughlin of Notre Dame, noted that a politically liberal but largely uncoordinated bloc of non-Catholics held the balance of power in the Association. This bloc opposed Communism and politicization but still viewed the Catholics as too eager to pick fights with their leftist rivals.⁷⁵ NSA did not formally affiliate with the IUS, and it cut off membership negotiations with the Union after the IUS secretariat failed to condemn the mistreatment of Czech students in the February 1948 Communist coup in Prague. NSA's move to distance itself from the IUS, however, did not end internal debates over the Association's dealings with the IUS and that body's increasingly disgruntled delegations from other Western nations. Western European students soon quietly began discussing the creation of a competing international student union—a step that NSA explicitly rejected in 1948. NSA's leaders at that time still saw no profit in turning the field of international student activities into another battleground of the Cold War by leading a revolt within IUS or inducing other national student unions to bolt the Union and create a rival organization.⁷⁶ (U)

⁷³McLaughlin, *Political Processes in American National Student Organizations*, pp. 51, 65-67. (U)

⁷⁴Ibid. (U)

⁷⁵Ibid. (U)

⁷⁶Peter T. Jones, *The History of US National Student Association Relations with the International Union of Students, 1945-1956* (Philadelphia: Foreign Policy Research Institute, 1956), pp. 57-68. (U)

NSA and the Communist threat to student life came to OPC's attention in the spring of 1949. Deputy ADPC Merritt Ruddock's friend George A. "Abe" Lincoln, on the faculty of the United States Military Academy at West Point, wrote Ruddock about a rumor he had heard from one of his cadets. It seemed a certain "National Scholastic Association" had asked this cadet's girlfriend to spend the coming summer doing "humanitarian work" behind the Iron Curtain. The whole thing smelled fishy to Lincoln:

I don't know whether the US has a similar program drawing people from the iron curtain regions to see the US way of life. I don't know whether our people are paying any attention to this "humanitarian" endeavor or whether it warrants attention. But it seems to me to be in the area of your business . . .

I feel very keenly that we can be gravely hurt in this cold war in the area of our colleges and universities. It was their weakness that magnified our stupidity during the thirties . . . May be we can't afford another such woolly-headed emotional orgy in the field where our pick and shovel local leaders are trained during their most formative years.

Will you show this to Frank [Wisner]?"

Ruddock relayed to Lincoln Wisner's interest and requested more information.⁷⁸ Wisner also queried the FBI about the "National Scholastic Association," but what he learned—if anything—apparently was not preserved in CIA's permanent files.⁷⁹ (U)

Given OPC's unsystematic approach and still-evolving procedures, its most important operational challenge in this field was finding someone with firsthand knowledge of the problem. In 1949, Frank Lindsay's Operations Division fortuitously hired several young Catholics who had just such knowledge and contacts in the small world of student and youth leaders. Between them, they identified for OPC the individuals who would eventually cement the CIA-NSA relationship in 1952.⁸⁰ (U)

⁷⁸G.A. Lincoln to Merritt K. Ruddock, 31 March 1949, Information Management Staff Job 78-04938R, box 1, folder 1. (U)

⁷⁹Ruddock to Lincoln, 8 April 1949, Information Management Staff Job 78-04938R, box 1, folder 1 (Secret) (U)

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OPC soon launched a series of mostly fruitless initiatives in the hope of creating some kind of operational relationship with NSA's officers. ^{25X1}

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Realizing that it could accomplish nothing immediately, OPC set its sights on the IUS's Second World Student Congress, scheduled for Prague in August 1950.⁴⁵ In the meantime, Erskine Childers, NSA's International Vice President and Donald Sullivan's friend, was searching for a dozen student delegates for the Prague Congress (as well as the money to pay their fares).⁴⁶ OPC's Operations Division swung into action when it learned of this opportunity to sponsor the NSA delegation. As NSA's then-Executive Secretary Fred Houghteling told the story years later, a friend from Harvard contacted him at NSA's Madison headquarters and asked about the delegates NSA had selected. A few days later, the friend showed up again with two other men and that evening drove Houghteling to an isolated spot outside Madison. When they stopped the car, they told him that "the government" would fund NSA's delegation but would make it look as if the money (reportedly \$10,000 to \$12,000) had come from two wealthy philanthropists who wished to keep their gift quiet. A few weeks later Houghteling traveled to Chicago with another (unwitting) NSA staffer to formally "ask" for donations from the donors, themselves in secret contact with OPC.⁴⁷ (U)

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OPC officer Milton Buffington summarized the Office's hopes for the Prague Student Congress [REDACTED]

It would be preferable to let the International Union of Students shoot its wad at Prague after carefully baiting it, short of an actual walkout, by the United States National Student Association and other Western influenced delegates who could present resolutions and formal motions of such type and character that the Communist majority of the International Union of Students would have to squelch them, in order to do obeisance to their Muscovite masters, but at the same time would lose face with the world in so doing.

