

FUNDING NEAR END FOR U.S. STATIONS AIMED AT RED BLOC

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Cutoff Tomorrow for Radio
Free Europe and 2d Outlet
Unless Congress Acts
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WASHINGTON, Feb. 20—Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, the American-run stations born of the cold war and secretly financed for more than 20 years by the Central Intelligence Agency, will lose their Government funding Tuesday and are struggling desperately to stay alive.

If Senator J. W. Fulbright, Democrat of Arkansas, has his way, the funding will not be renewed.

"These radios should be given an opportunity to take their rightful place in the graveyard of cold war relics," Mr. Fulbright, the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, told the Senate on Thursday.

But even if a compromise is reached in Congress to provide additional funds at least through the end of the current fiscal year, which ends June 30, the future of the organizations seems bleak, even to their most ardent supporters.

Half Billion Spent

Through the years the C.I.A. provided about a half billion dollars to the two stations, which broadcast to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Radio Free Europe, with 1,600 employes, was founded in 1950. It broadcasts in native languages to Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and Rumania. Radio Liberty, with about 1,000 employes, was founded in 1951, and broadcasts to the Soviet Union in Russian and other Soviet languages.

Because the stations often broadcast material not available in the controlled Communist media, the Soviet Union and its allies have long sought to still them. They are both based in Munich and the Communist governments have put

pressure on West Germany to revoke their authority to operate, a move up to now resisted by Bonn.

Nonprofit Operation Sought

The C.I.A. financing for the stations — about \$36-million yearly—came to an end last year after Senator Clifford P. Case, Republican of New Jersey, disclosed the extent of the secret funding. The Nixon Administration, seeking to keep the organizations alive through direct Congressional funding sought a bill to set up a nonprofit organization independent of the Government to over-

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see their operation.

But Mr. Fulbright was able to get the Senate to pass a measure that would finance the radios through the Secretary of State for only one year. The State Department, arguing that the radios should be "independent" of the Administration backed a House bill that would provide funds for two years and establish a two-year study group.

The differing House and Senate measures must be ironed out in conference but only one has been held and none is scheduled before Tuesday's expiration.

Mr. Fulbright has been accused of trying to "filibuster" the stations to death by delaying conference action. But his staff denied this yesterday, saying that Representative Thomas E. Morgan, Democrat of Pennsylvania, the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, was out of town last week.

Scott Is 'Disturbed'

Nevertheless, Senator Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania, the Republican leader, said Friday that he was "disturbed" that the Senate conferees had not met although "I understand the House has been ready to meet."

He said the Administration was "most concerned" that the stations be allowed to continue.

Spokesmen for the Administration have said that President Nixon was personally concerned, but he has not spoken out strongly.

It has been difficult to generate enthusiasm for appropriations of \$36-million annually in an era when the focus is on negotiation and not dispute with the Russians. Except for Mr. Scott, few Senators

have spoken in favor of the stations.

Senator Fulbright said that the Administration was seeking to keep "this old cold war program on the books despite the fact that neither the American public nor the governments of Western Europe are willing to support such a continuation."

Fulbright Questions Sincerity

He said that continuation of the two agencies raised doubts about the sincerity of Mr. Nixon's desire to negotiate and improve relations with Communist countries.

"I for one, and some of my colleagues," Mr. Fulbright said, "have not been willing to give it a new lease on life. I hope it will come to an end; I feel it should come to an end—it should be liquidated—if an authorization is not enacted."

He indicated that he would oppose another continuing resolution to finance the stations pending legislation. The two radio stations have been operating under such a continuing resolution, which expires Tuesday night.

Both stations have said that they could pay their expenses for a week or two, but would have to cease operations if Congressional authorization was not forthcoming by the end of the month. Congress already has passed an appropriation bill providing funds until June 30, but it was passed contingent on approval of an authorization bill.

Mr. Fulbright had earlier asked for studies by the Library of Congress on the effectiveness of the two stations. He had hoped that those reports would bear out his contention that the stations should be disbanded. But the reports, made available Friday to The New York Times by the Foreign Relations Committee, strongly supported the stations.

Basic Policy Shift

The report on Radio Liberty, written by Dr. Joseph G. Whelan, a specialist in Soviet and East European affairs, said that the station's basic policy had shifted from its early "liberation" of the Soviet Union to "liberalization" as conditions eased within Soviet society.

"The professionalism of the staff," the report said, "is apparent in the quality of their research product, their multilingual facility, the unique combination of American and Western scholarship with the native talents of former Soviet citizens, and finally the existence of an organizational spirit that seems to arise from a conviction of participating in creating positive change in the Soviet Union."

"The reality of Radio Liberty," the report continued,

connects with its popular image. It is neither a cold war operation nor is its staff a group of cold warriors. On the contrary, Radio Liberty accepts all Soviet institutions, though not its ideology, and seeks to bring about peaceful democratic change from within."

Mr. Whelan said that if Radio

Liberty was disbanded, the Soviet people "will have lost a free press for the inflow of information" that could not be duplicated by officially sponsored government radios. He said it would also mean the loss of a means of dissemination of "samizdat," or underground writings, throughout the Soviet Union "with the consequences that this liberalizing movement will unquestionably receive a serious setback."

Similar praise for Radio Free Europe was expressed by James R. Price in his Library of Congress report.

A General Accounting Office memo to the Foreign Relations Committee disclosed that Radio Free Europe had received Government grants of \$306,890,469 and raised \$46-million through public fund raising. Radio Liberty got \$158,830,637 from the government. It did not solicit public funds.