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[Redacted]

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to see
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February 10, 1953

file

MEMORANDUM to Mr. C. Tracy Barnes
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D. C.

"THE FRIENDSHIP-BALLOON LIFT"

On November 29, 1950, there was a meeting held in Washington for the purpose of discussing the possibilities of using free balloons for prepaganda-carrying purposes, and a memorandum was submitted as of that date to the Central Intelligence Agency.

[Redacted]

The balloon lift was later discussed with Mr. Allen Dulles of C. I. A. and Mr. Scripps. Last year Mr. Scripps presented to Mr. Dulles and associates a proposal for "The Friendship-Balloon Lift", which was then referred to Dr. Allen of the Phsycological Strategy Foard. Dr. Allen returned it to the C. I. A. and no further action has been taken until this date.

Around the middle of August, 1951, Mr. Scripps, [Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted] released balloons of two types containing printed matter from the vicinity of Hof, Germany, about four miles from the Czechoslovakian border. This operation was successfully completed, and approximately 2000 balloons a night were launched by the "Crusade for Freedom".

Although the above effort should be regarded as purely a pilot project, its success conclusively proved that such a project could have great effect on the minds of the people who receive the messages. Dr. Nicholas Myaradi, former Minister of Finance of the deposed Hungarian Government, wrote a book which came to the attention of Mr. Scripps entitled "My Ringside Seat in Moscow" in which he devoted many pages to the discussion of propaganda

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Paul Jones
4/15/54

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balloons and their probable effect on the Russian minds and the minds of the people in the satellite countries. Dr. Nyaradi agreed that the idea proposed by Mr. Scripps of sending, in addition to printed matter, many items common to the Western way of life would do a great deal to undo the intense feeling of distrust and hatred for the American people by permitting the Russian people to compare the items they received through the balloon lift with those obtainable in Russia. Mr. Scripps discussed with several of the "Name-Brands" people at a dinner meeting in New York addressed by Dr. Nyaradi, the general problem of obtaining necessary items satisfactory for the purpose and was assured by many present that the manufacturers of these items were enthusiastic about the idea and that material could be made available for this purpose.

During the week of the Inaugural ceremonies in Washington in January, 1953, Mr. Scripps discussed the balloon lift and its possibilities with General William Keppner of the Alaska Air Defense Command, and General Keppner agreed to serve as a part-time consultant for the project after his anticipated retirement for the Air Forces.

It is the desire of Mr. Scripps and his associates in this endeavor that the project be given the sanction of the various governmental agencies concerned, and that steps should then be taken to raise private funds to initiate this effort. Concurrently with Mr. Scripps' last discussion with Mr. C. Tracy Barnes in Washington, the January 17, 1953, issue of "Colliers" carried a story of the Japanese balloon invasion of America, which again points out to some degree the value of free balloons for purposes outlined in this memorandum.

Supplemental information for "The Friendship-Balloon Lift".

In the memorandum dated November 29, 1950, page three, the cost sheet indicated that a total of 300,000,000 messages could be sent through the medium of 25,000 balloon flights at a total estimated cost of \$529,000. The estimated man power for such a program was 2,145 men. Since these figures were determined by the technicians at the meeting in Washington on November 29, 1950, Mr. Scripps has given much thought to gradually enlarging the expenses of the propaganda balloon plans and suggests, in spite of the tremendous costs involved, a thousand-fold increase in the original figures. The figure arrived at is still low by comparison with the over a



Mr. C. Tracy Barnes

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billion-and-a-quarter spent by Russia on propaganda behind the iron curtain in the "Hate America" campaign.

On information that has come to Mr. Scripps' attention from people who have lived on the European continent and traveled extensively, there is only one conclusion that can be arrived at, and that is that the Russian propagandists have done an excellent job in teaching hatred of America and that this feeling is being magnified daily.

The "Voice of America" and "Radio Free Europe" efforts, although well intended, are not having the desired effect, and in many cases are staffed by people whose feelings and actions are not favorable to the United States. The result, if any, is that the effectiveness of radio can be seriously questioned, although many of those directly responsible for this endeavor are making a sincere effort to do a good job.