Buffington concluded with a warning, saying that "a student or a youth movement can, unless properly handled, be a dangerous instrumentality and its exploitation could very well backfire or boomerang upon us."⁸⁸ This caution would limit NSA-OPC contacts while Buffington oversaw the Office's youth and student plans in 1950 and 1951. ~~(S)~~

A Bolt From the Blue (U)

Early in 1950, President Truman directed Secretary of State Dean Acheson and Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson to reexamine America's strategic objectives. China had just fallen to the Communists, while the Soviets had tested their own atomic bomb, and a shaken White House felt the need for some clear thinking about the world situation and the risks for the United States. The report that Acheson and Johnson submitted in mid-April, known as NSC-68 (and drafted by the Department of State's Paul Nitze), painted the global battle between freedom and tyranny in lowering terms. Passages about "the struggle for men's minds" (lately a favorite phrase of Acheson's) stated that the Soviets were already waging full-scale psychological warfare against the West:

Every institution of our society is an instrument which it is sought [*sic*] to stultify and turn against our purposes [by the Communists]. Those that touch most closely our material and moral strength are obviously the prime targets, labor unions, civic enterprises, schools, churches, and all media for influencing opinion.

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Frustrating the Kremlin's designs called for "a vigorous political offensive against the Soviet Union." One could read NSC-68, with only a little interpolation, as a call for a US-led effort to save international nongovernmental and voluntary organizations from Communist subversion.⁸⁰ (U)

President Truman did not formally approve NSC-68 until after the Korean war broke out in June 1950, but OPC officials knew the gist of the paper as soon as it reached the Oval Office. Indeed, Truman called publicly on 20 April for "a sustained, intensified program to promote the cause of freedom against the propaganda of slavery." "We must," said the President, "make ourselves heard around the world in a great campaign of truth."⁸¹ (U)

Senior OPC officers had discussed NSC-68 with Department of State representative Robert Joyce at Carmel Offie's house on 18 April. Joyce told them the directive would have a profound effect on operations.⁸² At OPC's working levels, NSC-68 meant vastly increased resources and a new operating climate. Programs and Planning Division chief Joseph Frank called his staff together on 25 April and told them that NSC-68, if approved, would bring dramatic changes. The National Security Council had determined that war with the Soviet Union was a distinct possibility, and now it wanted OPC "to spend a maximum amount of money." "This is a go-ahead for taking long shots," the note-taker recorded.⁸³ Every office in OPC heard roughly the same message. (S)

North Korea's invasion of South Korea in June 1950 galvanized an already-alarmed Washington and ensured NSC-68's approval. Overnight the official mood—which had grown cautiously optimistic in early 1949 with the success of the Berlin airlift but darkened again with the fall of China and the Soviet A-bomb test—turned grim and warlike. Congress suddenly approved huge budget hikes for the President's overt psychological offensive, the "Campaign of Truth," which would be run out of the Department of State's United States Information Service.⁸⁴ Edward Barrett later noted that "American Congressmen, like Americans in general, were suspicious of anything that could be labeled propaganda"; but "if you dressed it up as warfare, money was very easy to come by."⁸⁵

⁸⁰ National Security Council, NSC-68, 14 April 1950, *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, vol. 1, pp. 240, 263, 282. (U)

⁸¹ Barrett, *Truth is our Weapon*, p. 73. See also Walter L. Hixson, *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War, 1945-1961* (New York: St Martin's 1997) p. 14. (U)

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⁸² Barrett, *Truth is our Weapon*, pp. 80-82. (U)

⁸³ Hixson, *Parting the Curtain*, p. 15. (U)

OPC had grown steadily before the Korean conflict, but soon the pace of its expansion increased at a rate perhaps too fast for the Office's good. 25X1

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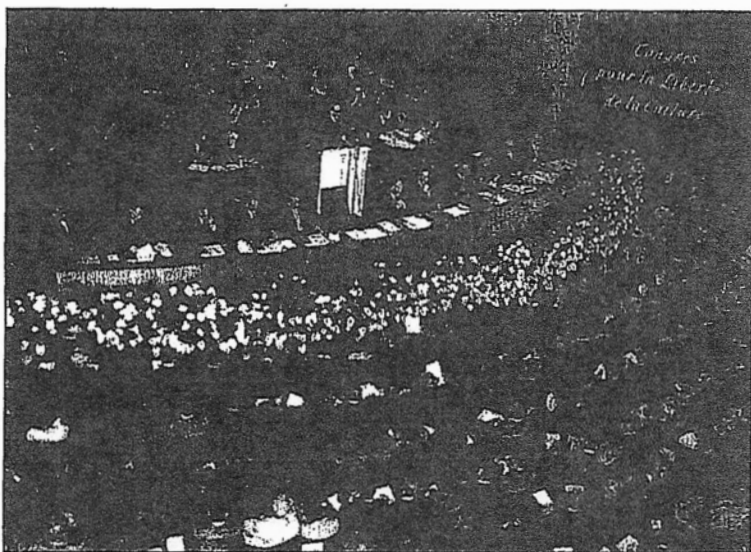
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Although much of the new money and staff went directly into the Korean war effort, every division and staff enjoyed a massive increase in resources.⁶⁵ (S)

