

U.S. RADIO ABROAD WINS SENATE TEST

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Overriding Fulbright, Unit
Votes Funds for Radio Free
Europe and Radio Liberty

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WASHINGTON, June 7—Despite the objections of its chairman, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted overwhelmingly today to approve an Administration request for \$38.5-million to extend the life of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty for at least another year.

The 10-to-3 vote of the committee, headed by Senator J. W. Fulbright, Democrat of Arkansas, virtually insured the continued existence of the two stations, whose broadcasts have long infuriated the Soviet Union and its allies.

Radio Liberty beams its programs to the Soviet Union, Radio Free Europe to the nations of Eastern Europe. Both were established in the nineteen-fifties and until last year received their funds secretly through the Central Intelligence Agency.

Senator Fulbright, who has called the stations "relics of the cold war" and a waste of taxpayers' money, argued against

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Fulbright Group Backs 2 Radio Stations

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continued Government financing of the stations during two days of hearings that ended this morning.

But aside from the support he drew from Senator Mike Mansfield, Democrat of Montana, and Senator Stuart Symington, Democrat of Missouri, he failed to convince the committee either to deny or to reduce the Administration request.

The \$38.5-million request for the next fiscal year has already been approved by both the Senate and House Appropriations Committees. The House Foreign Affairs Committee is expected to approve the necessary authorization shortly. The bill is not expected to face any significant floor fight when it is brought up for Senate and House approval later this month, Congressional sources said.

Mr. Fulbright, backed by most members of his committee, had almost succeeded in blocking funds earlier this year for the fiscal year ending June 30. But Administration pressure succeeded in bringing about a compromise allowing the stations to function until this June 30. The expected passage of the new bill will extend their life at least until June 30, 1973.

White House View Given

The Administration's argument for continuing the stations was made by U. Alexis Johnson, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, at this morning's hearing.

He told the committee that despite the accords reached by President Nixon in Moscow, the Soviet Union and the United States would continue to be major world competitors. He said that the stations were important in that they served as "a free and independent press" for the peoples of Eastern Europe whose media are tightly controlled.

He said that if the peoples of the Communist countries had information that might otherwise be denied them by their governments, they could help bring about beneficial internal changes.

Mr. Johnson added that the broadcasting activities of Radio Liberty had not in any way impeded the Moscow talks between Mr. Nixon and the Soviet leaders.

"I do not think that there is room now for any doubt that this Administration's effort to

achieve the first strategic arms limitation agreements was a completely successful one," he said. "This success was in no way diminished by its continuing strong support for freedom of international communication, nor was the achievement of the agreements jeopardized by the continued broadcasting of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty."

Earlier this year, Mr. Fulbright had said that he thought the stations might be a factor in delaying Soviet agreement on the strategic arms treaty.

Mr. Fulbright had been increasingly frustrated in recent months in his efforts to curtail Administration programs. He was soundly defeated on the Senate floor after he had succeeded in persuading his com-

mittee to cut sharply the United States Information Agency funds for the next year. The vote today was one of the few against Mr. Fulbright by the committee itself.

Over the years, Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, both with headquarters in Munich, have received about \$500-million in Government funds. They specialize in broadcasting news and views that would not normally be permitted by the Government-controlled media, in Communist countries.

Mr. Johnson in his testimony said that efforts would be made to get financial contributions from West European countries to help defray the costs of the stations.