

June 16, 1961

Letter, Edward Van Der Rhoer to Catharine Depuy

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Summary:

RL policy official Edward Van Der Rhoer responds to concerns of AMCOMLIB policy official Catherine Dupuy (letter of June 12, 1961, attached) about a RL policy paper on Military Technology Achievements.

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AMCONFIDENTIAL

Mrs. Catharine Dupuy
AMCOMLIB
New York, New York

See attached

Dear Cathy:

The misunderstanding over the PPS on Military Technology Achievements is unfortunate and possibly could have been avoided. As I conveyed to you in my telex, we see no problem here in making the changes desired by the NYPS. However, I must say that I am still at a loss to understand why the slight changes in emphasis contained in these revisions were considered so important. It is a fact, which we should keep constantly in mind, that the formulations contained in a given PPS are seldom if ever broadcast in the form stated. We provide in our statement of background, assumptions and objectives, certain rather general guidelines which in turn provide a skeleton rather than the flesh and bones of our programing.

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I anticipate that Dick will have definite ideas of his own as to how these papers should be prepared in the future. As for myself, I am prepared to obtain the formal concurrence of the NYPS before submitting drafts of PPS to the Council of Editors, providing sufficient time exists. Undoubtedly, the processing of such papers will require even longer periods of time than those which have been required up to now. In most cases, this will probably not be too important. My experience to date leads me to feel that, while the framework provided by the assumptions and objectives is very important, our greatest attention should go to the methods which translate these assumptions and objectives into programing, because it is here, if anywhere, that the whole system of a policy transmission belt tends to break down. The finest PPS, after being filed in a policy book, exists only in a vacuum if the methods for transmitting this policy into the program are either inadequate or absent.

I hope that you understand that I express my ideas on this subject frankly in order to convey to you my conception of the problem and not in any spirit of criticism or defensiveness. We have to give a great deal more thought here to our relations with the Council of Editors on policy matters and I believe it to be most important that we consult the editors informally during the process of actually writing each paper rather than

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at the time a formal presentation of the paper is made for approval, when too often the Council of Editors places its stamp of approval on the paper without really feeling that it has been consulted and that it has had any real part in contributing to the paper. Since this feeling is likely to remain unexpressed, it is all the more difficult to deal with.

As a final note on the Military Technological Achievements paper, I made a special effort to enlist the interest and participation of Mr. Predteschewsky in revising the paper, in view of his responsibility for preparing the Military Notebook. He made some valuable criticisms as well as constructive proposals which were fully taken into account and which appear in the draft of the paper as it finally went through the Council of Editors. This applies particularly to the section on methods. I mention this circumstance in order to make abundantly clear our position here and to show that we must at all costs avoid creating a situation in which papers received the stamp of approval of the American advisers in Munich, and those connected with the New York Policy Board, and then only are presented to the Council of Editors when it will in all likelihood be regarded (silently) as the presentation of a fait accompli.

Your telex on the 22nd Party Congress came at an opportune time since Al Boiter had just returned from London where he conferred with Leonard Schapiro. Boiter does not expect to do any analysis on the Party Congress until the draft party program is published -- this probably can not take place any later than July. As soon as the program is published, Boiter's shop will begin analyzing the program and all the explanatory articles which will be published in the following period of time. I intend to draft a policy guidance for the Party Congress within the next two weeks and a copy will be sent to you without delay for your consideration. I am enclosing with this letter a tentative outline drawn up by Al Boiter and Schapiro in connection with the materials they are planning to bring together on this subject. I think that this outline may be useful to us in drafting a program plan for Radio Liberty in connection with the Party Congress. For various reasons Boiter has asked that this outline be kept in your safe keeping and not passed around.

These exchanges between you and me are, I hope, as valuable to you as they are to me. I hope that at some point soon we can have the opportunity for full discussion of our mutual interest face to face rather than through correspondence alone. In the meantime, I wish you all continued success and send my most sincere regards.

Sincerely,

Edward Van Der Rhoer

P.S. I am also enclosing a revised draft of the PPS on The Communist Party of the USSR. The change in emphasis in the paper regarding the CPSU as a political institution is based on the research of Max Ralis' Audience Research shop, which studied the material in their possession in connection with this question. A copy of Ralis' informal memo to me, which should not be circulated, is sent for your guidance.

EVDR

VDR:AdW

Enc.: Tentative Outline by Leonard Schapiro.

Draft: The Communist Party of the USSR, 6/16/61.

Memo from Ralis to Van Der Rhoer re: draft PPS on CPSU, 6/16/61

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June 12, 1961

AMCONFIDENTIAL

Mr. Edward Van Der Rhoer
AMCOMLIB
Munich 19, Germany

Dear Ed:

The first go-round of our talks with Dick has been going very well. Friday we discussed policy questions specifically, and I hope you will be happy to learn that apart from one problem, which I shall discuss below, we were in agreement that the basic policy mechanism is sound and working reasonably well. I shall report more fully on the talks in another letter. This one is about that one problem in the policy mechanism.

As you know, the BOT were quite concerned about the Military-Technical Achievements paper in view of their own problem of getting final agreement back here. Regrettably their fears were realized and now they have to ask for some changes in the paper, despite the fact that it has already passed the Council of Editors. The enclosed memorandum from the BOT tells the tale. I thought you should see the full text, but suggest you hold it fairly close in Munich.

This situation seems to be one in which there is a definite and clear cut difference of judgment about what is significant, and it suggests that at a distance of 8,000 miles the only way to avoid possibly having to re-do a paper after it has already passed the Council is by checking back first. My frank opinion is that this is also a way to avoid a magnification of differences of opinion, since on the routine go around these raznoglasnye are easier to straighten out.

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We discussed the present situation, which was precipitated by the enclosed memorandum, with Dick on Friday and came to a general agreement that it should be possible to redraft the MTA paper to include the requested changes and re-submit it to the Council of Editors without too much fuss and feathers. As you see, we have been requested to submit revised copies as soon as possible. That is why I am writing ahead before Dick's return, although I am sure that he will want to discuss it more fully with you when he is back in Munich.

All involved agree that it is unfortunate this request for revision has to be made. As I said above, perhaps we can avoid such difficulties in the future by better coordination between us. In this particular instance, I hope I have not let you down by failing to communicate adequately earlier in the game.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

Catharine Dupuy
Policy and Planning Coordinator

CD:nt

Encl: (1)

cc: Mr. Yedigaraft