The Congress for Cultural Freedom opened in West Berlin's Titania Palace on Monday, 26 June 1950, a day after the arriving American delegates had learned that troops of Communist North Korea had launched a massive invasion of the South.⁶⁶ This pointed reminder of Berlin's own vulnerability heightened the pervading apprehension and grim determination of the almost 200 delegates and 4,000 spectators—a mood that the Congress's opening caught and reflected. The strains of Beethoven's dramatic *Egmont* Overture evoked an earlier struggle against oppression and preceded Lord Mayor Reuter's request for a moment of silence in memory of those who had died fighting for freedom or were still languishing in Stalin's concentration camps. Many of those present in the Titania Palace may well have felt themselves part of a great gesture of defiance directed at the Stalinist empire. (U)

Rhetorical leadership of the subsequent sessions fell spontaneously to two eloquent Europeans with very different views, according to historian Peter Coleman. One was a quiet Italian socialist writer named Ignazio Silone, who had defied both Fascism and Communism. His opposite number was the anglicized Hungarian novelist Arthur Koestler, a brilliant foe of tyranny who nonetheless, according to Sidney Hook, "was capable of reciting the truths of the multiplication table in a way that would make some people indignant with him." Although both Silone and Koestler had written about their breaks with the Communist Party in a new book titled *The God That Failed*, they represented two poles of opinion on the best way to oppose Communism. Koestler favored the rhetorical frontal assault, sparing neither foe nor friend (he irritated some delegates who thought he was denouncing socialism and the British

⁶⁵The American delegation included Sidney Hook, James Burnham, novelist James T. Farrell, playwright Tennessee Williams, historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., actor Robert Montgomery, and David Lilienthal, chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission. Other Americans present included Max Yergan and, of course, Melvin Lasky. (U)



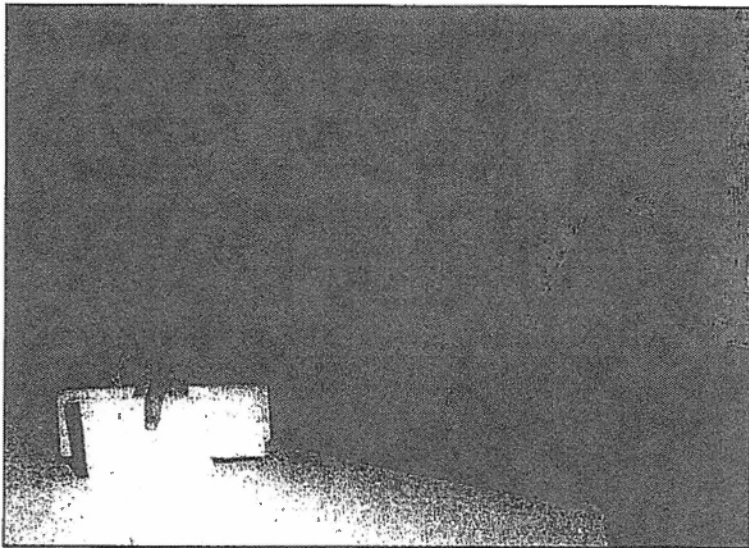
Lord Mayor Ernst Reuter addresses the opening session of the Berlin Congress for Cultural Freedom. (U)

Labour government). Silone was subtler, urging the West to promote social and political reforms to co-opt Communism's still-influential moral appeal.⁹⁷ (U)

Silone's ideas echoed the strategy that OPC adopted to guide its operations. Instead of backing the political right in Europe and Asia, OPC would back the "non-Communist left" as the most reliable bulwark against Communism. Silone and other thinkers of the non-Communist left suggested that only socialism or social democracy could lend the West the vision and the legitimacy to attain peace and prosperity—and thus dry up the sources of Communism's popular support. Whatever their misgivings about socialism, OPC officers conceded the strategic acumen of this thought. (U)

The competing ideas of Koestler and Silone lent a certain dramatic tension to the Congress, but their rivalry by itself confirmed that debate in the West was truly free, with room for all shades of anti-totalitarian opinion. The speeches and papers at the Congress, delivered by some of the free world's leading moral and social thinkers—who had temporarily set aside their differences to unite in a defense of democracy—impressed many as a brilliant and courageous defiance of the forces of

