

September 15, 1959

CIA-State 'Summit' on Radio Free Europe Polish Broadcasts

Citation:

"CIA-State 'Summit' on Radio Free Europe Polish Broadcasts", September 15, 1959, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Obtained and contributed to CWIHP by A. Ross Johnson. Cited Ch4 n38 in his book Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, CIA mandatory declassification review document number C01441033.
<https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/115035>

Summary:

Allen Dulles records his discussion that day with Undersecretary of State Douglas Dillon and Ambassador Jacob Beam, who were critical of RFE Polish broadcasts

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Blavatnik Family Foundation

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

C01441033

EO 12958 3.3(b)(1)>25Yrs
EO 12958 3.3(b)(6)>25Yrs
EO 12958 3.5(c)

(C)

APPROVED FOR RELEASE
MARCH 2009

BOX 11
7
97-2912

~~SECRET~~
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

SENDER WILL CHECK CLASSIFICATION TOP AND BOTTOM

UNCLASSIFIED	CONFIDENTIAL	SECRET
--------------	--------------	--------

**CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICIAL ROUTING SLIP**

TO	NAME AND ADDRESS	INITIALS	DATE
1	Mr. Richard Bissell, DD/P		
2			9/24
3	DDCI		9/25
4			
5			
6			

ACTION	DIRECT REPLY	PREPARE REPLY
APPROVAL	DISPATCH	RECOMMENDATION
COMMENT	FILE <i>Hand</i>	RETURN
CONCURRENCE	INFORMATION	SIGNATURE

Remarks:

Attached are two copies of my Memorandum of Conversation with Secretary Dillon and Ambassador Baum of 15 September re RFE and the Polish Broadcasts. Please pass a copy on to [redacted] only three copies of this memorandum have been prepared, and I have the third one. It should have a very restricted distribution on this basis.

FOLD HERE TO RETURN TO SENDER

FROM: NAME, ADDRESS AND PHONE NO.	DATE
THE DIRECTOR	21 Sept 59

UNCLASSIFIED	CONFIDENTIAL	SECRET
--------------	--------------	--------

30

97

30

~~SECRET EYES ONLY~~

(2-7)

15 September 1959

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION:

I had lunch today with Doug Dillon and Ambassador Jacob Beam to discuss the question of RFE broadcasts to Poland. The meeting was wholly relaxed and friendly. Doug Dillon opened it by stating that there was no question whatever as far as the Department was concerned, of terminating RFE broadcasts to Poland. He said the only question was to see how we could effectively bring them into line with American policy; if, as reported, there were instances where there had been deviations.

I replied that I wanted to make perfectly clear that there was no question in my mind, nor in the minds of any of my associates, nor in the minds of the officials of RFE, that these broadcasts should conform to policy directives as laid down by the State Department. I said that the Board of Directors and the management of RFE consisted of high-minded patriotic Americans, of considerable standing. That men like Archie Alexander, Arthur Page, John Hughes, C. D. Jackson, and others, had given a great deal of time over the years to RFE and that their views should be taken into consideration even though I was certain that they conformed to what I had stated, as regards policy directives.

They had been disturbed by the position taken in the letter from George Allen to the President and the report of Milton Eisenhower and also felt that their position had been made difficult by the published reports indicating the opposition of the Ambassador to Poland. I indicated that the visitors to the Embassy at Warsaw seemed to come away from the Embassy with highly changed views and, I felt, were prejudiced with regard to the Radio.

Mr. Dillon said that he thought George Allen's letter was most unfortunate. He had not understood it and had not made any reply to it when he received it from the addressee. I emphasized that the Milton Eisenhower letter had also disturbed me, particularly in view of the attention that the President had given it. Dillon felt that it was not necessary to go into an answer to these letters. I said I felt it would be appropriate if we could assure the President that this whole matter

~~SECRET EYES ONLY~~

CU1441033

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

was under consideration between State and CIA, and that both were trying to get the facts and arrive at the most appropriate solution. Any stoppage now of RFE would have far-reaching political connotations and would, I felt, have very unfortunate results. Doug Dillon reiterated that there was no question about this whatever in his mind and no question of stopping the broadcasts.

I referred to the dinner at the White House and the suggestion I had made there that, later on, it might be very useful to have a revived "Jackson Committee" review the same general problems they had tackled in 1953. I felt there had been certain changes and it would be well to get fresh guidance as to how our various information media could meet these changes. I proposed to take this up with the President again.

Ambassador Beam expressed himself entirely in accord with Mr. Dillon's position. He said, however, that there were features of the broadcasts which had seriously troubled him and that during the Nixon visit, Gomulka had taken up with the Vice President and with him in a very serious manner the personal attacks in the broadcasts on Polish officials. I asked him to what attacks he had referred and whether there had been anything recently about private individuals in the Polish government. I said I was familiar with the broadcasts based on the revelations published in Sweden of the Polish woman defector who had worked in Cyrankiewicz' household. I had not been informed of any similar personal attacks on Polish officials since that time, which was some six months ago. Beam stated he did not have details. I said that, in principle, I generally concurred that personal attacks on individual government officials should be avoided, although there might be exceptions as I felt that the earlier disclosures of Swiatlo had been very effective and had resulted in cleaning up a bad situation in the Secret Police. Also, I understood that as a result of the woman defector there had been certain clean-up operations which had been useful.

