

Political Persuasion in the First Period of „Cold War”  
(Hungary and the „Radio Free Europe” 1950-1956)

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*Basic ideas of project:* RFE - established in 1950 - seemed to be a latent part of political systems of countries belonged to soviet zone, as well Hungary. In spite of its illegitimacy it took part - from age to age by different ways and changing efficiency - in spreading of political information, in forming of public opinion, in political socialization, even influenced (indirectly but sometimes directly) decisions making by the political power.

„Values, because of their opened or closed character, theoretically, as a standard, help to direct ideas and actions, and to rank positions, instruments and purposes.” (Heller, Á.) So all types of political power try to persuade, even to force the citizens to identify with its own official political values, totally. When a state can not gain this result, the growing confusion of values leads to the crisis of the state. So the basic function of RFE was to present an alternativity of the monolitical value system of the totalitarian (later: authoritarian) political power, ruling in this period first of all in East-Europe.

Three, different forms of value systems stand at the center of this transmission process. These are: 1. main preferences of ideology and foreign politics of West (mainly of USA - as a consequence of any political-organisational-financial reasons); 2. inner value system formed in the social structure of a given „target-country”; 3. political priority of RFE, being special institute having some relative autonomy. There were different types of value-collision between them during the last 40 years because of its own internal changings, but their external relations were transformed, too. At least these, otherwise autonom value systems opposed as a whole to the 4. value order declared and forced by the state and party power in the soviet-type states.

Values, transmitted by RFE, were determined finally by these four kinds of value systems. To research these relations and problems is the main purpose of the project.

*Hypothesis:* Expected conclusion of the project is that during the last half century these value systems, researching by the topic, converged, at least tendentiously.

#### STUDYING THE EFFECTS OF RADIO FREE EUROPE IN HUNGARY<sup>1[40]</sup>

1. The era of a spectacular technological breakthrough in mass communications after the Second World War coincided with the period when the demand for Cold War ideologies and the war of doctrines was born. On both sides, direct political expectations were served by the media, voluntarily or otherwise. The opposing ideologies tried to win popular support for the unquestionable superiority of their own system of values both at home and abroad, in the

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<sup>1[40]</sup> Revised version of a background study „Research Agenda for Studying the Effects of Radio Free Europe in Hungary” made for a conference on The Impact of Cold War Broadcasting was organized in October 2004 by the Hoover Institution at Stanford University in the U.S.

broadest circle and with the greatest possible effectiveness.<sup>2[41]</sup> Throughout the Cold War, the task of winning „hearts and minds” around the world was of great importance to Soviet and American leaders. Both sides fought a cultural Cold War via radio waves, (later) television transmissions, propaganda, and other forms of psychological pressure.

Of the various branches of the media, it was the currency of radio broadcasting that rocketed sky-high in particular; in theory, broadcasting stations could reach an unlimited number of listeners in the target countries, quickly and risk-free, and also, last but not least, in a relatively cost-effective way. With a slight exaggeration, we could even claim that this was the reason why the 1950s were seen as the golden era of radio broadcasting.<sup>3[42]</sup> The number of programs broadcast over the borders multiplied. Each country was at the same time a target country for other states’ radio stations and an active participant in this strange propaganda war through its own broadcasting activities.

At the end of the 1940s, Hungary, bent on building the dictatorship of the proletariat at home, was actively engaged in this media war – in both capacities. The authorities tried to inform their potential audience, in Hungarian as well as in other languages and in countries near and far (from the Far East to South America), of the glorious achievements of both the people’s democracies and the „camp of peace-loving nations”. The foreign radio stations broadcasting in Hungarian were equally busy disseminating the news of the free world in Hungary. A memorandum prepared for the Politburo of the HWPP in late 1954 summed up the situation as follows: „At the moment, we receive propaganda broadcasts from Radio Free Europe, Voice of America, London, Paris, the Vatican, Rome, Ankara, Madrid and Tel-Aviv. Broadcasting on 110 to 120 different frequencies, the enemy wages a propaganda war against us in a total of 150 to 160 hours a day.”<sup>4[43]</sup>

Radio Free Europe, which had been on the air since the autumn of 1951, caused serious headache to the one-party state, and not just for the almost round-o-clock broadcasting on a large number of frequencies. The prime reason why this particular radio station was thought to be especially dangerous was that – save its direct propaganda – Radio Free Europe was able to present real news in the language of ordinary people. In an age when internal news broadcasting and public access to information were limited by the authorities, every alternative source of news – merely by the virtue of its existence – questioned the unconditional acceptance of absolute and total power. It was even more dangerous, when the listeners’ everyday experiences directly reconfirmed the authenticity of the alternative news of the „free world”.

Throughout the four decades that the Hungarian department of Radio Free Europe was broadcasting its programs, it attracted the closest attention of the political leadership of Hungary. In their efforts to discover what information had been leaked out about the internal affairs of Hungary’s top leaders, the authorities relied on the media screening services of the Hungarian Broadcasting Bureau first and the Hungarian News Agency later. Furthermore, they also wanted to know about the events, information and facts that the public was able to learn, despite all the efforts by the state to retain information and spread disinformation.

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<sup>2[41]</sup> Nelson, Michael: *War of the Black Heavens: The Battles of Western Broadcasting in the Cold War*. Syracuse University, 1997.

<sup>3[42]</sup> The phrase see Barnouw, Erik. *A History of Broadcasting in the United States*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1966. 167-170. pp.

<sup>4[43]</sup> Hungarian National Archives (hereafter HNA) M-KS-276. f. 54/350. ö. e.

During the fifty years of one-party-rule in Hungary, the authorities developed and employed various strategies to counter the effects of hostile radio broadcasting. These attempts included jamming the radio signals, putting spies on show trials and effecting the wholesale Marxist indoctrination of the public.

a) In the 1950s, the authorities' aim was to completely block out radio broadcasts from the West with the means of technology. By the end of 1948, they had stopped the production, import and sale of radio sets capable of receiving hostile radio broadcasts, as they only allowed the production of the so-called „people's radio” suitable for the reception of the existing Hungarian radio programs<sup>5[44]</sup>. In the early 1950s, the government embarked on a program to build up a cable network. By the mid-1950s, there had been roughly half-a-million households in Hungary, where the only program people could listen to was transmitted through the central receiver set up at either the local Communist party headquarters or the local government office.<sup>6[45]</sup>

Despite all these efforts, roughly one-third of the approximately one and a half million privately owned radio sets in Hungary were suitable for the reception of western radio broadcasts – mostly transmitted on short waves. In order to put an end to this, and to cover the entire range of hostile radio broadcasts, the people's democracies joined forces to set up a powerful jamming station in Eastern Europe.<sup>7[46]</sup>

b) From the mid-1960s, the party leadership stopped the jamming of radio broadcasts in Hungarian. Instead, they decided to launch a full-scale ideological offensive to combat the „enemy's subversive actions” with the help of political agitation and propaganda. A contemporary document issued by the Communist party distinguishes between four different forms of hostile propaganda by RFE:

- destructive propaganda: designed to raise doubts as well as hostile, nationalist and anti-Soviet feelings;
- thunderous propaganda: instead of dealing with fundamental issues, our politics and aims are attacked indirectly, in a blatant, repetitious and loud manner;
- whispering propaganda: in order to generate an atmosphere of distrust, fabricated stories are spread as inside news before important events, often about the imminent replacement or appointment of public figures;
  - objective information: although this form of propaganda may contain bits and pieces of factually correct information, it is accompanied by hostile commentary; its aim is deliberate disinformation.