⁹⁷Coleman, *The Liberal Conspiracy*, pp. 22-32. The Koestler and Silone essays were written in 1949 and published in Richard Crossman, ed., *The God That Failed: Six Studies in Communism* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1950). Hook, *Out of Step*, p. 438. (U)



Franz Borkenau (left) and Ignazio Silone in Berlin. (U)

darkness outside the gates. "Friends, freedom has seized the offensive!" shouted Arthur Koestler as he read the Congress's "Freedom Manifesto" before 15,000 cheering Berliners at the closing rally on 29 June.⁹⁸ The irony was subtle but real; Koestler had once worked for Soviet operative Willi Münzenberg managing front groups for Moscow, and now he was unwittingly helping the Central Intelligence Agency's efforts to establish a new organization designed to undo some of the damage that Stalin's agents had done over the previous generation.⁹⁹ (U)

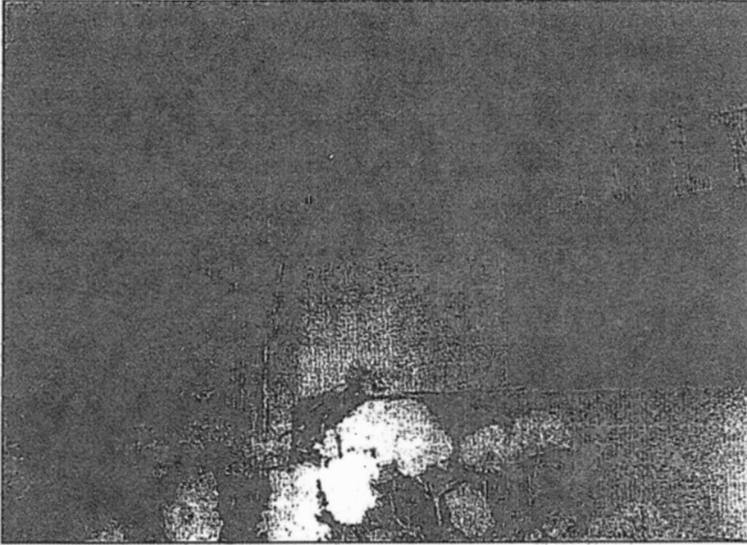
Having set the Congress in motion, OPC sat back and watched while events played themselves out. Michael Josselson kept out of sight, although he watched everything that transpired. Hook, Burnham, Lasky, and Brown caucused every night to monitor the Congress' progress and to plan for the next day's sessions.¹⁰⁰ The men whom OPC brought together in Berlin needed no coaching on the finer points of criticizing Communism. Although the delegates had publicly debated tactics, American occupation authorities concluded that the delegates' unanimity in

⁹⁸Coleman, *The Liberal Conspiracy*, pp. 1, 27-28. The "Freedom Manifesto" was reprinted in Hook, *Out of Step*, pp. 456-458. (U)

⁹⁹See Koestler's untitled essay in Crossman, ed., *The God That Failed*, pp. 71-72. (U)

¹⁰⁰Coleman, *The Liberal Conspiracy*, p. 27. 25X1

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Arthur Koestler addresses the Congress's closing rally. (U)

denouncing tyranny of all stripes had "actually impelled a number of prominent cultural leaders [in Germany] to give up their sophisticated, contemplative detachment in favor of a strong stand against totalitarianism."¹⁰¹ (U)

OPC Headquarters hailed the success of the Berlin Congress. Frank Wisner offered his "heartiest congratulations" to all involved,¹⁰² while OPC's institutional sponsors also judged the affair a hit. Department of Defense liaison John Magruder, in a memo to Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson, deemed it "a subtle covert operation carried out on the highest intellectual level" and "unconventional warfare at its best."¹⁰³ Johnson himself showed the after-action reports to President Truman and subsequently reported that the President was "very well pleased."¹⁰⁴ (U)

