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OPERATIONS COORDINATING BOARD
Washington 25, D.C.

March 4, 1958

MEMORANDUM OF MEETING: Committee on Broadcasting and Television (COBAT)

34th Meeting held 2:00 P.M. March 3
Room 2039 HEW Building

Working Group Members Present:

- USIA - Robert A. Bauer, Acting Chairman
- State - Florence T. Dowling, alternate
Richard T. Black (representing TPIB)
- CIA - Representative present
- ICA - Gale C. Griswold, alternate
- Defense - John C. Broger
Col. Harry W. McClellan, alternate
- OCB Staff - Ralph R. Busick
Marjorie M. Denny

Others Present:

- Defense - Major Stanley Rodby

1. The minutes of the February 6 meeting were adopted with the following correction in paragraph No. 5: The Defense member informed that the Armed Forces would not be building a television station in Teheran.

2. Possible avenues of assistance to West Berlin television were discussed (reference Despatch No. 148 from USIS Bonn, 1/29/58). The Defense representative outlined categories of TV film which could possibly be made available to the West Berlin Station, if COBAT should decide it were feasible, after informally exploring the German reaction to use of such programs. It was agreed that full information on the problems of obtaining TV films would be furnished the Acting Chairman, who will discuss the problem informally with German television officials on a forthcoming visit to Europe, and determine whether they believe American films would be helpful in countering East Berlin programming. The preliminary study made by Defense was limited to what might be made available, and not how this might be done.

3. A similar agreement was reached in connection with the possible supplying of film to Baghdad Television, which is in need of more program material. The Chairman of COBAT is to visit Baghdad in the near future, at which time he will explore informally Iraqi reaction to the use of TV film which might be made available by Defense, via MATS from Saudi Arabia.

4. The Acting Chairman reported on reactions received from Bangkok and Baghdad as to the feasibility of distributing privately financed and donated TV community receiver sets, with a view to furthering country objectives. Although neither post was over-enthusiastic about the idea

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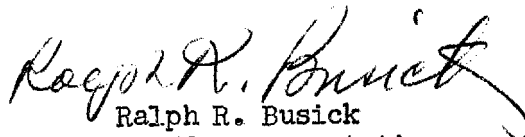
at the present time, both agreed that the plan had merit. Baghdad believed that the project was feasible, but would be of limited effectiveness because of the limited programming now put on by Baghdad Television. It was generally agreed that this project should be taken up with IOC.

5. The Acting Chairman called attention to a recent despatch from the New Delhi country team urging aid to Indian television (No. 903 of 2/14/58). The despatch recommends U.S. initiative to provide funds to set up an experimental television operation. It appears that the GOI already may have decided against requesting aid through USOM. The country team is making a strong recommendation that the President's Special Economic Fund be utilized. The recommendation is being considered by the State Department, together with other interested agencies.

6. The Acting Chairman informed COBAT of the guidance which has been given to him by the State Department prior to his attendance of the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) meeting in Brussels later this month.

7. The members of COBAT agreed that a working draft of a report to the OCB, attaching agency positions on television and pointing up the problem of financing Committee projects, should be distributed before the next meeting for consideration and revision.

8. In the event that the members of the Committee feel it necessary to have a meeting during the brief period that the Chairman and his alternate may both be out of the country, it was agreed that the State Department member would act as Chairman.


Ralph R. Busick
Staff Representative

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