In order to initiate "The Friendship-Balloon Lift" project, it is suggested that ~~a conference be held in Washington at an early date and that all of the interested parties be invited to attend,~~ including technical people, representatives of the interested services, civil as well as military, and a concrete and definite program be established as a result. There is no doubt that time is the most important factor in the progress of the cold war, and some action, whether it be the use of free balloons or other means, should be taken, for immediate action is indicated; otherwise, the time consumed by organizations doing this type of work will limit its use and effectiveness.

William J. Scripps
William J. Scripps

WJS:w

February 17, 1953

Mr. William J. Scripps
286 South Woodward Avenue
Birmingham, Michigan

Dear Mr. Scripps:

I have been out of town so that I only received yesterday your memorandum dated February 10, 1953, entitled "The Friendship-Balloon Lift". The memorandum covers precisely the ground which I had in mind at our luncheon discussion. I am forwarding it today for consideration by the appropriate authorities and will keep you advised as to where the matter stands.

Sincerely yours,

C. Tracy Barnes



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| Authority | <u>NLE 2012-31 #7</u> |
| By | <u>MMK</u> NLDDE Date <u>11/5/12</u> |

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Authority NLE 2012-31 #8
By MMK NLDDE Date 11/15/12

17 February 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR: DEPUTY DIRECTOR (PLANS)

SUBJECT: "The Friendship-Balloon Lift"

1. Attached is a memorandum dated 10 February 1953, same subject as above, to me from Mr. William J. Scripps. I suggested, at the luncheon which [] and I had with Mr. Scripps about a month ago, that he write a memorandum of this kind so that it could be presented to the proper persons for consideration. You will note that his conclusion consists of a conference in Washington of all interested persons to devise a definite program.

2. It seems to me that it is not the kind of operation which we should undertake, and even if it were, there are policy considerations involved -- which can only be resolved at a high level -- of a number of other departments and agencies. My suggestion would be, therefore, that you or Mr. Dulles submit the attached to Mr. C. D. Jackson in his new capacity as Special Assistant to the President with special responsibilities in cold war planning, either directly or through the PSB. I talked to Bill Jackson on the phone about this today, as I had to call him on other matters, and he agreed that C. D. Jackson was the best recipient. I might add a further reason for sending it to him is, that the press release stating his functions provided that he should maintain liaison with all departments and agencies engaged in cold war activities. Consequently, it would be entirely consistent with his duties to call together all interested parties.

3. I would appreciate it if you could let me know what in fact is done with the memorandum, since I have undertaken to keep Mr. Scripps generally informed.

/s/

C. TRACY BARNES

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Authority NLE 2012-31 #6

By MMK NLDDE Date 11/15/12

FEB 25 1953

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| Action Office | <u>Kent</u> |
| Date Completed | ----- |
| Officers Initials | ----- |
| Return to E/M for Dispatch or file. Attach original & record copies of reply. | |

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. George A. Morgan
Acting Director
Psychological Strategy Board

SUBJECT : "The Friendship-Balloon Lift"

ATTACHMENTS : (1) Letter dated 10 February 1953
from William J. Scripps, same subject

(2) Letter dated 17 February 1953 to
Mr. Scripps acknowledging his letter

1. Mr. Dulles took attachment (1) up at a recent PSB meeting and it was there agreed that it should be passed on to you together with a copy of my acknowledgment letter.

2. I would appreciate your keeping Mr. Scripps advised of the status of this matter; or, if you prefer, I will write him if you will inform me of the status.

Tracy
C. TRACY BARNES

Attachments (2)
As stated above

*P.S. Am also adding for your info.
a copy of my memo. to Frank
Wisner - It does not say much
but will complete the record -
Tracy.*

*Referred to C.D. Jackson
informed Barnes.
MMK*

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| Authority <u>NLE 2012-31 #5</u> |
| By <u>MMK</u> NLDDE Date <u>11/15/12</u> |

This item has been extracted from:

Minutes of the PSB Staff Meeting, March 4, 1953



Scripps Balloon Project

Morgan reported Barnes had requested Scripps to give him a memorandum tracing his efforts to get the Government interested in his balloon projects (considered last year by PSB). This matter had come to Allen Dulles's attention and was now in C. D. Jackson's hands, Morgan said. Jackson expressed interest in seeing what could be done with this balloon project.

452-21

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[Handwritten signature]