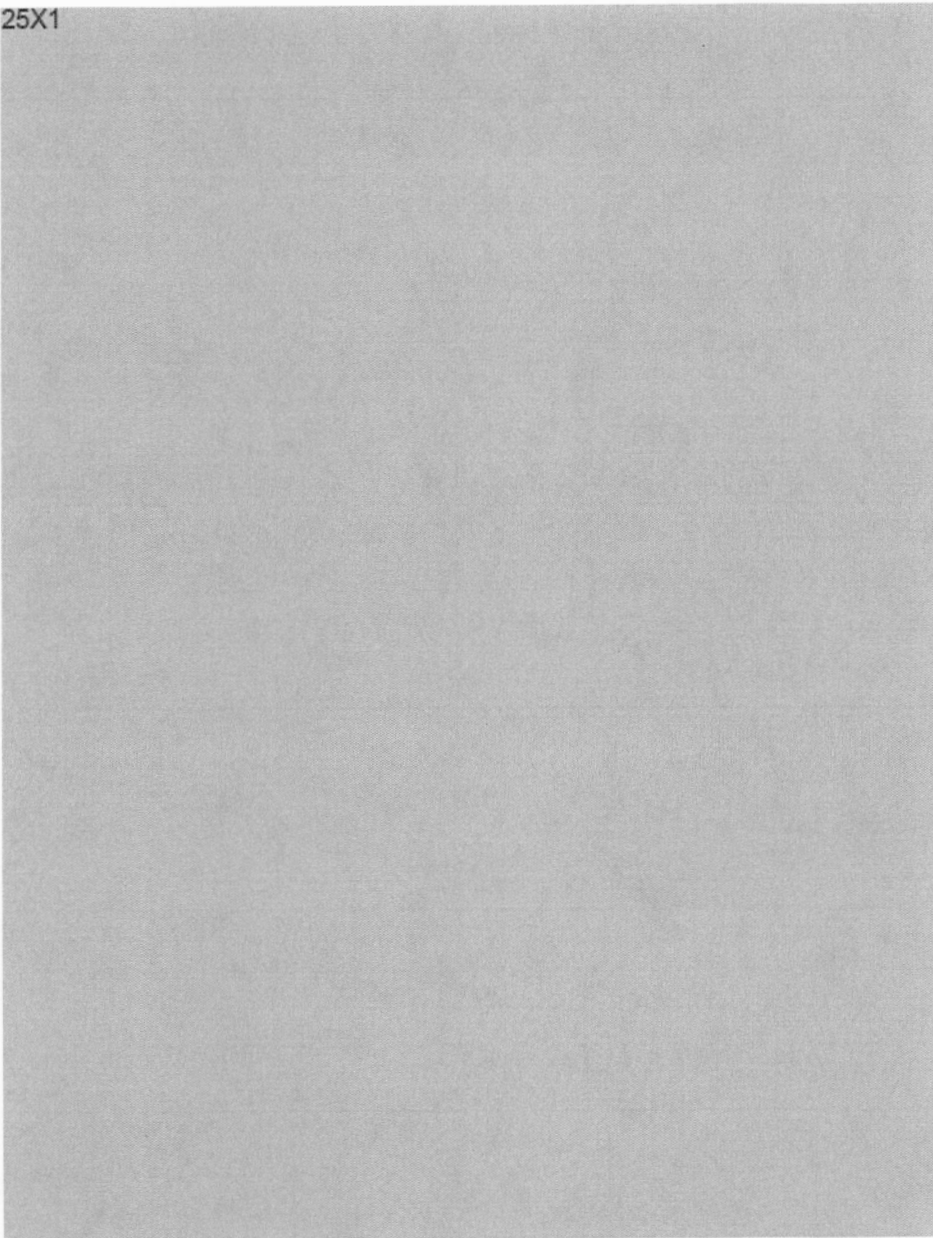
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Slow Progress (U)

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The Prague Congress that August proved to some Western observers that IUS had become a thoroughly Stalinized institution. NSA delegate Robert West scribbled notes during one of the Congress' orchestrated demonstrations of solidarity with North Korea:

After sixteen and one-half minutes, chair requested delegates take their seats, but this entirely ignored . . . demonstration continued unabated. Each individual Korean carried by group of students through aisles between tables. Songs and clapping continue at end of twenty minutes. Demonstration ended suddenly at twenty and one-half minutes . . . delegates returned rather quietly to seats. At end of paragraph they picked up last sentence of [IUS President Josa] Grohmann . . . Hands Off Korea shouted in unison. From where I sit, I can see Scots, in red academic robes, seated in the midst of the confusion. I know also, British and Danes and South Africans are seated. Swede has walked away from seat.

The unhappy Americans and the other Western European delegates began meeting together in the evenings to complain about the IUS's Stalinist tack. They agreed to discuss formal cooperation between their respective student unions at a conference in Scandinavia the following December.¹⁰⁸

