

April 9, 1958

Memorandum from the President [Howland H. Sargaent], 'Actions Taken to Strengthen the Programming of Radio Liberation'

Citation:

"Memorandum from the President [Howland H. Sargaent], 'Actions Taken to Strengthen the Programming of Radio Liberation'", April 9, 1958, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Released by the Central Intelligence Agency on October 16, 2019 in response to Mandatory Declassification Review request EOM-2018-00930. Contributed by A. Ross Johnson. <https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/290909>

Summary:

AMCOMLIB President Sargeant records actions he has taken to strengthen the programming of Radio Liberation.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Blavatnik Family Foundation

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

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10/10/58

AMCONFIDENTIAL

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MEMORANDUM FROM THE PRESIDENT *AWB*

SUBJECT : Actions Taken to Strengthen the Programming
of Radio Liberation

1. An independent review, to be established by the Board of Trustees, of Radio Liberation programming has been requested by the President, with emphasis on Radio Liberation's handling of the news.
2. The President has established a central New York headquarters group, under his personal chairmanship, to give the Radio Programming Division in Munich the New York view on a policy or plan where this is requested or appears desirable. Initially, this group will consist of the Director of Planning, the Advisor for Radio Programming Policy, the Director of the Radio Programming Support Division and the President and will have as its Executive Secretary the Assistant to the President.
3. Allocations for Radio Programming, both in Munich and New York, have been increased by the President for the fiscal year 1959, in line with priorities designed to concentrate on improving the quality of the Russian-language programs; better selection and presentation of news; better interpretation of the world outside to the Soviet listeners; greater emphasis on human resources, including improving existing staff and reassigning or replacing personnel not measuring up to requirements; and provision for exchange of key personnel between Munich and New York.
4. Program Evaluation -- In addition to reviewing with Max Ralis, the present processes by which two panels in Munich and one in New York are supplying each week their assessments of the same day's total output of Russian-language programming for that week, Mr. Bertrandias will review, on his return to Munich, procedures now in effect for applying the results of the program evaluations in an effort to make this more effective.
5. Audience Research -- During Max Ralis' home leave, we will attempt to come closer to a system for obtaining and maintaining a "profile" of the major areas of agreement about important characteristics and desires of Radio Liberation's listening audience. In particular, we will try to prepare in advance for a meeting of Max Ralis with specialists in the field of audience research under the direction of Dr. Wilbur Schramm in Palo Alto in mid-May.

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6. Content Control Monitoring -- The President will undertake to get content control monitoring equipment purchased and in operation as promptly as possible.
7. Adherence to Basic Policy in RL Programming -- As soon as the Country Paper has been received by the American Committee in its final form, the President will establish an agreement with Mr. Bertrandias for a system of review of RL's programs strictly to determine their adherence to basic policy.
- a. Mr. Bertrandias will establish procedures and a system for applying the results of such review, taking any corrective action that may be necessary, and systematically reporting back to the President on corrective action taken.
 - b. The President will see that the present Radio Programming Policy Manual is promptly revised to conform to the Country Paper.
8. Planning Division Basic Assumptions -- Director of Planning Division has already been experimenting with a system under which these are kept under review and revised on a monthly basis. Mr. Bertrandias has suggested that this would be useful to him in running Radio Programming and the President will determine whether it is possible to put this on a regular monthly basis.
9. Mr. Bertrandias, in Munich, after full discussion with the President, has undertaken, in addition to his review of procedures for applying the results of program evaluation and his agreement to establish an effective system of compliance and reporting back when it is possible to establish an adequate audit of RL programs for policy adherence, the following:
- a. To review the assignment and responsibilities of key personnel, with a particular view to strengthening --
 - 1) The Russian Desk
 - 2) The News Desk
 - 3) The function of the Policy and Plans Advisor
 - b. To seek means of delegating to a responsible person or group a larger measure of authority and responsibility for editorial content of Radio Liberation programs.
 - c. In order to maintain clear channels of communication, he will look to Mr. King, Chief of the Radio Programming Support Division in New York, as his point of contact and communication and will take the necessary steps to see that all members of the Radio Programming Division observe this channel under such ground-rules as he finds necessary to establish.

HHS.ab