Against such a coordinated strategy directed from the top and mobilizing substantial intellectual and material resources „we must act in every area with a well-planned, coordinated and scientifically well-founded program,”<sup>8[47]</sup> the contemporary party document concludes.

c) On the third level of countering the effects of these radio broadcasts, the authorities resorted to the methods of criminal prosecution. The administrative measures and the weapon of criminal prosecution came to be used in the fight against the western radio broadcasting

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<sup>5[44]</sup> HNA M-KS-276. f. 55/18. ő. e.

<sup>6[45]</sup> HNA M-KS-276. f. 54/119. ő. e.

<sup>7[46]</sup> HNA M-KS-276. f. 89/256. ő. e.

<sup>8[47]</sup> HNA M-KS-288. f. 5/401. ő. e.

station at a time, when these radio stations were classified en masse as cover agencies for the intelligence services of western imperialist states. After that, any association with them – including the act of listening to them in a group – was made punishable under criminal law. Albeit with varying severity, the criminalization of the listeners of western radio stations continued all through the four decades.<sup>9[48]</sup>

The situation is faithfully illustrated by a document produced by the Ministry of Interior in the mid-1950s: „To measure directly the effectiveness of the RFE broadcasts, or to put a figure on the number of their listeners, would be difficult. Indirect estimates could be inferred from the fact that there are very few people in Hungary who have never heard of RFE; also, in almost every case of unlawful association, incitation, illegal border-crossing and spy investigations, references to the RFE broadcasts come up. It can also be concluded from the investigation of unlawful association cases that the reactionary or the wavering social groups regularly listen to the broadcasts, quite often in group. On the basis of all this, we must conclude that the RFE is a powerful weapon in the hands of the imperialists and, therefore, we must increase our activities against it in the area of both state security and propaganda.”<sup>10[49]</sup>

Further research work in the fields of political sciences, media history and sociology is needed to uncover hidden facts and information germane to any studies about the activities and programs of Radio Free Europe and the relevant opinions and attitudes of the audience. Possible sources for such studies would include reports, accounts and interrogation transcripts produced by the Ministry of Interior in the course of investigating people charged with listening to the enemy’s propaganda broadcasts and passing on the news. Despite their apparent biases, the documents produced by various top-level party organizations, as well as the regularly compiled reports on public morale for the party leadership, would be of paramount importance.

Any study attempting to clarify the above mentioned problems would initially necessitate research fieldwork of the sources; held in various archives, these sources usually have not yet been researched; also, they are incomplete and only occasionally appear in registries. Through a number of documents selected from the few sources already researched, we wish to illustrate the more important tendencies of this research, indicating that the first steps towards a comprehensive and systematic research have been made.<sup>11[50]</sup>

2. The most important institute for studying the history of RFE in Hungary is at the Open Society Archives.<sup>12[51]</sup> The prehistory of OSA started in 1949 with the post-war division of Europe. The local communist parties seized power in all of the countries in Central and Eastern Europe which were controlled and/or occupied by Soviet troops in 1944–45. Central and Eastern European emigrants – former politicians and influential public figures, once

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<sup>9[48]</sup> Révész, Béla: *Criminalization of Proletarian Dictatorship – Its Ideological Function*. Acta Jur. et Pol. Szeged, 1997.

<sup>10[49]</sup> IM CA 36-213/1954.

<sup>11[50]</sup> An important step towards a complex and systematic research was a conference on cold war broadcasting impact organized by Hoover Institution and Cold War International History Project, Woodrow Wilson Center, with support from the Center for East European and Eurasian Studies, Stanford University in Stanford, California, October, 2004. in the following issues:

– Goals and Content of Western Broadcasts – VOA, BBC, RIAS.

– Impact of the Broadcasts: Estimating Audiences

– Impact of the Broadcasts in Eastern Europe: Evidence from the Archives

– Impact of the Broadcasts: Regime Countermeasures

<sup>12[51]</sup> Leszek Pudlowski and Iván Székely: ed. cit.

members of the domestic political, social, and cultural elite who had to leave their own countries due to these post-war political developments – decided to form a common organization, the Free Europe Committee (originally founded as the National Committee for a Free Europe). The initiative was approved and subtly encouraged by the US government. Thus, at the beginning the Free Europe Committee presented itself as a private organization. The activists tried to raise funds among people within the American upper and middle classes, and also among well-to-do emigrants who believed that the struggle against communism was of crucial importance. The declared aim of the Committee was to promote the „containment” doctrine of US foreign policy as well as to advance the liberation of the people under Soviet rule in Central and Eastern Europe by peaceful means.<sup>13[52]</sup> The Committee had a double task: it aimed to keep alive the public interest in the West towards the problems of their homelands, and at the same time they strived to maintain and reinforce the spirit of hope and resistance within the oppressed countries. Therefore, the Committee specialized in organizing research projects and conferences, accumulating information from behind the iron curtain from all available resources, and editing and publishing books, essay collections and information bulletins for the academic audience and for the broader public. The Committee set up an information center in New York which consisted of a small library and an archives that was continuously updated and enlarged.<sup>14[53]</sup> The archival center aimed to serve both the emigrant organizations and Western scholars, experts and decision-makers. However, the mere collection of information did not seem efficient, and was unsatisfactory for the founders. It became clear very early that the Committee had to find and take advantage of other means that might produce the desired effects upon the communist world. The real task was to break the information monopoly of the communist propaganda machinery within the Eastern bloc. Under the aegis of the Free Europe Committee several actions and projects were started that tried to spread information and propaganda among the people who lived „beyond” and were completely cut off from sources of real news and information – even about themselves and about their own lives. Two ways seemed feasible. The traditional type, widely used during the Second World War, involved dropping leaflets and other propaganda materials from jets or balloons.

The experts and staff – editors, speakers, political analysts, archivists and librarians – were primarily recruited from among natives, many of whom were newcomers to the West. Former politicians, famous journalists and scholars who had left, or rather were forced to leave their own countries gravitated toward the Radios. The newly established national editorial desks of the Radios enjoyed a wide range of sovereignty in determining the structure and the content of their programs<sup>15[54]</sup>. Yet, the ultimate professional and political control still remained in the hands of the American supervisors, who were politically responsible and accountable for what was put on the air. The Directory Board regularly issued strategic and tactical guidelines that basically followed the actual directives of the US State Department.