Mr. Beam generally agreed to this but felt that personal attacks should be avoided. He stated that he felt the Radio could be of use in making it more difficult for Gomulka to proceed with further repressive measures, possibly under Moscow influence, and that the Radio disclosures which kept the people informed, helped to build up pressure against repressive legislation. He did not object to this but said he felt the present tactics were to attack every government

C01441033

~~SECRET~~

measure without discrimination. The Radio made every development in Poland appear "black". He also referred particularly to the birth control legislation where the government was recently working to prevent the excessive population increase and possibly there was some merit to their position in this. He felt that the Radio should not engage in indiscriminate attacks of this nature.

I said I had read these broadcasts about birth control and felt they were rather boring but I did not find them particularly objectionable. I understood that the effort here had been to deal with the government's misstatements in connection with this legislation.

Mr. Beam felt that in general the Radio should give less concern to local Polish affairs and should tend to give more information about what was going on in Europe generally rather than concentrating so much on Polish affairs. I said that while they should be discriminating, we should not ban all comments on Polish affairs. Beam felt that statements and speeches of Europeans could possibly be used more to give it a more European flavor. At this point, I mentioned the European Advisory Committee, about which Beam did not seem to be informed. I agreed that it would be well to Europeanize the Radio more and more.

I told Beam of my high regard for [] and that I had planned at an appropriate time to bring [] over here so that we could fully indoctrinate him with regard to our policy line on Poland. Beam seemed to feel that there might be script writers down the line on [] staff who were overenthusiastic, overtemperamental, and who did not always follow [] directives. He also criticized attacks on the attitude of certain Polish emigres who had gone back to Poland to try to help Poland develop along more liberal lines and help them correct certain abuses. He referred particularly to Slominski, head of the Writers' Union who he said had spoken to him in deep sorrow of the attacks by RFE. I asked Beam whether these attacks had been directed against Slominski and he said he did not believe so but had been directed more generally against refugees who had returned. In general, he thought RFE was inclined to portray everything that happened in Poland as bad and he felt that some of it was not in that category.

We had quite a discussion about the attitude of the Catholic Church toward the Radio. Beam seemed to think that the attitude of church officials might be somewhat divided. He had talked with a Polish-American architect who had visited Poland, Foray, who claimed

~~SECRET~~

C01441033

to have talked with Cardinal Vichinsky. He had quoted the Cardinal as saying that RFE was often inaccurate and not objective. I told him we had made every effort to ascertain the church's attitude [redacted] and that we had had reports indicating the Cardinal was favorably disposed towards the RFE broadcasts. I did know that certain of the church officials were very decidedly so. It was difficult to get a clear cut statement from Vichinsky himself in view of his very delicate position. Beam recognized this and said that the Cardinal did not talk about such things to Americans.

I told Dillon and Beam that we had in mind asking [redacted] and [redacted] well as [redacted] to come back to this country for a brief visit and that I thought he ought to have a talk with them. Beam spoke very highly of Pan whom he had known in Yugoslavia and said he would be very glad to talk to him but both he and Dillon said they wondered if the Ambassador should talk with [redacted]. I said as I planned to see [redacted] myself I did not think it was necessary as I could give him clearly the policy line.

It was then agreed that we would proceed as follows: ✓

Beam was planning to go on leave for several weeks on Thursday, September 17, and would be back here beginning the 16th of October. I suggested that meanwhile we sit down with the State Department people and carefully review the last directives covering RFE Polish broadcasts and work out some general guidelines for further consideration upon his return. I felt [redacted] and Beam should also be available when Beam was here on the 16th, to which he agreed.

I stated that I was in agreement that we ought to set up all reasonable controls of the broadcasts, but that they must recognize that in every operation of this kind, no matter how carefully controlled, there would be slips from time to time. I felt that by and large over the recent months, there had probably not been many slips. Certainly recently none had been called to my attention. The latest word we had had from Beam was his Despatch of February 17, 1959, and word that he had objected to the broadcasts with regard to birth control. Hence, we had not had much, in the very recent past, to go on. Beam agreed to give any part of October 16 to going over this matter with us and more time if it was necessary. Meanwhile I said we would be considering ways whereby the broadcasts could be adapted to the developing situation in line with the new directives which would be developed.

C01441033

~~SECRET EYES ONLY~~

Beam, in answer to my inquires recognized that there had been jamming of the RFE broadcasts into Poland from Soviet and Czech sources. He also recognized the broad RFE coverage among the peasant and farmer ranks of the people.

ALLEN W. DULLES

ALLEN W. DULLES
Director

AWD/ji

1 - (Orig.) DD/P

1 - via DD/P

1 - DCI