

February 13, 1961

CIA-Radio Liberty Exchange on Sprague Report

Citation:

"CIA-Radio Liberty Exchange on Sprague Report", February 13, 1961, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Obtained and contributed to CWIHP by A. Ross Johnson. Cited in his book Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, CIA mandatory declassification review document number C01441054. <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/115043>

Summary:

An International Operations Division officer regrets to AMCOMLIB president Howland Sargeant, that the Sprague Committee equated RL's record with that of RFE

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Howland:

Here is the portion of the Sprague report pertinent to radio. On the whole, I suppose we came out fairly well, but I am unhappy about portions of it and I think you will be, too. I refer to paras 26 and 27 (the introductory comment, not the recommendations).

Careful reading of both shows that RadLib has been tarred unjustifiably with the RFE brush. I want you to know that we tried to stop this when given a chance to comment on an early draft. Here is what we said then:

"This indicates that the blame laid to RFE is being unjustifiably attached to RL as well. RL has not been slow to adjust to changing conditions (in its target area) or failed to accommodate to changes in broadcasting policy; nor have there been any divergencies between State and CIA concerning either RL's role or the significance of developments."

The same basic injustice was done by para 27 in that RL does not experience any such difficulty as described. This we also challenged.

Unhappily, our case got lost somewhere or, at most, it was ignored.

Stan

13/2/61

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From the desk of

Howland H. Sargeant

Dear Stan -

Naturally, I am disappointed that the Sprague Report found it impossible to distinguish between RL and other operators. I think we are different but their main recommendation is helpful. I know you all tried -

HHS

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