Radio Free Europe targeted the Soviet satellite states in Central and Eastern Europe – Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and (shortly) Albania – while Radio Liberty broadcast toward the Soviet Union. RL had services in most of the languages of the Soviet republics – in Baltic, Moldavian, Belarusian, Ukrainian and also in Caucasian languages and Turkic languages of Central Asia. In addition, they had services in Tartarian and Baskhirian as well.

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<sup>13[52]</sup> See Holt, Robert, T.: The Origins of Radio Free Europe. In: Holt, Robert, T.: Radio Free Europe. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1958. 9-16. pp.

<sup>14[53]</sup> National Committee for the Free Europe. June 1, 1949. *ibid.* 23. p.

<sup>15[54]</sup> Organization, personnel, and setting. *Ibid.* 30-56. pp.

The embryonic forms of the various national research sections that were merged into the RFE/RL Research Institute in 1990 were established parallel with the Radios' editorial desks in the early 50s. In 1959, the „research” function of the RFE news department was separated and the management established independent units reporting to each of the broadcast desks. As for Radio Liberation, the research section, which became the Soviet „Red” Archives, started working in 1953 and later remained administratively under the jurisdiction of the Radio Liberty.<sup>16[55]</sup>

The idea was that the research sections would serve the programming and editorial work of the national desks. Thus, some of the research units, for instance the Hungarian Unit, started functioning even a few months before the first programs were put on the air. The research activities were divided into national sections, which roughly meant that each national editorial desk was supported by native analysts and archivists who collected, arranged, interpreted and transmitted the necessary up-to-date information for the editors. However, these units were not intended to operate indefinitely. Like the Radios themselves, they were supposed to be temporary establishments, which would operate until the collapse of communism within the Soviet satellite states. The prevalent opinion was that the collapse would come soon. This was why the founders of the research sections had not considered the establishment of a uniformly regulated archival machinery. At the beginning, the research staff worked on a day-by-day basis. Even rules for mandatory preservation had not been laid out. Without having a unified system and processing rules the national sections existed and functioned separately, but still parallel to each other. The lack of unified organization meant that the processing and organizational principles, the archival methodology, the code systems, the finding aids and the accessories of the national departments were almost accidental and differentiated slightly from each other, although some general features and characteristics could be detected.<sup>17[56]</sup>

In most cases the research units were separated into two independent parts: the research and analysis sections and the evaluation sections. The first worked directly for the Programming Section and for the national desks, and elaborated actual press analyses of domestic and Western publications on the political, economic and cultural issues of the target country. From 1952 (in some cases from 1956), the Evaluation and Research sections started to regularly publish Background Reports, which consisted of longer essays about actual events and about the political and social situations in several countries. Soon each country had its own Background Report bulletin written in English, making the information available for everybody at the Radios.

In the beginning, the Background Reports were written on an ad hoc, irregular basis and concerned not only the five countries to which RFE broadcast but also Albania, the GDR, Yugoslavia, the non-ruling communist parties of the West, and East-West political relations. Later, the periodicals were prepared with an increasing frequency, until they became monthly, then bi-weekly periodicals, Situation Reports that were written separately for each of the eight countries.

During the early period, the work of the Evaluation Sections seemed to be more important than research on printed and electronic sources. Their task was to analyze and evaluate reports and interviews sent to Munich by the local Field Offices. The series of these reports became

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<sup>16[55]</sup> Michie, Allan A.: *Voices through the Iron Curtain: the Radio Free Europe Story*. New York, N. Y.: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1963. 304 p

<sup>17[56]</sup> Policy formulation and programing. Holt, op. cit. 57-62. pp.

known as Items. The Items were recorded in Western refugee camps and immigration offices by the agents of the field offices located in several European capitals and major cities. On the letterhead of the Items Roman numbers identified the office from which the report was sent to the center in Munich: I. was Munich, II. was Stockholm, III. was West Berlin, IV. was Paris, V. was Athens, VI. was Rome, VII. was Linz, VIII. was Salzburg, IX. was Vienna, X. or XI. was Istanbul and XII. was London. The best and most reliable reports not surprisingly arrived from the field offices located in Linz, Salzburg and Munich, where the biggest refugee camps functioned and the most effective information control could be exercised. Unlike pre-elaborated questionnaires, the Items contained complete stories as told by the „source”. The structure of each information Item was as follows: source, date, evaluation summary, evaluation comment and text.<sup>18[57]</sup>

The idea was quite interesting: the field offices surrounded the communist bloc like „military bases” and conducted information warfare. On the other hand, it was even more characteristic that the Radios tried to base the information acquisition on „independent” sources. But the within communist countries which all operated a centralized propaganda machine, only the information received from average people, i.e. the refugees, seemed to be independent and reliable. That practice could also be interpreted as a demonstrative gesture of the democratic commitment of the Radios: while the communist regimes used politics and propaganda against their own people, RFE/RL based its work upon and in favor of the very same people.

These stories were not taken completely at face value. The primary task of the evaluation sections was to control them: the experts tried to compare details of these stories to the information received from other sources (domestic radio, official press or other Items). They also tried to filter out the elements of exaggeration, personal revenge etc. At the national research units, the reports were carefully checked for accuracy and plausibility. Only those reports which passed the various filtering systems were recommended as subjects to be used in producing radio programs. Collection of the Items went on until 1972, when the scandal over RFE/RL broke out in the US Congress<sup>19[58]</sup>. Then the Radio leadership, urged by the higher authorities in the US, decided to destroy them.

In the early period the Items were among the most important sources of information. The other main source was the Monitoring Department, also established at the beginning. Every day the Radios’ staff monitored and recorded the programs of the official state radios of the target countries. The recorded broadcasts were transcribed, and the editors found a copied selection on their desks each morning.

It was quite natural that the Radios acquired information from other radios, and the daily reports compiled from the Radios’ monitoring served as a source of information, though not exclusively or primarily, since those were produced from totalitarian propaganda. They rather served as references: they contained the „facts” that RFE and RL had to know in order to battle communism effectively. The monitoring provided a clear picture of the elements and phenomena that the official propaganda in the Eastern bloc wanted to emphasize on the one hand, and what it wanted to hide on the other. RFE/RL particularly concentrated upon just these elements. In this little game of propaganda and counter-propaganda, RFE/RL and the

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<sup>18[57]</sup> See Sebode, Gerhard: Hungarian Refugees in Germany. IM CA 1-a-950/1964.

