June 22, 1967

Memorandum, Alex Long to Catherine Dupuy, 'Policy Review Memo of May 10 and May 24'

Citation:

Summary:

The CIA liaison officer provides AMCOMLIB policy official Dupuy with his views of the roles of CIA and AMCOMLIB officials in determining RL broadcast policy.

Credits:

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

16 - 0646

~~RL CONFIDENTIAL~~

(N) 25 JUL 1967

22 June 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR: Catherine Depuy

SUBJECT: Policy Review Memo of May 10 and May 24

1.   While in general agreement with all assumptions of consensus
that have been made, and seeing no special problems presented by work-
ing within the procedural framework proposed, I nevertheless remain
unsure about the purposes -- in relation to the work already done -- of
this latest stage of the policy review exercise initiated by the subject
memoranda.   Consequently, I am proceeding on the assumption that the
objective of this series of memoranda is to conclude a report with
recommendations arising from the substance of the exchanges and pro-
posals already made, and not to cover ground already travelled.   Repeat-
edly, the policy review discussion has raised and revolved around two
central issues -- policy authority and policy effectiveness -- and this
memorandum is confined to some random observations pertaining to
these two recurring aspects of the problem.

Policy Authority

2.   In theory, as well as in effect, all -- and only -- that policy
issued on the authority of the Policy Advisor is definitive to the ques-
-tions and employees of the Radio.   The sole exception to this flow of
responsibility is in those instances when policy is directed on the
authority of the President, and even when this option is exercised it is
usually in the nature of an instruction specifying the policy that is to
be issued by the Policy Advisor's office.   All programming policy, then,
as well as the conduct of all policy operations, is ultimately the respon-
sibility and concern of the Radio staff, and all policy directives emanating
via the Policy Advisor's office are definitive in equal measure.   This
is not to say that the Policy Advisor and policy staff are the sole ori-
ginators and final arbiters in all policy matters.   But while certain policy
originates with or requires specific affirmation by the Board or higher
authority, it remains that the Board acts through the intermediacy of the
Policy Advisor's office, and that in such instances the degree of policy

definitiveness vis-a-vis programming operations is no more or no less than on other occasions.

3.   Consequently, it would be burdensome to attempt specifying that only certain levels of policy are definitive while others are not, or that certain articles of policy become definitive upon receiving the sanction of the Board while others require only the approval of the Policy Advisor, or that responsibility for preparing certain types of policy instruments lies in the province of one shop or another. It would be far less complicated and more reliable to conclude (a) that there is but one level of authoritative policy -- that authorized by the Policy Advisor; (b) that the Board discharges its functions of advising and consenting -- when it must -- through this channel; and (c) that all policy authorized by the Policy Advisor is automatically assumed to carry the Board's concurrence, either as the result of the Board's taking a direct hand in such policy action or by implication under existing authorization. Responsibility for assuring such concurrence, then, rests with the Board's making known its concerns to the Policy Advisor, and the Policy Advisor's making known his intentions to the Board, and not by attempting a delineation of spheres of responsibility.

4.   To attempt any division of labor that would assign to a single party the exclusive responsibility for preparing definitive Radio policy at one level or in one sphere would be to deny that level from effective consideration by the other parties, and thus to blur the separation of functions and interests that are the concern of the several representatives. For its part, the Board engages in wide-ranging policy and substantive liaison with the Radio staff, but this should be distinguished from its essential policy role arising from its special interests, narrowly construed. In practice, the Board has attempted to separate considerations of Radio policy from considerations of Board policy, and always to leave judicious leeway for a separation of functions by withdrawing from the field of R   o policy innovation after discharging its necessary responsibilities ¿   before becoming involved in doing for the Radio that which the Rad   can and should best do for itself. In effect, then, the Board's essential policy contribution is limited to bare necessities, thus leaving to the radio the maximum available latitude for innovations on which it is the best judge. But because the Board ultimately bears full responsibility before official councils for all that the Radio says and does, its concern with policy matters is continuous, and consequently access must be available when necessary to all levels of policy and to all policy instruments. No areas should be automatically excluded from its competence.