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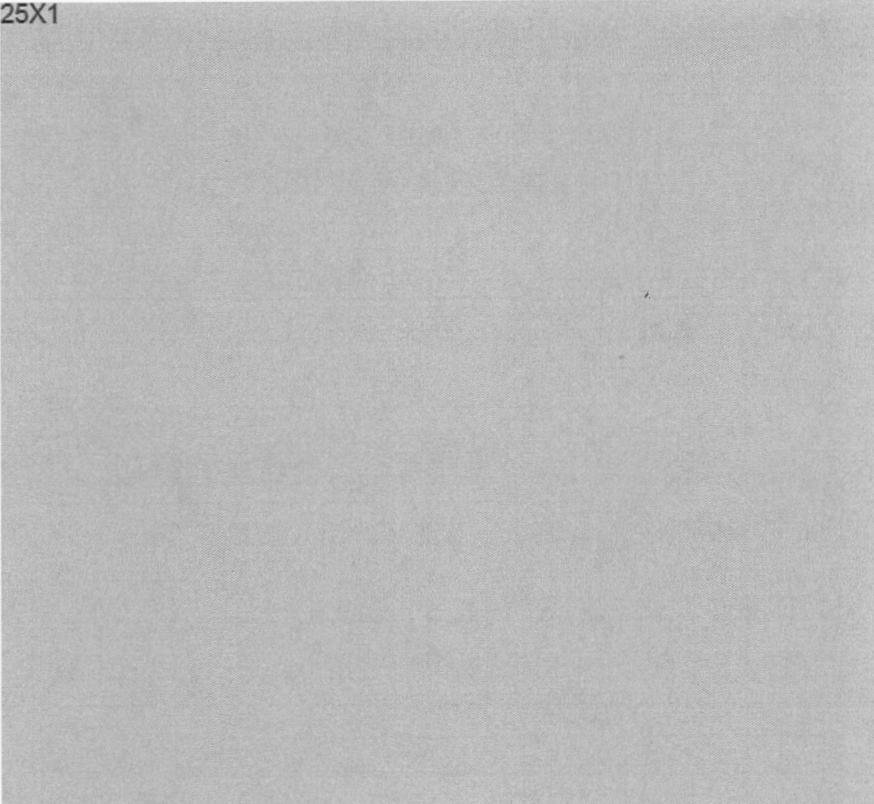
The delegates' report convinced NSA's leaders that the time had come to end the policy of practical cooperation with the IUS. Nevertheless, NSA still refused to commit itself to supporting a new Western group for fear of splitting the international student world into rival blocs. The NSA Congress in Ann Arbor in August 1950 reflected this ambivalence by electing as president Allard K. Lowenstein, who favored a split, and as international affairs vice president Herbert Eisenberg, who still thought it premature to make a total break with the IUS. This policy dispute and the consequent argument over the relative power of the offices of president and international affairs vice president weakened NSA for the entire 1950-51 school year.¹⁰⁹ (U)

¹⁰⁸ Jones, *The History of US National Student Association Relations with the International Union of Students*, pp. 75-78. The three Americans representing NSA in Prague were Robert West, Eugene Schwartz, and William Holbrook. See also International Organizations Division (Office of Reports and Estimates), "Weekly Summary No. 33," 22 August 1950, Office of Transnational Issues Job 78-01617A, box 49 (declassified). 25X1

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¹⁰⁹ Jones, *The History of US National Student Association Relations with the International Union of Students*, pp. 79-80. (U)

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The Stockholm International Student Conference (ISC) in December 1950 did not accomplish the rupture with IUS that OPC had desired, although it marked another small step forward from the Office's point of view. Lowenstein and Eisenberg, joined by Schmidt

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[redacted] attended for NSA.¹¹³

Some of the European delegates criticized Lowenstein's plea for a complete break with IUS and the formation of an explicitly anti-Communist international organization. Their hope for continued cooperation with IUS had grown noticeably dimmer, however, and with regrets the delegates agreed to formalize their own separate cooperation, establishing an office and a set of loose procedures for a permanent "International Student Conference."¹¹⁴ (s)

Despite the Stockholm conclave's ambiguous result, Harvard Government Professor William Y. Elliott soon afterward urged the CIA's recently appointed Deputy Director for Plans, Allen Dulles, to consider subsidizing NSA. Elliott had been lobbying Wisner for OPC assistance to a non-Communist international student body and viewed NSA as a way toward this end.¹¹⁵ Dulles was still learning his new job, however, and seems to have come to no decision on the matter. Milton Buffington explained his own reluctance not long after Elliott met with Dulles. The most important objection, in Buffington's eyes, was the fact that NSA had never knowingly taken government money for fear of compromising its independence. Buffington also saw a more practical obstacle to cooperation in the lingering dispute between Lowenstein and Eisenberg over the Association's policy toward the IUS.¹¹⁶ (c)

Buffington's hesitation may have stemmed, at least in part, from NSA's inability to persuade foreign student groups that the time had come to abandon the IUS and create a truly independent international student organization. Western delegates had been shaken by the Prague conference in August 1950, but their new and loosely organized cooperative

¹¹³Lowenstein later claimed that he had paid his own way to Stockholm and took no OPC money. He also noted that someone had pitched him a "suspicious" offer to pay for the trip; he declined the funds when the source refused to divulge the money's origin. 25X1

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See

David Harris, *Dreams Die Hard* (New York: St. Martin's, 1982), p. 168. 25X1

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¹¹⁴Jones, *The History of US National Student Association Relations with the International Union of Students*, pp. 80-81. (U)

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¹¹⁶Milton Buffington to Lewis Thompson, "United States National Student Association," 17 February 1951, in Warner, *The CIA Under Harry Truman*, pp. 383-384. Buffington may have taken Lowenstein's aforementioned refusal to accept unattested funds for his Stockholm trip as proof that the current officers of NSA would refuse to cooperate with OPC. (U)

arrangement did not look promising except as a pathway to a more vital, permanent organization. While they waited, Buffington and his colleagues in OPC turned their attention and resources to the problem of building a relationship with a seemingly more promising organization, the World Assembly of Youth. (U)