<sup>19[58]</sup> The right to know: report of the Presidential Study Commission on International Radio Broadcasting. Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1973. 91 p. Quoted by Borbándi, Gyula: Magyarok az Angolkertben: a Szabad Európa Rádío története. Európa, Bp. 1996. 365. pp.

communist radio stations always responded, reflected, and even indirectly edited each other's programs.<sup>20[59]</sup>

During this period the traditional archival work of collecting and arranging information from the printed and electronic media perhaps was not a focus of the Research and Evaluation Sections of the Radios (although the situation was probably different in the various national sections). However, these kinds of archival activities had started from the beginning, and became increasingly systematic and important. The processing of written sources, Western and Eastern newspapers, and news agency reports was initially based on a Card File system covering various subjects, including institutions and persons. The basic references were recorded cards that indicated the original sources, which could be traced back with the help of the cards.

In the 50s the collection of news clippings was rather accidental.<sup>21[60]</sup> The archivists and researchers mostly relied upon the cards, together with the material in the newspaper and periodical collection cited by the cards. But soon a more sophisticated subject clipping system was requested, and this enabled the archives to fulfill demands of the national desks much more rapidly.<sup>22[61]</sup>

After the first few years the management of the archives became more and more professional. The experiences of the Hungarian and Polish uprisings in 1956 brought about the major changes in this respect. These historic events made clear both the importance and the responsibility of the Radios in the region, and also proved that this venture would not be merely a temporary one. It became clear that communism would stay in these countries, and the division of Europe was a long-term historical phenomenon.<sup>23[62]</sup> This new recognition invoked the reorganization of the Radios and the research units as well.

From 1958 on, the structures of the latter were reorganized step by step, as the traditional archival work became more and more important in information acquisition. This shift of emphasis from accidental sources to regular ones required a much more organized system for processing information. The various national sections elaborated their own filing system (the Subject Code system), according to which they clipped, arranged and processed the documents and data coming from printed and electronic media. Additionally, at this time the operational structure of research and evaluation was unified, and the systematic collection and processing of the Subject Files and biographical clippings really started. The general policy was to file the same article under all of the relevant subject titles as well as in the Biographical Files if the article concerned a relevant person. The result was an extremely effective and sophisticated network of information in which data and problems could be identified and approached via divergent routes. This was also the time when the separate national archives gained a predominantly similar structure. The same elements could be found in all of the national subfunds: Subject Files, the series of Background Reports and Situation Reports, Biographical Files, Press Surveys and Monitoring Files.<sup>24[63]</sup>

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<sup>20[59]</sup> Critchlow, James: *Radio Hole-in-the-head/Radio Liberty: An Insider's Story of Cold War Broadcasting*. Washington, D.C.: American University Press, 1995. passim.

<sup>21[60]</sup> It was more systematic in the case of the archives of RL, the „Red” Archives.

<sup>22[61]</sup> „The Hungarians have worked out a special rotation system of handling important speeches so that programing can have them immediately.” Holt, op. cit. 99. p.

<sup>23[62]</sup> „The most serious charge that has been made against RFE is that it has incited listeners to suicidal action.” Ibid: 206. p.

<sup>24[63]</sup> Mickelson, Sig: *America's other voice: the story of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty*. New York: Praeger, 1983. passim.



The research units<sup>25[64]</sup> operated until the mid-90s. During 45 years of continuous activity, they accumulated an archives of millions of documents both in paper and micro-format about the Soviet Union and the former Eastern bloc. The amount of archival materials exceeds 2,500 linear meters, despite the unfortunate fact that the research sections regularly sorted out parts of the collections that were supposed to be irrelevant in the future. After more than four decades the archives became the major source of information about the post-war history of the region. In the meantime, communism collapsed with an unexpected rapidity, and this changed the role of the RFE/RL Archives and redefined its function and mission<sup>26[65]</sup>. From an information database that served the programming needs of an electronic medium with the ultimate purpose of undermining the communist regimes, the materials of the Research Institute became an archives, a historical collection of the bygone communist regimes, a product of and a memorial to communism.

The core collection of the Open Society Archives, the documents and records accumulated by Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty are the residue of the Cold War, remnants of the longest propaganda war in modern history<sup>27[66]</sup>. The documents in part were produced and collected in order to aid and cover a large covert operation of the agencies that stood behind, and at the same time helped, the work of the Radios.

The holdings of the Open Society Archives are both smaller and more extensive than the Radios' original archive.<sup>28[67]</sup> Not everything came to Budapest from Munich and New York when, after the end of the Cold War – when the Radios had fulfilled their original mandate and made themselves obsolete – the US Congress decided to downsize the operation and cut the budget. The final destination of the „Corporate Archive” – the administrative documents, the correspondence between the Radios and the different offices of the American government, as well as the directives sent to the Radios – was the Hoover Archive at Stanford. OSA does not have the still-classified, partly CIA documents, which could testify about „one of the [CIA's] most successful covert operations” as a well-informed insider addressed the Radios retrospectively. The core of the collection under the ground in Budapest is a typical product of the Cold War period: it does not directly reveal much about the organization that produced the documents, but one can learn much inferentially by studying the materials the Radios and the agencies behind them had collected and stored.

The programs, or „production tapes” the different desks of the Radios had produced did not come to OSA, but instead remained for the time being at the Radios, which moved to Prague in 1995. A large number of the copies of the Polish and Hungarian radio programs were later donated to Polish and Hungarian national archives<sup>29[68]</sup>, and a plan to copy the Russian language programs and donate the copies to an institution in Russia has not yet been abandoned. The destination of the transcripts of the so-called „monitoring tapes”, however, was Budapest.

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<sup>25[64]</sup> From 1990 the unified Research Institute

<sup>26[65]</sup> See Arch, Puddington: *Broadcasting Freedom: The Cold War Triumph of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty*, University of Kentucky, 2000.

<sup>27[66]</sup> See Lindahl, Rutger: *Broadcasting across borders: a study on the role of propaganda in external broadcasts*. (Goteborg studies in politics 8.) Goteborg: C W K Gleerup, 1978.

<sup>28[67]</sup> Leszek Pudlowski and Iván Székely: *op. cit. passim*.

<sup>29[68]</sup> A duplicate set of the texts and recordings of the RFE Hungarian Service from 1952 through October 1993 has been transferred to NSL in Budapest. See I. Chapter, 2. 3.

Besides collecting clippings from Central and Eastern European official newspapers, diplomatic post reports, interviews with refugees from the region, descriptions by tourists and sensitive and clandestine information with the help of different intelligence agencies, the Radios closely followed the events in the so-called „target countries” by listening to and recording the official radio broadcasts coming through the air from the communist world. The broadcasts were then transcribed during the night, and by the time the programs resumed in the early morning, the transcripts were already on the tables of the people in charge of the political and ideological direction of the programs.<sup>30[69]</sup> The Radios immediately reacted to the news coming from behind the iron curtain, where, at the same time, agents working for the other side, for the communist jamming/monitoring stations, listened attentively to the broadcasts of the „enemy stations” like Radio Vatican, Voice of America, Deutsche Welle, Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty and, later, Radio Tel-Aviv, Radio Tirana, Radio Peking and others as well.

