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 BOX 24 NUMBER 230

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(19)

DECLASSIFIED UNDER AUTHORITY OF THE
 INTERAGENCY SECURITY CLASSIFICATION APPEALS PANEL,
 E.O. 13526, SECTION 5.3(b)(3)

ISCAP APPEAL NO. 2013-098, document no. 3
 DECLASSIFICATION DATE: September 19, 2016

23 November 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Chief, International Organizations Division

SUBJECT: Radio Free Europe Czechoslovak Desk

Withheld under statutory authority of the
 Central Intelligence Agency Act of 1949 (50
 U.S.C., section 403g)

1. The following is the situation as I understand it as of the morning of November 23.
2. As you know, some 19 members of the Czechoslovak Desk of Radio Free Europe in Munich signed a petition to the European Director protesting about the promotions of three people to senior positions on the Desk. This problem has been brewing for some time and is due in some major part to the new Desk Chief who succeeded [redacted].
 [redacted] A copy of the petition is attached.
3. On receipt of this petition it was passed by Hasselhoff to New York. At Bernie Yarros's suggestion -- in the absence of Archie Alexander who was in Lisbon -- [redacted] the head of the Czechoslovak Desk in New York, called some members of the Czechoslovak Desk in Munich and obtained their agreement to withdraw the petition.
4. Hasselhoff, however, felt that this was not sufficient and issued a memorandum to the Czechoslovak Desk in Munich to the effect that if each member did not issue a full retraction as specified in his memorandum, he would issue termination notices to each person involved by 2:00 p.m., Munich time, November 22.
5. Three members of the 19 signed the retraction, the remaining 16 refused. At 2:00 p.m., November 22, these 16 were issued termination notices by Hasselhoff.
6. Although we do not have the names of the people involved, we are told that these 16 are the key people on the Desk. We are also told that the other Czechs and Slovaks in Munich have "associated" themselves with those who refuse to sign the petition. Fetscher, the representative of the newspaper guild to which practically all members of the Czech Desk in Munich belong, has interested himself in the case and has instructed his members not to sign the retraction. He also claims that the action of Hasselhoff is in violation with agreements with the union and apparently is making a major issue of this.
7. Alexander is seized with this problem having spent practically all day the 22nd trying to straighten it out. He plans to send Tom

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Brown and Robert Smith to Munich on November 24 with [] to follow if needed. Alexander is disturbed that Hanzelhoff took what he considers to be precipitous action after the initial petition had been withdrawn. Alexander is also disturbed about what will certainly be at least local publicity about this in Germany and the repercussions of this within RFE generally.

8. This problem is somewhat complicated by the fact that two of the senior appointees on the Czech Desk are considered to be security risks (Czarnok and Balak-Dorger). There is considerable question as to whether [] is qualified to run the Desk and it is probable that some major reorganization of the Desk will have to be worked out.

9. We will keep you advised of developments.

[]
C/IO/I

P.S. LATE FLASH

Alexander reports that as of 11:00 a.m. this morning Messrs Hanzelhoff, Ryan and McNeill have threatened to resign if they are not "backed up" in this matter. For my money this would be an extremely healthy thing.

IO/I:EBB:kb (23 Nov 60)

Orig. & 1 - Addressee
1 - RFE File
3 - IO/I

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