CCF Moves to Paris (U)

Almost before the last chairs were folded in Berlin's Titania Palace the previous June, various OPC officers and contacts began campaigning for approval of a project to support the Congress for Cultural Freedom on a permanent basis. The Congress already was continuing on by virtue of its own momentum and a small OPC subsidy, with token offices in Berlin and Paris and a pair of committees that had been nominated in June.¹¹⁷ Michael Josselson pouched to Washington a copy of Melvin Lasky's outline of the form and mission of a permanent Congress for Cultural Freedom. He pointed out that events were moving rapidly; an informal steering committee comprising Melvin Lasky, Irving Brown, and Arthur Koestler was meeting in Paris to decide the final shape of the permanent Congress.¹¹⁸ (U)

For the time being, however, Frank Wisner—in effect agreeing with James Burnham that a permanent Congress could pull European opinion away from neutralism—had decided that Eastern Europe Division had to remove Melvin Lasky and Burnham from prominent positions in any ongoing project.¹¹⁹ Burnham was happy to step aside, agreeing that he made an easy target for the Congress' critics.¹²⁰ (S)

Lasky was another matter. Michael Josselson had defended Lasky's involvement in April, and EE Division—while admitting that Lasky was

¹¹⁷The Congress's governing body at this point was a 5-man executive committee comprising Irving Brown, Ignazio Silone, Arthur Koestler, Carlo Schmid, and David Rousset. 25X1

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See also Coleman, *The Liberal*

Conspiracy, p. 34 (S)

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a lightning rod—nonetheless agreed with Josselson that Lasky had been a key to the Berlin gathering's success.¹²¹ This apologia infuriated Wisner. In a scathing memo to EE, the ADPC declared himself "very disturbed" by the "non-observance" of his April command to have Lasky moved to the sidelines of the project. Lasky's visibility was "a major blunder," recognized as such "by our best friends in the Department of State." Wisner made himself clear: unless the headstrong Lasky left the Congress for Cultural Freedom, OPC would not support the organization.¹²² EE had no choice but to cable Wisner's instructions to Germany.¹²³ Michael Josselson exploded and cabled a histrionic protest, but there was nothing he could do.¹²⁴ Lasky had to go, and OPC contrived to have him removed from the project and canceled his operational clearance.¹²⁵ (S)

The Congress' steering committee formally established the Congress for Cultural Freedom as a permanent entity on 27 November 1950. The Agency's Project Review Board had approved the project—OKOP-ERA—earlier that same month 25X1

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The new organization chose a seven-member Executive Committee, with the Swiss aristocrat Denis de Rougemont as its President.¹²⁷ Josselson's

¹²¹Louis Glaser to Frank Lindsay, "Activities of Mr. Melvin Lasky in connection with Congress for Cultural Freedom (Project PDQUICK)," 4 August 1950, Political and Psychological Staff Job 78-01614R, box 1, folder 4-(S).

¹²²Frank Wisner to C.D.G. Breckinridge, "Berlin Congress for Cultural Freedom: activities of Melvin Lasky," 8 August 1950. 25X1

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Wisner viewed Lasky's actions as interference in a covert operation by the employee of another US agency, and he made sure that his contacts in the Department of State knew of his unhappiness. State's Jesse MacKnight agreed with Wisner on this issue, lamenting that the activities of officially connected Americans in Germany were particularly difficult to control (from a public relations standpoint) because they were under the authority of the High Commission for Germany. 25X1

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¹²⁷The other members of the committee were Irving Brown, Arthur Koestler, Eugen Kogon, David Rousset, Stephen Spender, and Ignazio Silone. Raymond Aron, among others, served as an alternate member. Coleman, *The Liberal Conspiracy*, p. 37. Apparently Irving Brown was the only witting member of the Executive Committee. (S)

friend Nicolas Nabokov became Secretary General and principal executive officer (although CIA security, believing him to be a homosexual, refused to allow case officers to brief him about the OPC connection).¹²⁸

(S)

The organization's move to Paris had already prompted OPC to transfer the project from the Eastern Europe Division 25X1 Western Europe Division 25X1 Michael Josselson resigned his 25X1 job with the American occupation government in Germany to take the post of Administrative Secretary in Paris 25X1 Josselson would be 25X1 the Congress's "enlivening spirit" for the next 17 years. (S)

Conclusion (U)

By January 1951 the Central Intelligence Agency had decided and begun to use American intellectuals and college students (as well as other segments of American society) as unwitting apologists for US policies abroad. Agency officials perceived this to be a matter of necessity; given the global emergency, stopping Communism seemed to justify desperate expedients. The Soviets and their satellites at roughly this time were reportedly thought by American "intelligence agencies" to be spending \$1.5 billion a year on domestic and foreign propaganda (with 10 percent of that in France alone!).¹²⁹ Neither the NSA nor the CCF operations was very far along yet, and within a few years senior Agency officials would have second thoughts and voice misgivings about the risk of scandal. These worries would prove decisive in the case of the Congress for Cultural Freedom, but would not significantly affect the operation involving the National Student Association.