Monitoring the „enemy broadcasts” was made difficult by the political need to jam the very same programs at the same time. Jamming took either the form of transmitting a continuous noise on the same frequency as the „enemy station”, or broadcasting a mixture of speech, music, and atmospheric noise designed to overwhelm the incoming broadcast. According to the one-time director of the Hungarian secret jamming agency, right before 1956, each day 218 hours of enemy broadcasting trespassed the Hungarian airwaves on 214 frequencies. The jamming agency, with the modest code-name „Post Office No. 118”, did not have the capacity to jam all incoming programs, and even if it had possessed the necessary technical means, it would not have been allowed to do so, as a consequence of the need to monitor the enemy broadcasts.<sup>31[70]</sup> During the night, while the transcribers worked at RFE/RL, scribes were busy transcribing the recorded programs of the enemy stations inside secret offices in the communist countries. The transcripts were delivered in due time to desks in the ministries of interior, the offices of the secret police and the propaganda and agitation department of the party headquarters. Orders and directives were sent in turn to the official media including the radio stations: how to respond to the propaganda of the enemy.

Looking at the archives of the national news agencies of the former communist countries or the archives of the former secret police, one would find the recorded or transcribed versions of those program tapes that did not come to Budapest with the core collection. OSA and these secret archives together form a full and peculiar picture of the way the Cold War, communism, the West, and the East were jointly fashioned and produced by the enemy Radios and the national radios of the „target countries”. There was a constant, ongoing dialogue in the air with both sides reflecting on the recorded, transcribed and analyzed propaganda of the other. What the secret listeners, who tried to comprehend the broadcasts behind the constant curtain of noise perceived about their world, about communism, was in large part supplied by the descriptions they gathered from the „enemy radios”, RFE/RL being most prominent among them. RFE/RL conceived its programs largely as a response to the programs produced behind the iron curtain.

OSA acquired a few amateur tapes with records of RFE programs recorded inside the „target countries”, that preserved the noise of the jamming. Superimposed on the voices in the

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<sup>30[69]</sup> Monitoring can be looked upon as the ear of RFE – a large, sensitive, mechanical ear that picks up the voices from behind the Iron Curtain.” Holt, op. cit. 98. p.

<sup>31[70]</sup> Author's interview with Gusztav Gogolyak on 26 March, 1996. See Béla Révész: Political Persuasion in the First Period of „Cold War”. Hungary and the „Radio Free Europe” 1950–1956. Acta Jur. et Pol., Szeged, 1996. 58-64. pp.

programs, covering the message, is the noise that was transmitted in order to neutralize, to eliminate and to erase all meaning. Instead of erasure, instead of an acoustic black hole, however, the result turned out to be noise as message, as meaningful information: „for despite the death it contains, noise carries the order in itself; it carries new information. This may seem strange. But noise does in fact create meaning: first because the interruption of a message signifies the interdiction of the transmitted meaning, and signifies censorship and rarity; second, because the very absence of meaning in pure noise or in the meaningless repetition of a message, by unchanneling auditory sensations, frees the listener’s imagination... The presence of noise makes sense and makes meaning. It makes possible the creation of a new order on another level of organization, or a new code in another network.”<sup>32[71]</sup>

The Open Society Archives houses thousands pieces of carefully assembled information, obtained, collected and smuggled out in clandestine ways from countries with rulers who tried to hermetically seal them and isolate them from the other side, from the outside world. Most of the information stored underground, on levels minus-1 and minus-2 in Budapest, is blatant and obvious lies: forged election results, forged production statistics, forged birth and death rates, doctored maps and photographs and censored descriptions of events that never happened. Analysts at the Radios frantically searched for meaning behind the stereotypical topoi, trying to decode the allegedly coded messages, since it was difficult to imagine that anyone of sound mind – even in a completely boring totalitarian regime – would produce such unbelievable stories, news and information. But the cryptanalysis was in most cases done in vain: there was nothing behind the message; the message, as in the case of the noise, was the information itself.

Communism was built on, and eventually ruined by, such metatruths: on noises that warned the listeners that the jamming agency, the Party was there – even in the air, controlling not only the propaganda of the enemy but the eager listeners as well. Yes, the Party was there but paralyzed; capable only of making a cacophony in the air, merely creating the appearance of being there. If one wants to learn the truth about communism, the truth about the Cold War, the world of propaganda and appearances, and the most important reason for the Fall, an informed choice is to study this fake world, and the files and documents of which OSA is the guardian.

Not all the documents in the holdings of the Open Society Archives testify about paralysis and impotence: the Russian, Polish and Hungarian samizdat collections prove that there were some who questioned the lies, who chose not to remain silent, who under the dark sky had hopes even against hope. The Archives however houses documentation not only of individual dissent but of open resistance, the sometimes naive, romantic, but nevertheless heroic attempts: the Polish and Hungarian uprisings in 1956, Prague in 1968 and Poland, the strikes along the Baltic coastline, Solidarity.<sup>33[72]</sup> The documents from the Fall, the peaceful revolutions, the transition, the End, which resulted in the Archives move from Munich and New York to Budapest, to the basement of the Central European University which is itself a product of the abrupt and unexpected changes.

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<sup>32[71]</sup> Noise: The Political Economy of Music. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1985. p. 33. Quoted by István Rév: Just Noise. A lecture given at a conference on The Impact of Cold War Broadcasting was organized in October 2004 by the Hoover Institution at Stanford University in the U.S. Manuscript.

<sup>33[72]</sup> See Lévesque, Jacques: The Enigma of 1989. The USSR and the Liberation of Eastern Europe, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1997.

OSA is not an archives frozen in time. It actively collects, solicits and acquires important collections and documents on the afterlife of communism and issues connected to human rights. This is why OSA houses the archives of Index on Censorship<sup>34[73]</sup>; this is why the records of the UN Expert Commission on war crimes on the territory of the former Yugoslavia<sup>35[74]</sup> found a place in the Open Society Archives; this is why the decision was made to continue the monitoring activities of the Radios and systematically record the nightly news programs of Serb, Croat, and Bosnian television during the war in Yugoslavia.<sup>36[75]</sup> OSA has a growing collection of new materials, but like the core collection of RFE/RL, most of the newly acquired documents testify about despicable acts, cruelty, the breach of democratic rules of law and grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions and other international humanitarian law.

3. The radios came into being after World War II in response to the thousands of displaced persons throughout Western Europe, a large number of whom were housed in refugee camps in West Germany, while others had fled to Paris, London, New York, and Washington from Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in advance of the Red Army or as the result of communist takeovers. Many had been incarcerated in POW<sup>37[76]</sup> camps and refused to be repatriated to lands controlled by the Soviets after the war ended.

As communist governments took over in Eastern Europe, the U.S. government realized that these émigrés represented a powerful force against their communist-controlled homelands and it recruited them as writers, speakers, and in other capacities to facilitate the return of democratic governments.