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5. Nothing in the above is to suggest that all policy need be submitted to the laborious process of formal approval, but only that all policy actions authorized by the Policy Advisor are regarded as carrying the concurrence, specific or implicit, of the Board. As a practical matter, such mutuality seems more likely to be facilitated by continuing the practice of submitting for formal approval the Radio's highest and most comprehensive level of topical policy. While the Board, by the nature of its responsibilities and capabilities, remains best equipped to service the Radio with policy and substance on a current basis, the existence of such standing authorizations by topical category nevertheless (a) reduces the need for frequent inter-cession by the Board, (b) lends policy and programming continuity, and (c) provides to higher authorities both an assurance and an indication of certain fixed policy guidelines.

Policy Effectiveness

6. The Policy Position Statement can be resurrected from the dis-use into which its has fallen, and can be made a more useful policy and programming tool, if used in greater numbers and if made more relevant to the substantive policy issues at hand. If policy statements are made briefer, less comprehensive, then it is likely that they can (a) be pre-pared in greater numbers, on shorter notice with less effort, than in the past, (b) cover a greater range of topics than this system did pre-viously, and (c) be prepared, issued, and withdrawn from circulation with greater frequency. And if the statements are made less inclusive and are oriented to issues on which there is a clear and present need for programming policy guidance, rather than serving as standing docu-ments in given areas to be renewed periodically, then in all likelihood they can establish one effective link between policy and programming by acquiring greater relevance to the immediate work of programmers. In short, once the format for this system is simplified and the contents of the statements made more purposeful, then it is reasonable to expect that greater reliance will be placed on them and that an upsurge in their production is likely.

7. Procedures for preparing policy statements and the selection of priorities for issuing them are for the most part practical consider-ations best left to the determination of the Policy Advisor as the respon-sible official charged with administering the entire body of Radio policy. What is essential, however, is that agreement be reached on avoiding the interminable rounds of redrafting that have occurred as a draft policy statement passed from one party to the next. To this end, it may be wise to agree that it is the Policy Advisor's responsibility and prerogative to

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determine, in consultation with others, the need for a new policy state-
ment, and that once having done so he should solicit the considerations
and/or requirements of the respective parties regarding substantive
content of the proposed statement. Responsibility for drafting the state-
ment could then be directly assigned by the Policy Advisor, with the
resultant final draft being circulated among the several representatives
for their concurrence before being forwarded for final approval. Never-
theless, these procedures should remain flexible and at the discretion
of the Policy Advisor so as to allow either rapid consultation or drawn-
out negotiation, as the case may warrant, since no amount of systema-
tizing can fix the amount of time required for individual consideration
or formal approval.

8. It would seem a helpful step toward better policy implemen-
tation if the various policy instruments used by the Radio could effect
more of a link between policy and programming by attempting to
specify some applicability for the policy being put forward. This
applies particularly to the policy position statements, which in the
past have not clearly come to grips with questions of whether the policy
stated is intended to apply whenever the Radio programs on the given
subject, or whether the policy, or parts of it, pertains only to cer-
tain kinds of programming, or whether the policy desires to stimulate
certain kinds of programming, as well as questions of circumstantial
and time limitations in the enunciated policy. As it is, the Radio now
has some very fine statements of policy, but their effectiveness is
limited because they fail to specify their intended applicability and
intended programming results. The following new format for policy
position statements is suggested with these problems in mind:

    I.   Situation (1-2 paragraphs assessing the issue at hand
    and the purpose for the statement).

    II. Policy
        1.
        2.
        3. etc.

    III. Programming assumptions(substantive assumptions about
    the situation which should be conveyed in programming)

        1.
        2.
        3. etc.

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IV. Treatment (discussion on and elaboration of policy objec-
tives and themes).

V. Programming (applicability to existing programming, need
for special programming, programming caveats).

VI. Duration (anticipated longevity of policy, pegged to alter-
native developments in situation).

Alex Long

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#16-601

8 OCT 1967

Alex -

Here is a draft of the Task Force
report, whichI think will serve as a
good basis for continuing and concluding
the task force discussions. My intent
is not to preclude further discussion.
I am hopeful that each of you will
feel free to haul off and say, 'that
is all wrong there' or 'there's a big
gap here' as well as registering any
objections you may have to specific
wordings. But at least we will be
talking in terms of final language,
and I think that will speed our
mental processes toward final decisions
As I said to Ed, I know everyone is
eager to get ahead with preparing the
papers, so the task force report
should not lag too far behind, and
we s hould set some reasonable limit
to the di scussions.

Hope you will be able to forward
your comments soon.

Cathy Dupuy