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August 21, 1952

DOCUMENT NO. _____
NO CHANGE IN CLASS.
 DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S C
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 2010
AUTH: HR 70-2
DATE: 18 JUN 1980 REVIEWER: []

Sub

Staff Meeting: Held in Mr. Valentine's office on August 21, 1952 at 9 A. M.

Present : Messrs. Valentine, Siegbert, Maddocks, Elwood, Stewart, Keller, Kops, White and Mrs. Ryan

I think we have followed the policy of the Committee particularly of late to try to have all of you as well informed as possible about all matters of importance to you in your work here. There have been some matters in recent weeks of which it seemed that one shouldn't inform you unless it became necessary so that your work and your thinking shouldn't be necessarily disturbed.

I want to say here that of course everything that is said in these meetings of any confidential nature should always be completely confidential, but I want to emphasize that this should be particularly the case in the meeting this morning.

I debated at some length with myself, and discussed it this morning with a couple of others, how much I should say to you at this time with regard to the subject of which you all know something, which has lead to the recent special meetings of the Executive Committee. It has seemed to me, however, that at this stage of the game, because the continuing full understanding of those present in this room as to the situation of the Committee and as to the factors which determine your own work and decisions is necessary, that I would be derelict in my duty as the chief administrative officer if I did not inform you of these matters at this time. This is particularly the case because some of you have already been asked to meet with members of the Executive Committee and I am told that more of you will be asked to meet with them. Two have met in this office with four members of the Committee and at least two others have met in this room with one or more of the Executive Committee. It seems important to me, because you are each faced with prolonging your plans in connection with your work and in making decisions in connection with your work, that you know the factual status of the situation so that you can each use your best judgment in those plans and decisions.

I want to emphasize very emphatically that all I am trying to do this morning is to convey to you in the most dispassionate, factual manner, the facts of the situation as I know them for the reasons given.

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It is by no means my purpose to endeavor to influence any of you in any way as to what position you may take with regard to this situation individually or collectively; in fact, to attempt to influence your attitude toward it would be the last thing I want to do. I want to make it clear that my hands have been and are completely free to use my judgment in conveying the situation to any member of this staff if I think it desirable for the sake of effective operations or staff morale. If there is anyone here who doesn't wish to hear the facts I present, they are perfectly free to leave at this time. I want to repeat that my purpose is to give you the necessary facts without any desire on my part or desire on the part of my associates, who have known everything that I have known throughout, to influence you in any way. The rest of this will consist of reading of correspondence, with only verbal statements from me to make that correspondence meaningful.

The first intimation I received from any source that there was any serious criticism of my leadership of this staff came to me in Washington on July 24. I had gone to Washington with two major objectives in mind. One, and the secondary one, was to endeavor to clarify for our purposes the precise thinking of our sponsor and their associates with regard to our radio plans. For reasons unnecessary to go into here, it was impossible to advance that ball very much. The second and primary objective was to obey the formal instructions of the Executive Committee to endeavor to gain revisions to a General Memorandum No. 5 in order to regain at least freedom of action within reasonable grounds by this Committee. In my pursuit of that second and major objective, I secured on that occasion, as on all previous ones, the full support and assistance of the Deputy Director. In my work with him on that subject he asked me to work out details with two members of his staff, [redacted], and he arranged a meeting with them. The full purpose of that meeting, as I understood it, was to work on the memorandum, but we had barely begun that work when [redacted] advanced certain drastic criticisms of the work and efforts of the Committee to date, and particularly of me. [redacted] then made certain statements to me which will be revealed in the correspondence I will read you and which were the genesis of this letter to the Deputy Director, sent through the usual channels and dated July 31.

(Mr. Valentine read July 31 letter)

July 24 was the day in Washington when those two individuals, [redacted], and no other individuals in Washington before that time, at that time or since that time, advanced any criticism, to my knowledge or to me. That reply was dated July 31.

On August 4, Mr. Wilbur asked me to come to his office and after a very few preliminary remarks of a very personal nature, handed me a memorandum which he said had been given him here in San Francisco by [redacted] on the date of July 28 [redacted] was then in

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San Francisco and attended a meeting with members of the Executive Committee. Mr. Wilbur gave me the memorandum; I read it and offered some comments, but had no time for detailed discussion; and was instructed to prepare a reply at the earliest possible moment. I did so, and here are the memorandum and my reply:

(Mr. Valentine read Mr. Brown's memorandum
to Mr. Wilbur, dated July 28, 1952)

Although much of those criticisms are directed specifically at me, it seems to me clear that, directly or indirectly, other members of the staff, in some cases at least, are involved in those criticisms and, therefore, they should be aware of those criticisms. Since some have already been asked to discuss allied matters with the Executive Committee, and others, I have been assured, will be asked, it seems appropriate that you be informed of those criticisms. My reply, prepared all too hurriedly and made as brief as possible, dated August 4, and handed to Mr. Wilbur the next morning, is as follows:

(Mr. Valentine read his letter to Mr. Wilbur
dated August 4, 1952)

After my conference with Mr. Wilbur -- on that same day -- I had a long conference with Messrs. Siegbert and Maddocks in which I asked their advice as to how to proceed, and it was suggested by one and agreed by the other, that I should go on and discuss the matter with the Deputy Director to whom I have always had access when I have requested it. I felt that the sooner the better for the obvious reason that since these charges appeared to originate with our sponsor at lower levels, and those charges were influencing members of the Executive Committee, it was desirable for our sponsor to hear the other side of the question so that any influence that our sponsor, through our liaison officer, might extend on the Executive Committee, would have the understanding and concurrence of the Deputy Director. I was naturally more than pleased when General Maddocks and Mr. Siegbert both offered voluntarily that they would like to go on to Washington with me to discuss the matter with the Deputy Director. I had previously stated to Mr. Wilbur in the meeting I had with him that I would like to see the Deputy Director and he had asked me not to do so in advance of the meeting with the Executive Committee. When I gave the reasons, it was my clear understanding that he definitely said it would be all right to do so.

After my conference with Mr. Maddocks and Mr. Siegbert I phoned the Deputy Director, explained the matter to him, asked him if we might come on. He acquiesced and set a date of ten A. M. two days later.

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We got reservations and would have to leave the following evening. I notified Mr. Wilbur of our intentions. The following morning I received a call here from the Deputy Director in which he said that Mr. Wilbur had called him and the matter had been discussed. It was agreed that the matter would be left entirely to the Executive Committee and, therefore, the Deputy Director preferred not to see us in Washington. I explained to him my reason to come on. He simply stated he had reached the conclusion that he be left out of the matter. I tried to plead that our sponsor had already been pulled in and inquired if he had read the memorandum Mr. Wilbur had received. He stated over a clear telephone that he had no letter and proposed a letter to the Executive Committee stating that the matter was that for the Executive Committee with no position taken by our sponsor. (He said he would send me a copy of that letter. I have received no copy, to date, so I do not know if a letter was ever sent.) I, therefore, begged to come on and he declined to see us until after the Executive Committee had met, but said he would see me then, but was reluctant to see the other two, though he did not close the door. We, therefore cancelled our reservations and I wrote him the following letter:

(Mr. Valentine read his letter to the
Deputy Director dated August 6, 1952)

The next step was a meeting with the Executive Committee held here on Thursday of last week, and I was asked to arrange in advance for members of this staff to be available and I was further asked to make an initial statement at whatever length I thought fitting. For reasons given in the document, I wrote out that statement, and anything added was a matter of detail, and read to members of the Committee present at that time. They were: Messrs. Wilbur, Mc Baine, Greene (who had just returned from a vacation of over a month and to whom the matter had recently come, apparently completely new), and Mr. Paul Smith (whom I am told has been substituted for Mr. Blyth). Mr. Zellerbach and Mr. Peterson were unable to attend the meeting.

(Mr. Valentine read his memorandum to
the Executive Committee dated August
12, 1952)

I was asked by one member of the Committee the chief causes of the present difficulties and what ought to be done about them. And this, in outline form, is difficult for you to get:

(Mr. Valentine read his memorandum to
Mr. Greene dated August 20, 1952)

I have read this to you so you could be informed; I have read this so that rumors, gossip and concern, which must unfortunately be circulating, be as informed as I can inform you. The harm done to

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your morale and the morale of your staff cannot be minimized. I have read this so that in your own operations and feelings, you will be able to make the most informed decisions regarding acquisition of personnel, decision of your activities and the rest.

I want to conclude by saying that I have nothing more to say and don't want to discuss this matter which is so far undecided. I want to repeat that there is absolutely no desire on my mind that you be influenced but by one's own attitudes and facts of the situation. There is no desire in my mind to achieve, by direction or indirection, your support and sympathy in this matter.

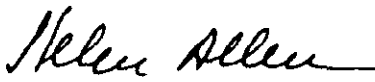
I ask that when we leave this meeting be kept absolutely confidential, be discussed between you to the minimum, and that to the best of your ability, you proceed to expedite your own operations so the work of this Committee be advanced as rapidly and effectively as possible in our endeavor, under general policy, to fight Communism and to achieve freedom for Asians.

I realize by telling you this, I lay myself open for criticism; first, to influence you, and secondly, that I shouldn't tell you. I made no pledge that I not tell you and do so at this time because I feel it is my duty in connection with your operations and your own thinking.

(Above comments made by Mr. Valentine)

Alan Valentine

The above represents my own exact stenographic notes of everything said by Mr. Valentine at the meeting described.


Helen Allen