George Kennan of the State Department asked Ambassador Joseph C. Grew to enlist prestigious civilians to lead an anticommunist organization dedicated to returning democracy to Eastern Europe<sup>38[77]</sup>, using the talents of the refugees. This organization, the National Committee for a Free Europe<sup>39[78]</sup>, later the Free Europe Committee, was established in 1949 with several objectives: find work for the democratic émigrés from Eastern Europe; put émigré voices on the air in their own languages; and carry émigré articles and statements back to their homelands through the printed word. These objectives were realized through the establishment of a publishing division, Free Europe Press, and a broadcast division, Radio Free Europe.<sup>40[79]</sup>

### *The Crusade for Freedom*

Funded primarily by Congress through the CIA until 1972, the NCFE maintained a public identity as a private corporation of freedom-loving American citizens. A separate organization, the Crusade for Freedom, was formed in 1950 to promote the NCFE and to raise money for its activities. President Dwight Eisenhower announced, in a nationwide radio address: „The Crusade for Freedom will provide for the expansion of Radio Free Europe into

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<sup>34[73]</sup> Records of the Index on Censorship OSA Fonds HU OSA 301

<sup>35[74]</sup> Records of the International Human Rights Law Institute Relating to the Conflict in the Former Yugoslavia. OSA Fonds HU OSA 304

<sup>36[75]</sup> Video Recordings of the Proceedings of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. OSA Fonds HU OSA 319

<sup>37[76]</sup> Prisoners of War and Missing in Action Servicemen.

<sup>38[77]</sup> Letter from George Kennan to Joseph C. Grew, February 4, 1949. Quoted by Holt, op. cit. 10. p.

<sup>39[78]</sup> National Committee for a Free Europe (Hereafter: NCFE).

<sup>40[79]</sup> See National Committee for a Free Europe, Inc., „Portion of Introductory Statement to the Press by Joseph C. Grew”, June 1, 1949. (mimeo.) 1-2. pp. Quoted by Holt, op. cit. 11. p.

a network of stations. They will be given the simplest, clearest charter in the world: ‘Tell the truth.’”<sup>41[80]</sup>

The Crusade for Freedom took as its symbol a bell resembling the American liberty bell, designed by Walter Dorwin Teague of New York. It had a laurel wreath symbolizing peace encircling the top and a frieze of five figures representing the five races of humankind passing the torch of freedom. An inscription quoted Abraham Lincoln: „That this world under God shall have a new birth of freedom.”<sup>42[81]</sup>

The 10-ton bell arrived from the British foundry of Gillett and Johnston to a ticker tape parade in New York City. The bell then visited 21 American cities, and people in every state were encouraged to sign Freedom Scrolls and contribute money for RFE. The bell then traveled to West Berlin, where it was permanently installed on United Nations Day, October 24, 1950. More than 400,000 Berliners filled City Hall Square to witness the dedication ceremonies. General Lucius Clay, chairman of the Crusade for Freedom, gave a speech, then pushed the button that started the bell ringing. Its deep tones were heard throughout East Berlin and into East Germany. The East German Communist Party denounced the Freedom Bell, with Politburo member Hans Jendretsky warning, „The rope of the death bell will become the gallows rope for those who ring it.”<sup>43[82]</sup>

Although the Crusade for Freedom never raised enough money to fund more than a small part of the RFE budget, its ubiquitous advertising, along with parades, public forums, and slogans such as „Fight the Big Lie with the Big Truth” and „Help Truth Fight Communism”, served to mobilize American support for the Cold War.<sup>44[83]</sup>

### *The Early Broadcasts*

RFE initiated broadcasting when a 7.5-kilowatt shortwave transmitter, nicknamed Barbara and formerly used by the Office of Strategic Services during the war, was installed in West Germany at Lampertheim, near Frankfurt. On July 4, 1950, the first 30 minutes of news, information, and political analysis was sent to Czechoslovakia, to be followed later that year by programs to Romania, Hungary, Poland, and Bulgaria<sup>45[84]</sup>.

A larger transmission facility was completed the following year at Holzkirchen, near Munich, with the official inauguration on May 1 celebrating 11.5 hours of daily broadcasting to Czechoslovakia. This inaugural date was chosen because May 1—May Day—was a widely celebrated communist holiday honoring workers. According to C. D. Jackson, the president of the NCFE, „We thought that would be a good day to launch our station and to let some people know out loud, and quite loud, the difference between workers and slaves.”<sup>46[85]</sup> Although the

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<sup>41[80]</sup> Quoted by Broadwater, Jeff.: *Eisenhower and the Anti-Communist Crusade*. Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1992. 48. p.

<sup>42[81]</sup> Lincoln never let the world forget that the Civil War involved an even larger issue. This he stated most movingly in dedicating the military cemetery at Gettysburg: that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain – that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom – and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth . Speech at Gettysburg, Nov. 19, 1863. Quoted by Helen Cothran: *Abraham Lincoln*. San Diego, Calif. Greenhaven Press, 2002. 87. p.

<sup>43[82]</sup> Quoted by Cissie Dore Hill: *The Story of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty*. Hoover Digest, 2001. No. 4. 45. p.

<sup>44[83]</sup> *Ibid.* 39. p.

<sup>45[84]</sup> See Holt, op. cit. 14-15. pp.

<sup>46[85]</sup> Quoted by Cissie Dore Hill: op. cit. 40. .

rhetoric moderated over the ensuing decades, the purpose of RFE and its sister station, Radio Liberty (RL), remained the same: to act as uncensored national media, offering an alternative to the highly censored Radio Warsaws and Radio Moscows of the communist world.

RFE's broadcasts were produced in New York, sent to Europe, and transmitted from Lampertheim and Holzkirchen in West Germany. A European production site, however, was essential if broadcasts were to be timely. West Germany, sharing a border with Czechoslovakia, had the best location and was still occupied by American forces; Munich, the second-largest city within the U.S. zone, was a center for East European émigrés, many of whom had experience in writing, editing, broadcasting, and the technical aspects of radio. In November 1952, at a site on the edge of Munich's English Garden, RFE opened a complex with 22 studios, six control rooms (including master control, editorial, and technical spaces), and a maintenance service.

### *Balloon Warfare*

While RFE programming was getting under way, the publishing arm of the NCFE was also busy. In 1951, Frank Wisner, the head of the Office of Policy Coordination, that section of the CIA responsible for RFE, inherited a stockpile of weather balloons left over from World War II. He immediately imagined a flotilla of balloons dropping millions of leaflets produced by the Free Europe Press, whose job it was to produce documents about Eastern European affairs.<sup>47[86]</sup>

A trial project took place over a two-week period in 1951. The prevailing west to east wind patterns carried the hydrogen-inflated balloons sailing over the border of Germany, where they dropped their payload of more than 11 million leaflets on Czechoslovakia.<sup>48[87]</sup>

Following Stalin's death in 1953, a series of demonstrations by factory workers in several eastern bloc countries encouraged the NCFE to try a coordinated four-day radio/balloon campaign called Operation Prospero. German civilian laborers readied 6,500 balloons and 12 million leaflets at launching sites near the Bavarian border village of Tirschenreuth. As leaflets fell, the Prague regime ordered jet fighter planes to shoot down the balloons (they hit only three). Meanwhile the leaflets dropped on isolated villages, where radios were rarities, as well as population centers.

