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December 8th, 1959

COCOM Document No. 3806

COORDINATING COMMITTEE

RECORD OF DISCUSSION

ON

A GERMAN PROPOSAL TO EXPORT TELECOMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT TO POLAND

December 3rd, 1959

Present: Belgium (Luxembourg), Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, United Kingdom, United States.

Reference: COCOM Document No. 3775.

1. The CHAIRMAN drew the attention of the Committee to the German proposal to export radio relay communication equipment and a carrier frequency telephone installation on loan to Poland. He invited Delegates to give the views of their authorities.

2. The UNITED STATES Delegate informed the Committee that he had been instructed to object to this export since his authorities consider that the security considerations involved outweighed the requirements of the special Polish policy. The equipment concerned contained advanced technology. It would help to alleviate a serious deficiency in Bloc telecommunications equipment and would be of material help to the Bloc communications network. Furthermore they did not consider that the location was such that it would assist communications between Poland and Western Europe.

3. The UNITED KINGDOM Delegate said that his authorities appreciated the careful arrangements which had been proposed for safe-guarding this equipment while it was on loan to the Polish postal authorities but they regretted they could not agree to this export because of its important strategic nature.

4. The FRENCH Delegate stated that his authorities raised no objection to this temporary export. The material in question included radio relay equipment which was perhaps of a wider band-width than usual but the terminal equipment was designed to take only 12 channels. The 4 wire system, consisting of two wires for transmission and two wires for reception, was a very simple arrangement and was one of those normally used on all telephone services. If one wished to adapt the terminal equipment to take 120 channels, considerable work would have to be undertaken to provide the additional channels. The Delegate continued that the equipment in question was simple in nature and there was much more advanced and more expensive equipment in existence, equipment which would, for example, change automatically to another channel when the signal noise level on one channel was too low. The price and the technical specification of the German equipment showed, however, that it did not possess this automatic refinement. Contrary to what had been said by the United States Delegate, the Soviet Union had recently developed equipment incorporating new technical characteristics which made the German equipment old-fashioned. The Russian "Viesna" (meaning "spring") equipment had 600 channels and worked with telephonic band-widths of only 2 kc/s. It was well-known that this band-width was not suitable for telephone communications, therefore the "Viesna" equipment used separate reserve channels with integrating devices to measure the average telephonic level of each channel between 2 kc/s and 4 kc/s, thus giving an improved signal noise level and allowing an increased number of communications. This equipment represented a standard of perfection which had not yet been attained in the Western world.

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5. The ITALIAN Delegate stated that his authorities raised no objection to this export. He emphasized the fact that according to the German memorandum the equipment was only to be lent to the Polish authorities. If the latter subsequently wanted to buy the equipment, the German Delegation would presumably submit a fresh exceptions request in the normal way. Finally the Delegate said that his authorities had also taken into account the fact that German engineers would supervise the installation of the equipment and it would remain under their supervision throughout the period of the loan.

6. The UNITED STATES Delegate asked for how long the loan would be made?

7. There were no objections from the other Members of the Committee.

8. The GERMAN Delegate expressed his thanks to the Members of the Committee for the views they had given and in particular to the French Delegation for the technical support they had given to the German exception request. He could not concur with the views expressed by two Delegations that the equipment could be considered to be of strategic importance. It was intended for the Polish post administration and not for the military communications system. He stated that no technical know-how was involved. The quantity of the equipment to be lent was so limited that its installation would not change basically the telecommunications conditions in Poland. He pointed out that Lodz was to the west of Warsaw and thus the improved communications would be in the direction of Western Europe. It was not yet known for how long the loan would be made. The German Delegation would not fail to submit a new request should the Polish authorities want to buy the equipment at some future date. In view of the foregoing, the Delegate would be grateful to the United Kingdom and United States Delegations if they would reconsider their position.

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