

Memorandum

May 5, 1951

To: Rowan Gaither
From: Donald G. Marquis and Hans Speier
Subject: INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS

Given the interest of the Foundation in both Program One and Program Five and activities supporting U.S. Government policies in the field of international information and propaganda in peace and wartime, it is recommended that consideration be given to the establishment by means of Foundation support of an "Institute of International Communications."

Present activities in this field are largely restricted due to the fact that the international information operations are predominantly the responsibility of government agencies and due to the fact that studies supporting these governmental activities are undertaken, to a large extent, in response to government requests. On the other hand, the fairly large number of established research centers at American universities in the field of communications concentrate their efforts, to a large extent, on problems of domestic communication. This leaves a gap which the recommended institute of international communications is to fill.

This institute should be developed at an established university, rather than within government or as an independent

organization. This would enable the institute to be free in the selection of the specific problems it proposes to study and the specific activities it wants to pursue. While it might be free to accept contracts with government agencies in the field of international communication, its existence and continuity of operation, and its policies, would not be determined by a continued flow of such contracts.

Locating the Institute of International Communications within a university would be advisable in other respects as well. It would make it easier to count on the availability of younger research personnel (for instance, graduate students, assistants, etc.), it would provide opportunities for consultation with members of various university departments and it would facilitate the use of library and other resources located on the campus; finally, it is most likely to help in the recruitment of high-grade personnel, particularly if appointments to the institute could be made as appointments in university departments. Finally, the location of the institute within a university might be desirable from the point of view of the Foundation inasmuch as it would strengthen the impression in the public mind that the Foundation contributes to the strengthening of American academic institutions.

The institute should be located at a university which is able to provide a wealth of related scholarly and scientific activity, including centers for the study of foreign areas, and from which key personnel can be drawn. As to location, there might be a slight preference for the east in view of the

desirable accessibility to government resources and personnel. Examples of appropriate universities would be Harvard, Columbia, Cornell, Princeton, Chicago and Michigan.

The proposal of an Institute of International Communication may raise the question of its relationship to Project Troy. The two activities could supplement each other with Troy taking principal responsibility for advising policy and operations in government information services, with operations research of immediate and direct relevance, and for work with classified materials. The institute, on the other hand, would be free to conduct studies of a more general and fundamental nature which also could be expected to contribute background knowledge to current problems. In terms of a previous memo concerning the breakdown of the four tasks of Program Five, the institute would work predominantly on tasks Two and Three and would, through its existence and the training it provides, itself be a project that could be subsumed under Task Four as well.

The range of work in which the institute could engage will be wide, and its projects varied in terms of academic observation. It is conceivable that the institute might develop into a center of studies where work in the field of international communications, and particularly studies on political attitudes, conducted abroad could be coordinated. Certain projects will surely be undertaken in close cooperation with studies of the material conditions and popular predispositions in foreign areas. Other studies will be devoted to

basic problems in the fields of communication: content, effect and media. The exchange of persons program itself, in the development of which the Foundation has shown interest, has important communications aspects which could be studied in the institute. The inter-relation between domestic and international communications, a problem of great political importance, would be a legitimate subject of study. Obviously, as plans for the Institute of International Communication become of increasing interest to the Foundation a more detailed plan of the project would have to be developed.

It is clear at this point, however, that the institute would require the utilization of skills not only in the various behavioral sciences but also in the fields of political science, international relations and other pertinent disciplines. This should be reflected in the composition of the staff, which definitely should not consist exclusively of "communications experts."

It is difficult at this point to estimate the appropriate size of the budget required by such an institute. In all likelihood the contribution required by the Foundation would be smaller in the first or second year than in subsequent years. Probably the Foundation should plan on a five-year duration of the project with the possibility of renewing its support after the expiration of the first phase. As a rough estimate, the annual rate of expenditure at full scale operation should be between \$300,000 and \$500,000.

It is possible that the Institute, once it has established its competence, will receive supplementary funds from government agencies. Provision should be made, however, that these governmental funds will not change the nature of the Institute as an independent organization.

Finally, consideration may have to be given to the possibility that the Institute be permitted to place subcontracts with other academic or private institutions.