

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Ford
Frank Stanton, Chairman of Panel on
International Information
Walter Roberts, Project Director
Lt. General Brent Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant
to the President for National Security Affairs

DATE AND TIME: Tuesday, March 11, 1975
12:45 p.m.

PLACE: The Oval Office
The White House

The President: Nice to see you.

Mr. Stanton: This is an independently funded study. Both of the parent Advisory Commissions called for it. The area hadn't been looked at in depth for 20 years.

We spent 10 months on it. We have talked to Rusk, Rogers, Kissinger, and all the living USIA directors. We have a solution which makes it more effective and manageable.

There is duplication between the State Department and USIA. Our recommendation is to give it back to State. Take the cultural activities of USIA and the cultural affairs of state and make it a new entity within State like AID. Make the Voice of America independent under a five-man board with two people from State.

The President: Does that include RFE and RL?

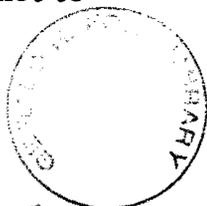
Mr. Stanton: No, we thought of putting it in the BIB [Board for International Broadcasting]. One problem was the State board members on VOA. The other was the CIA association of RFE and RL -- so as not to tar VOA with CIA.

DECLASSIFIED

AUTHORITY LAC review 9/9/04; NSC/State guidelines ~~TOP SECRET~~ XGDS (3)

BY llh NLF, DATE 4/17/07

CLASSIFIED KCSINGER



The President: So USIA disappears.

General Scowcroft: Yes. Part of it goes into State and part of it would be autonomous.

The President: Who were your commission members?

Mr. Stanton: Lewis, Gulley, Wrench, Shaheen.

The President: Was the panel unanimous?

Mr. Stanton: No, we had one abstention. One was appointed ambassador.

The President: Will this come to me or to Congress?

Mr. Stanton: Technically it will go to Georgetown University since they funded it. But I think it will get to you.

The President: How about the Hill?

Mr. Stanton: I think Slack is opposed, but most of the others commented favorably.

The President: I expect the USIA people will oppose it.

Mr. Stanton: Yes and No. VOA mostly likes it. Even Jim Keogh said it is more important for the cultural aspects to be united than who owned them. But he is not cheering.

The President: How about the USIA bureaucracy?

Mr. Stanton: You know there was an FS IO category. We maneuvered them into the FSO category. I don't think it will cause any changes in the field, just more efficiency in Washington. USIA executes cultural affairs in the field, but State does it in Washington -- mostly because of Fulbright who thought the propaganda (USIA) was dirty.

The President: My feeling is you would require legislation to get it done.

Mr. Stanton: Yes. There would be at least three or four separate pieces of legislation.

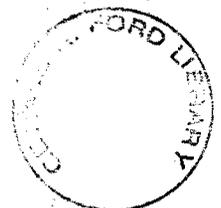


The President: I appreciate the job you did. I will try to look over the report. I think we should periodically look over these things. What was good at the time of the organization of the agencies isn't necessarily permanently good.

Mr. Stanton: There were earlier recommendations to return the Information Agency to the State Department. There was one study done under Ike by Rockefeller.

Mr. Roberts: Legislation was initiated in August, but it died when Congress adjourned in September.

Mr. Stanton: This was in State originally, but Dulles pushed it out because he didn't want to get more tangled up with McCarthy.



P/ Stanton / Walter Roberts

11 Mar 75

P Nice to see you

S This independently funded study. Both houses called for it - but it hasn't been heard of in depth for 20 yrs.

We spent 18 mos on it. We have talked to Rank, Reagan, H, & all the things USIA directors. We have a relative who is involved in more effective & manageable.

There is duplication of State & USIA. Gms to it back to State.

Take control activities of USIA & Central office of state & make new entity like AID. Make USA indpt under 5 member board w/ 2 from state.

Q Does that include RFE & RH

S No, we thought of putting it in B.B.B. One part was a state board member on USA. The other was CIA assistant of RFE & RH - 1000 not to tax USA w/ CIA

P So USIA drops

S Yes. Part with state and part autonomous.

P Who were your commission members.

S Harris, Colby, Murch, and Shabazz

P Was the panel unanimous

S No, we had one abstention. One was a paid consultant.

P Will this come to me or Cong

S Technically will go to Congress since they funded it. But I think it will get to you

P How about Bill

S I think Slack is opposed, but most other comment favorable.

P I expect USIA people will appear.

DECLASSIFIED

AUTHORITY per Ltr Review 9/9/04; NSC/State guidelines

NY 111 NLG DATE 4/17/07

S Yes + no. VOA mostly was it.

Even Kerph said it more important for external aspect to be united than who owned them. But he not checking.

P How about USA Bureau

S You know that was a F.S.I. category. We mean and folding them into F.S.I.

I don't think it will cause any change in field - just more efficiency in Wash. USIA executes internal affairs in field, but State does it in Wash - mostly because of Fulbright was that propaganda (USIA) duty

P My feeling is you would require legislation to get it done

S Yes. There would be at least 3 or 4 separate pieces of legislation.

P I appreciate a job is needed. Would try to look over report. I think we should periodically look over these things. What was goal at time of system pay raise not necessarily permanently good.

S There were earlier moves to return IA to State - one under T. E. Hall by Keahfeller.

US legislation was initiated in Cong, but it did when Cong adjourned in Sept.

S There was in State originally but Dulles pushed it out cause he didn't want to get those tangled up with MacCarthy