

June 22, 1967

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

Citation:

"Memorandum, Alex Long to Catherine Dupuy, 'Policy Review Memo of May 10 and May 24'", June 22, 1967, 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.
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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:

This document was made possible with support from Blavatnik Family Foundation

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

16 - 0696
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(1) 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 working 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 proposals already made, and not to cover ground already travelled. Repeatedly, 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 questions 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 responsibility 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 originators 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

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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 Radio policy innovation after discharging its necessary responsibilities: before becoming involved in doing for the Radio that which the Radio 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.

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 intercession 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 disuse into which it 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 prepared in greater numbers, on shorter notice, with less effort, than in the past, (b) cover a greater range of topics than this system did previously, 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 documents 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 considerations best left to the determination of the Policy Advisor as the responsible 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

determine, in consultation with others, the need for a new policy statement, 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 statement 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. Nevertheless, 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 systematizing can fix the amount of time required for individual consideration or formal approval.

8. It would seem a helpful step toward better policy implementation 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 certain 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.

IV. Treatment (discussion on and elaboration of policy objectives and themes).

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

VI. Duration (anticipated longevity of policy, pegged to alternative developments in situation).

Alex Long

#16-601

6 OCT 1987

Alex -

Here is a draft of the Task Force report, which I 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 should set some reasonable limit to the discussions.

Hope you will be able to forward your comments soon.

Cathy Dupuy