In 1954, RFE, calling itself the „voice of the opposition,“ urged regime leaders to give Czech and Slovak citizens a way to veto that year's election. Operation Veto developed a platform and 10 limited demands, all possible within the constraints of a communist state. Gummed stickers with the number 10 were dropped by balloons, turning up on government walls, telephone booths, and the doors of police buildings. When voting took place, at least 5 percent voted against the single slate of candidates by putting the number 10 on their ballot.<sup>49[88]</sup>

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<sup>47[86]</sup> Projects was created in 1948. Soon afterwards it was renamed the Office of Policy Coordination (OPC). This became the espionage and counter-intelligence branch of the Central Intelligence Agency. Wisner was told to create an organization that concentrated on „propaganda, economic warfare; preventive direct action, including sabotage, anti-sabotage, demolition and evacuation measures; subversion against hostile states, including assistance to underground resistance groups, and support of indigenous anti-Communist elements in threatened countries of the free world“. Quoted by Nelson, Michael: op. cit. 37. p.

<sup>48[87]</sup> Holt. R. T.: Operation from the Berlin to the Poznan riot. In: Holt. R. T. op. cit. 145-165. pp.

<sup>49[88]</sup> Czechoslovakia – Guidance No. 10. June 30. 1953. Holt. R. T. op. cit. 145. p.

A Hungarian version of Operation Veto, named Operation Focus, was carried out in 1956; it was the last balloon project. A total of more than 300 million leaflets had gone over the Iron Curtain.<sup>50[89]</sup>

The first balloons were launched in August 1951 in an open field only 3 miles from the Czechoslovak border, when the Free Europe Committee used the Free Europe Press (FEP) to print up millions of propaganda leaflets. This test operation was on a stand-alone basis, i.e., the balloons were not part of a coordinated programming effort with Radio Free Europe. The leaflets contained such slogans as „A new hope is stirring,” and „Friends of Freedom in other lands have found a new way to reach you”.<sup>51[90]</sup>

Famed American newspaper correspondent Drew Pearson was a major proponent of the balloon launching program in his US newspaper columns. He and C.D.Jackson, President of Free Europe Committee, and other prominent guests were in attendance. Weather research balloons, about four feet in diameter carrying „friendship” leaflets were launched into Czechoslovakia over a two week period. Each balloon carried about 3000 leaflets, and when the weather was favorable, about 2000 balloons were launched each night. In total, over 11,000,000 leaflets were dropped. Both the regime and citizens seemingly ignored the leaflets.<sup>52[91]</sup>

Though not politically successful, the FEC (and the CIA) gained valuable practical experience in balloon launching. Ballooning had become a cost-effective means of delivering printed propaganda. FEP used different types and sizes of helium filled balloons from round to pillow shaped. Pillow balloons, for example, used a remarkable timing device: dry ice. Cartons filled with leaflets were attached to the bottom of the hydrogen-filled balloons. The loosely-covered cartons were held upright through the use of envelopes containing dry ice. As the dry ice evaporated, the cartons tipped over, thus dropping the leaflets. To try and hit an intended population target, the balloon launchers developed an ingenious system that calculated the weight of the dry ice, the amount of hydrogen, weight of the leaflets, direction and velocity of the wind. FEP estimated that 500 balloons carrying 2 to 7 pounds of leaflets could be filled and launched hourly at the stations.

The balloon launching, with coordinated Radio Free Europe programming, operations that followed were called „PROSPERO, „VETO,” „FOCUS,” and „SPOTLIGHT”. Three major launching sites were constructed in Bavaria to launch the balloons in round-the-clock operations in good weather. The balloon launching station at Freyung, Bavaria, for example, had a plaque that read, in part, „Free Europe Press... permitting the addition of the written word to Radio Free Europe's spoken communications with the people behind the Iron Curtain.”

PROSPERO was the code name for the RFE balloon program in the summer 1953, when in a time span of only four days, 6,500 balloons with over 12,000,000 RFE leaflets were launched into Czechoslovakia. The balloon launching started approximately at midnight on 13 July in the small Bavarian town Tirschenreuth. RFE broadcast news of the launching during the first news broadcasts at 6:00 AM. This was the first time balloons were launched in conjunction

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<sup>50[89]</sup> Richard H. Cummings: The Psywar Society. Balloons Over East Europe. The Cold War Leaflet Campaign of Radio Free Europe. The Falling Leaf Magazine. Autumn 1999. Volume XLII, No. 3.

<sup>51[90]</sup> A leaflet illustrated is from Operation Focus see Appendix II.

<sup>52[91]</sup> Czechoslovakia – Guidance No.16. Czechoslovakia: Regime Press and Radio Response to Western Broadcast and Leaflets. January – April, 1955. Holt. R. T. op. cit. 152. p.

with specific radio programs. RFE was critical of the regime's just installed currency reforms. Included in the leaflets were aluminum replicas of a newly-introduced Czechoslovak coin. The Freedom Bell and the inscription, „All Czechs and Slovaks for Freedom--all the Free World for Czechs and Slovaks” were stamped on the coin replicas.

The regime responded to PROSPERO by using military aircraft and anti-aircraft weapons along the border to shoot down the balloons the day after the first launching. In fact on July 15, the FEP staff actually saw the military aircraft shooting down the balloons as they first crossed the border into Czechoslovakia. Police cars in Prague and elsewhere used loudspeakers ordering citizens to turn in all the leaflets. Both the Czechoslovak and Soviet media attacked this balloon program. Because of the violent reaction and the media attacks, RFE inadvertently discovered that the balloon program was more successful than first planned and paved the ground work for even greater balloon efforts with specific programming in the following years.

