

May 30, 1958
Letter, Robert Kelley to Howland H. Sargeant

Citation:

"Letter, Robert Kelley to Howland H. Sargeant", May 30, 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/290918>

Summary:

Deputy to the President for Europe Robert Kelley reviews for AMCOMLIB President Sargeant RL personnel and policy issues and relations with the West German government.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Blavatnik Family Foundation

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

Approved for Release: 2019/09/25 C06768112

AMERICAN COMMITTEE FOR LIBERATION

LILIENTHALSTRASSE 2, MUNICH 19

TELEPHONE 62041

May 30, 1958

10/08/10
10/20/58
SRR

24

HOWLAND H. SARGENT
PRESIDENT

ROBERT F. KELLEY
DEPUTY TO THE PRESIDENT
EUROPE

CABLES: AMCOMLIB MUNICH

NEW YORK ADDRESS:

1657 BROADWAY
NEW YORK 19, N.Y.
CABLES: AMCOMLIB
NEW YORK

TRUSTEES

- MRS. OSCAR AHLGREN
- JOHN R. BURTON
- WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN
- HON. CHARLES EDISON
- J. PETER GRACE, JR.
- ALLEN GROVER
- H. J. HEINZ, II
- ISAAC DON LEVINE
- EUGENE LYONS
- HOWLAND H. SARGENT
- DR. JOHN W. STUDEBAKER
- REGINALD T. TOWNSEND
- WILLIAM L. WHITE
- PHILIP H. WILLKIE

PERSONAL

Mr. Howland H. Sargent
1657 Broadway
New York, New York

Dear Howland:

The past month has been somewhat quieter than the previous month. The major problem confronting us here was the question of the establishment of procedures calculated to improve substantially the newscast of Radio Liberation. -I was very glad to have your views on this subject, contained in your letter of May 16th. I agree 100% with you that we can best contribute to the establishment of a sound basis for the radio's programming by facilitating and encouraging the development of a relationship of mutual confidence and respect between Dick and Charlie, with a view to relieving Dick of the immediate responsibility for decision making in the programming field. I think that a good start has been made in the news area. Your letter of May 12th to Dick has contributed a great deal to this development. In particular, your numbered paragraphs 5, 6, 7 and 8 contained a very sound and clear-cut solution of the problem. I have had several discussions with Dick with reference to your letter and I feel that Dick has a much better understanding of the problem since the receipt of your letter.

7/8/58-295/8/24

With regard to Charlie's participation in the selection of news and the preparation of news commentaries, etc., I believe that he is now in such a position that he actually exercises control of the news content of the Russian-language programs. I asked him yesterday whether he was satisfied with the way things are going at the present moment with respect to the exercise of his responsibility in respect to the news-cast, and he told me that he was quite satisfied. In any event, I shall keep an eye on the situation and check up from time to time with a view to seeing whether any obstacles have developed calculated to impede Charlie's supervision of the news-cast.

With regard to the question of the transfer to the Russian Desk of the responsibility of determining the news to be included in the Russian-language program, both Bob Shankland and Dick Bertrandias have assured me that they intend to bring about this change

Approved for Release: 2019/09/25 C06768112

as soon as possible. Bob Shankland considers that this matter should have top priority in connection with his plans to improve the Russian-language program. I shall do everything possible to expedite the accomplishment of this change which I consider to be long overdue.

I believe that after three or four months we should have a qualified group make a study of Radio Liberation's news-casts, with a view to evaluating the effectiveness, from the point of view of Radio Liberation objectives, of the news items and news commentaries carried in the Russian-language program. In the meantime, I'll keep an eye on the comments of the people now evaluating the Russian-language program with a view to seeing whether the deficiencies of the programs in the past are being eliminated.

I am happy to be able to report that I have noted an improvement in both the personal and working relations between Dick and Charlie. I hope that this improvement will continue because, as you pointed out, the establishment of a relationship of mutual confidence and respect will help to bring about a substantial improvement in the effectiveness of Radio Liberation.

The transfers which have been effected in Radio Liberation appear to have met general approval. Insofar as I can ascertain, the three Slavic desks are not dissatisfied in any way with having a single program advisor. Victor Frank seems satisfied with his new assignment and I believe that he and Charlie will get along very well together. Dick Bernard has promised to keep in mind your advice in respect to the utilization of Victor. As I have practically no acquaintance with the work of Joe Scott, I have no means of judging whether he will work out well in his new job. I agree very strongly with you that it should be clearly understood that he is undergoing a probationary period in his new position.

Bob Dreher has been in Brussels during the past week endeavoring to implement our projects in that area. He informed me over the phone today that he is rather optimistic in regard to our working out satisfactory arrangements, but somewhat pessimistic as to the extent of what we may be able to accomplish. He said that the first big batch of Soviet tourists arrived last week. However, they stayed on board a ship at night and were herded back and forth to the Fair each day so that they had practically no opportunity to do any sightseeing or make any contacts on their own.

With reference to the first matter mentioned in your letter of May 21st, I have had a lengthy conversation with Dr. Frederiksen regarding the problems which should be settled in connection with the meeting of the General Assembly. He will let Pennar have his views as soon as he has completed a study of the matter. The question of the replacement of Mertsalov is a very difficult one, in view of the absence of candidates qualified to succeed him. Nobody, not even the Russian group at the Institute, has been able to recommend a successor, although they appear convinced of the necessity of making a change.

I am glad that you are making arrangements to see that we receive a full account of the discussions with the Paris Bloc in New York. As you point out, a great deal of confusion and misunderstanding has arisen in the past because Munich and New York did not keep each other fully informed with regard to negotiations with the Paris Bloc leaders.

With regard to your inquiry in your letter of May 16th as to whether there were any implications in the recent German-Soviet agreement on repatriation, I may say that one of the German Foreign Office officials who participated in the repatriation talks in Moscow has informed us that the question of repatriation of Soviet emigres now in Germany came up very briefly only on two occasions. The Soviet representatives mentioned the matter at the beginning of the talks and did not raise the question again until last March when the Germans pointed out that anyone who wanted to could leave Germany, but that nobody would be forced to renounce his right of asylum. The Soviets did not press the matter further, but dropped it. Insofar as we can ascertain, there were no sub-rosa commitments on the part of the Germans in regard to the facilitation of the repatriation of Soviet citizens.

Mr. Pearsall has arrived and is busy familiarizing himself with the many personnel problems confronting Munich and New York. I think that his visit will be very helpful, both to us and to New York. I think that he already realizes that many of our personnel matters are much more complex than they appear to be in New York.

I am visiting Bonn on June 11th, where I am going to give a dinner for 10 to 12 of the key people in the Foreign Office. I am hoping to have everyone who may in any way have jurisdiction over matters in which we may be interested. As I think I wrote you once, there have been quite a few changes in the Foreign Office during the past six months, so that we will meet at the dinner quite a few new people. I am taking with me my chief assistants, Frederiksen, Dreher, Bertrandias, Malamuth, Moeller and Hedlich, as I consider that it will be helpful to them to get to know these key people.

Summer is gradually approaching, but creeping very slowly. However, we continue to remain optimistic.

Please remember me kindly to Myrna.

With cordial best wishes,

Sincerely,

Robert F. Kelley