

Radio Free Europe Safe At Least Until July

Washington

House conferees yielded to the Senate in the battle over Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty yesterday, agreeing to extend the life of the two stations only until June 30.

The initial House bill, backed by the Nixon administration, had called for extension until mid-1973.

The House-Senate conferees agreed on a budget of \$32 million for the current fiscal year for the two stations, which beam programs into Eastern Europe from West Germany.

The two stations once were covertly financed by the Central Intelligence Agency, but Congress emphasized this year that it wants open public financing from now on.

Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairman J. William Fulbright (Dem-Ark.) had insisted on limiting the

extension of the station's life to June 30, and requiring the State Department to justify anything beyond that.

He has said repeatedly he considers the stations a wasteful irritant to East-West relations, and wants them eliminated.

The administration and House didn't give up their fight to keep the stations alive beyond the June date. They extracted from the Fulbright language, to be written into the conference report, that "further legislation will be considered before the end of this fiscal year" on whether to continue financing beyond this June 30.

A State Department spokesman said the Department expects to explore "the option" of getting some of the European nations to contribute to financing the stations.

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