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November 26, 1956
Review of Radio Free Europe Hungarian Broadcasts

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Summary:

Cord Meyer informs Allen Dulles that Radio Free Europe (RFE) Hungarian broadcasts did not incite revolution or promise outside military intervention. He encloses his memorandum of November 16, 1956, on monitoring and program control of RFE and RL.

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English

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DATE: NOV 2006

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

VIA: Inspector General

SUBJECT: Radio Free Europe - Review of Broadcast Policy and Content

This memorandum is for information only.

1. Attached as Tab A is a statement of present broadcast policy and content review procedures in effect within RFE. Attached as Tab B is a memorandum transmitted by DCI to the President concerning RFE broadcasts during the period October 23 to November 4. This memorandum is specifically responsive to allegations made by various people to the effect that RFE incited the Hungarian people to revolution and/or provided or implied outside military intervention during the revolution.

2. Based on a review of some twenty political commentaries in English translation, we believe that:

a. RFE broadcasts were generally consistent with U.S. policy toward the Satellites;

b. RFE did not incite the Hungarian people to revolution;

c. RFE did not directly or by implication offer hope that outside military assistance would be forthcoming to the Hungarian patriots;

d. RFE went somewhat beyond specific guidances in identifying itself with certain patriot aims and in offering tactical advice to the patriots. We do not consider these significant policy violations.

3. We are arranging for the review by Hungarian language specialists of tapes of actual broadcasts during this period. We estimate that this will require some thirty days to complete once qualified personnel are made available. These people have been requested.

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4. Also, we are actively engaged in determining what would be required to conduct push audit checks of native language scripts to all five satellite audiences. From information at hand, we do not believe that it is necessary or feasible to post audit all broadcasts to all target countries. We are certain that it is not feasible to review all scripts prior to broadcasting.

5. Recent events in the Soviet Bloc profoundly affect not only Radio Free Europe but all PSB operations. This requires a reassessment of this entire activity. We will come forward shortly with our proposals for revisions in both the policy and operational fields.

[redacted], Jr.
Chief
International Organizations Division

Attachments (2)
Tab A, Monitoring and Program Control of RFE, November 17, 1956
Tab B, Radio Free Europe, 26 November 1956

IO/[redacted] (26 November 1956)

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NOV 26 1956

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

VIA: Acting Deputy Director (Plans)
Chief, Psychological and Paramilitary Staff

SUBJECT: Monitoring and Program Control of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberation

This memorandum is in response to your request for information on the methods of monitoring and program control applied to Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberation.

1. Radio Free Europe

a. RFE strategic policy is based on a policy handbook written in 1951 and supplemented by contemporary strategic guidances on major events as they occur. The handbook and all of the guidances were reviewed and approved in Washington. [redacted] [redacted] but the president has not yet been approved by the Department of the Free Europe Committee, Dunnell, Whitehorne.

b. Daily tactical policy guidance originates primarily in Munich. All political developments concerning Germany inside the target countries and the USSR are prepared in Munich. The policy guidance for these communities is provided by the Political Adviser's office in approximately daily meeting with each of the country desks. No written statement of the daily guidance is prepared.

c. Most international commentary and news of America is written in New York. A daily international commentary paper is prepared by the New York policy staff, copies of which are sent to Washington. In addition to the foregoing policy guidance, guidances are occasionally sent from Washington to New York, particularly at times of major developments in the target area. These guidances are sometimes sent in written memoranda, but more often because of the need for speed, they are forwarded directly by telephone to New York.

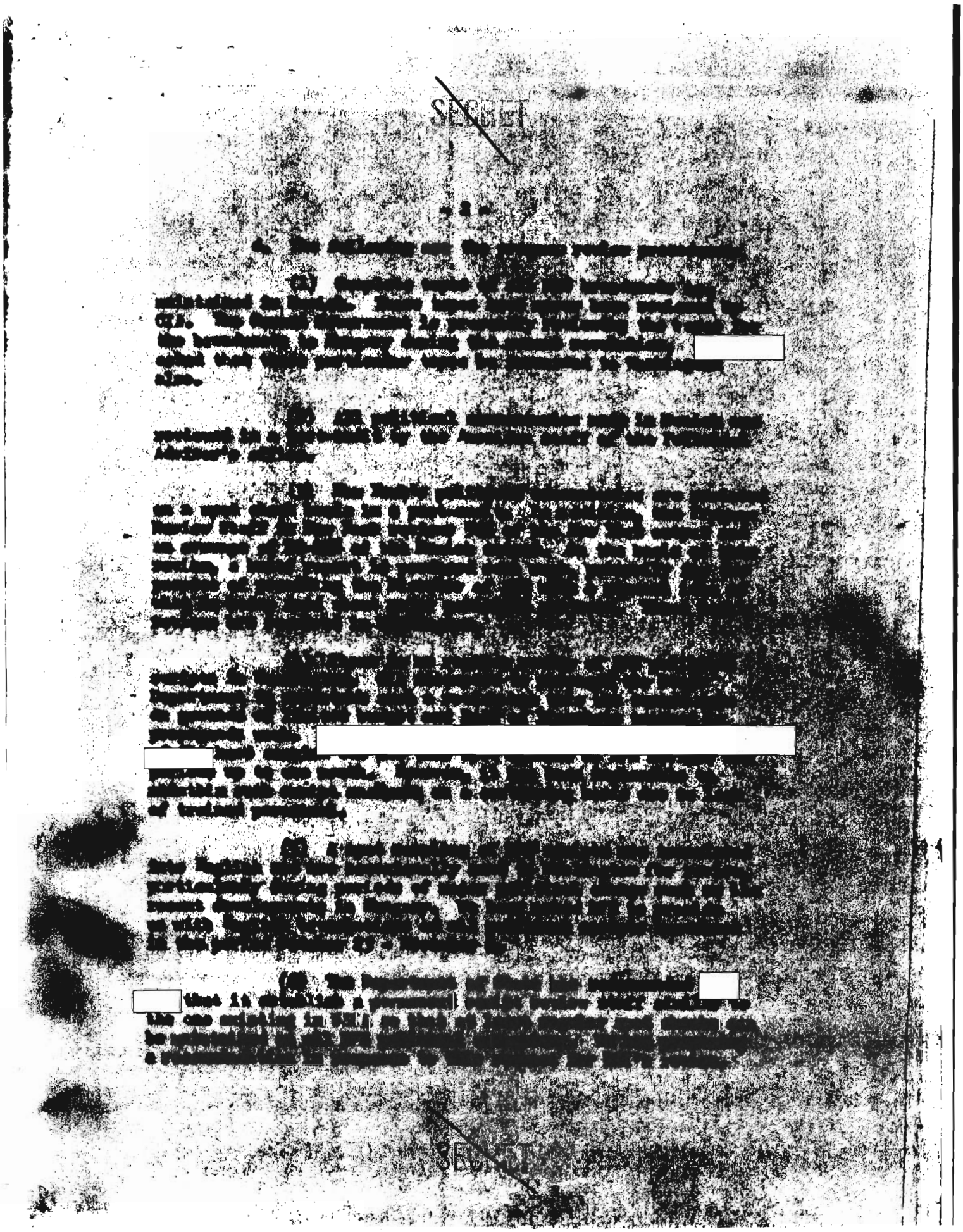
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approved for broadcast consisted of "don't shoot" messages addressed to Soviet troops in Hungary. After 5 November, Radio Liberation was permitted to resume its normal program originations, but under the added personal supervision of the President's Deputy in Europe.

CORD MEYER, JR.
Chief
International Organizations Division

IO/[redacted] (16 November 1956)

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