With little explicit guidance from the White House or the NSC on using domestic voluntary associations, but general praise for the Congress' conference in Berlin, OPC felt encouraged to proceed. The new DCI, Walter Bedell Smith, was still asking the NSC to exercise a strong coordinating role in national psychological strategy. OPC filled the policy vacuum with its own ideas and projects. (U)

¹²⁸ Coleman, *The Liberal Conspiracy*, p. 43. 25X1

25X1 "OKOPERA" 25X1

¹²⁹ Barrett, *Truth is Our Weapon*, pp. 172, 183. (U)

The Office, having no corporate operational experience or covert infrastructure of its own, chose to rely on American voluntary organizations with foreign contacts for operational entrée and cover. OPC officers quickly learned that such organizations themselves did not yet exist, at least not in forms that would have allowed OPC to make secure and effective use of them as psychological warfare instruments. Nonetheless, various individuals in and around the National Student Association and the short-lived "Americans for Intellectual Freedom" wanted very much to fight Stalinism in Europe. Thus OPC applied itself to the task of subsidizing and assisting the activities of these people, hoping they might gain influence and followings in their respective circles. No coercion was involved or necessary; OPC simply ensured that funds would be available to finance certain forms of anti-Communist activism and organizing by the right sorts of Americans. (U)

OPC's new projects embodied a sophistication that belies depictions of the Truman administration's "psywar" offensive as a simplistic McCarthy-era exercise in wishful thinking about "liberation" of the East.¹³⁰ The subtlety was twofold: in the employment of the "front" system that Merrit Ruddock described in 1949; and in the use of unwitting American critics of US policies as exemplars of free speech. Both innovations were forced on OPC by its initial weakness and inexperience, but OPC officials quickly recognized both as significant and beneficial. ~~(S)~~

The record of this early period shows no specific instance of OPC officials objecting that CIA-supported organizations were attempting to influence the views of American citizens on foreign policy issues. Some OPC components chose to encourage and reward vocal anti-Communist intellectuals like Sidney Hook and James Burnham at a time when US policy toward Moscow was a live issue in American political debates. Other OPC branches worked somewhat less effectively to ensure that the National Student Association's leaders—hitherto ambivalent about the necessity and wisdom of open confrontation with the Communist-dominated International Union of Students—saw with their own eyes the face of Stalinism at the Prague IUS conference in August 1950. The fact that OPC was not yet (as of mid-1951) subsidizing NSA's day-to-day operations owed more to the individual personalities in both organizations and the inexperience of Office personnel than to any reluctance to inject covert funds into an American student group. (U)

¹³⁰ Walter Hixson verges on such a mischaracterization in his division of American Cold War policies into "aggressive psychological warfare" versus the "evolutionary approach"; *Parting the Curtain*, pp. xiv, 101, 115. (U)

Indeed, the Office of Policy Coordination had taken sides at home as well as abroad. ADPC Frank Wisner glimpsed danger in OPC's involvement in domestic political life. In November 1950, with the Korean war raging and the US Government anticipating a global conflict with the Soviet Union, he reminded his OPC staff and division chiefs that

the ultimate objective of any proposed undertaking must clearly be to produce an effect upon a foreign state or group. This effect may even be the ultimate reception abroad of an idea which has been produced and disseminated within the United States. It is not appropriate to undertake any activity which has the objective or primary effect of influencing the foreign or domestic policies of the United States, or of influencing the internal security of the United States, or which has as its target a domestic group in the United States.¹¹¹

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OPC's insensitivity to certain larger issues inherent in the use of Americans as unwitting apologists for official policy mirrored the feeling that pervaded official Washington. The authors of NSC-68, for their part, seemed more concerned about unintended consequences abroad rather than at home:

The integrity of our system will not be jeopardized by any measures, covert or overt, violent or non-violent, which serve the purposes of frustrating the Kremlin design, nor does the

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necessity for conducting ourselves so as to affirm our values in actions as well as words forbid such measures, provided only that they are appropriately calculated to that end and are not so excessive or misdirected as to make us enemies of the people instead of the evil men who have enslaved them.

NSC-68 had sounded a note of caution, however, urging due care "to avoid permanently impairing our economy and the fundamental values and institutions inherent in our way of life."¹³² This concern, in the eyes of some observers, would later seem prophetic. (U)

¹³²NSC-68, *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, Volume I, pp. 244, 289. (U)

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