For the first time, PROSPERO proved the value of combining the spoken word of RFE and written word of FEP for effective propaganda.<sup>53[92]</sup>

#### 4. Jamming<sup>54[93]</sup>, as a radio protection tool

4. 1. E. H. Gombrich, one of the most influential art historians of the twentieth century, one-time director of the Warburg Institute in London, worked as a so-called monitor and later as a monitoring supervisor, between 1939 and 1945 at the „Listening Post” of the B.B.C. In his Creighton Lecture in 1969 he summarized his experiences, later published under the title *Myth and Reality in German War-Time Broadcasts*. Gombrich claimed that „I am not sure that German home broadcasts ever got away from the basic conception of the loudspeaker as an amplifier of the political meeting. Throughout the first year of the war its professed highlights were the carefully managed relays of Hitler's or Goebbels' speeches which were invariably held in front of responsive and well-drilled audiences”.<sup>55[94]</sup>

Until the early 1960s the propaganda machinery of the Communist world tried hard to follow the German example: „People were encouraged to listen in groups, in factories and barracks, for the idea of the hearer alone in the privacy of his room and able even to switch off was anathema to this theory.”<sup>56[95]</sup> In the first half of the 1950s in East and Central Europe, governments and local party bosses aimed at preventing private, solitary listening, and organized instead communal, compulsory listening events at work-places, before, after, and even during working hours, in order to prevent even half-overheard critical remarks, to provide opportunities for trained expert agitators to interpret the official voice of the regime. The public loudspeaker was a familiar object in the streets and squares, not only in small villages but even in Budapest.<sup>57[96]</sup>

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<sup>53[92]</sup> Guidance during this period out explicitly that all scripts should be written in the light of RFE's basic policy. Listening audience were reminded that liberation could be achieved only by the operation of the confluence of forces.” Holt. R. T. op. cit. 168. p.

<sup>54[93]</sup> Jamming as an electronic warfare a technique to limit the effectiveness of an opponent's communications and/or detection equipment.

<sup>55[94]</sup> E. H. Gombrich, *Myth and Reality in German War-Time Broadcasts* London, 1970. The Athlone Press, 1970. Quoted by István Rév: op. cit. 12. p.

<sup>56[95]</sup> Ibid. p. 4.

<sup>57[96]</sup> Tibor Valuch: *A Cultural and Social History of Hungary 1948–1990* In: *A Cultural History of Hungary* edited by László Kósa. Corvina-Osiris, Budapest, 2001. p. 264. p.



A few years later, however, Marshall McLuhan in his *Understanding Media* recognized that „Radio affects most people intimately, person-to-person, offering a world of unspoken communication between writer-speaker and the listener...That is the immediate aspect of radio. A private experience.”<sup>58[97]</sup> The voice coming from the air, entering the solitude of the silent room, well before the beginnings of the television programs had peculiar and dangerous effects on the listener: „It is very far from the material world, so one does not apply material standards to it. The eye alone gives a very complete picture of the world, but the ear alone gives an incomplete one. So at first it is a great temptation for the listener to 'supplement' the broadcast from his own imagination, to add what is so obviously lacking in the broadcast”<sup>59[98]</sup> Radio stimulates fantasy; it feeds hope.

To measure the impact of the private experience of listening to international broadcasts, especially before the terminal weakening of the Communist regimes, was the constant preoccupation of politicians, broadcasters and researchers as well. Leo Lwenthal, a former member of the Frankfurt School, Research Director of the Voice of America, first in his talk at the American Association for Public Opinion Research in 1951, then in a paper in the *Public Opinion Quarterly*, reflected on the methodological problems „posed by the vast populations who are politically inaccessible to systematic polling.”<sup>60[99]</sup> To overcome the barrier of the Iron Curtain, analysts, pollsters and researchers had to rely mostly on interviews conducted with recent immigrants, unsuspecting tourists, volunteer helpers, and undercover agents. In order „to obtain accurate information about large populations without systematic use of the populations themselves”<sup>61[100]</sup>, analysts at the Office of International Broadcasting used two methods as compensatory approximations in the absence of more reliable techniques: the so-called „most like” approach, which „consists of using respondents who, while not actually members of the inaccessible group are of all available people 'most like' the subject group [this was the method used in interviewing refugees]...to obtain information about groups behind the Iron Curtain; ...and the 'qualified judge' approach [in the course of which] a person believed to know the group in question is asked to make certain estimates about the inaccessible group”<sup>62[101]</sup>.

Probably the most ambitious use of both the „most like” and the „qualified judge” indirect approaches was the analysis of several hundred interviews conducted in 1951-52 with Polish, Czechoslovak and Hungarian refugees. The unclassified version of the study, written by Siegfried Kracauer, one of the most important twentieth century theorists of visual culture, photography and German cinema, and Paul L Berkman, was then published by the Bureau of Applied Social Research at Columbia University.<sup>63[102]</sup>

Kracauer and Berkman tried to overcome the limitations of the existing literature on „Satellite mentality”, which either reflected on the general situation, the system itself or, based on subjective eye-witness report, with its „foreshortenings, super-impositions and omissions, on life within the system”, leaving the comprehensive characteristics of the system itself out of

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<sup>58[97]</sup> McLuhan, Marshall: *Understanding Media: the Extensions of Man*. London, Sphere Books, 1967. 154. p.

<sup>59[98]</sup> Rudolf Arnheim: *In Praise of Blindness*. Quoted by Thomas Bass, *Balloons and Broadcasts: Infiltrating the Internationalist Barrier Dividing East from West. A Study in Metaphors*. mimeo, 1996. 15-16. pp. Quoted by István Rév: op. cit. 15. p.

<sup>60[99]</sup> Joseph T. Klapper, Leo Lowenthal, *The Contribution of Opinion Research to the Evaluation of Psychological Warfare*. *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 15. No. 4. 657. p.

<sup>61[100]</sup> *Ibid.* p. 659.

<sup>62[101]</sup> *Ibid.* 659-660. pp.

<sup>63[102]</sup> *Satellite Mentality. Political Attitudes and Propaganda, Susceptibilities of Non-Communists in Hungary, Poland, and Czechoslovakia*. F. A. Praeger, New York, 1956. Quoted by István Rév: op. cit. 15. p.

the picture<sup>64[103]</sup>. By focusing on the inconsistencies of the answers, on the slips of the tongue, reading in-between the lines of the interviews, the analysts attempted to outweigh the inherent biases of the interviewees. (In most cases the tourists and especially the recent emigrants – waiting for their residency permits – tried to please the interviewer and said what was – according to their anticipation – supposed to be expected of them. The interviews made with recent migrants reveal, primarily, the notions the East Europeans from behind the Iron Curtain had about the supposed image of Communism in the West. It is also apparent, both from the hundreds of interviews Karacauer and Berkman analyzed and also from the „information items” in the Open Society Archives, originally from the archives of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, the remnants of a collection of thousands of interviews with East Europeans, that the overwhelming majority of the interviewees had been, at least sporadically, listeners of RFE/RL. Their views about the West, their circular presuppositions about the Western image of Communism, - especially in the case of the Soviet migrants - had typically been formed by listening to the programs of the Radios. The Soviet Area Audience and Opinion Research Department of Radio Liberty periodically conducted systematic research on reactions to broadcast. In turn, the programmers at the Radios made use of the interviews when broadcasting anti-Communist propaganda to the East. The stories which were told in reply to the sometimes suggestive questions of the interviewers - who had good reasons to presuppose the anti-Communist learning of the refugees, testified to the effectiveness of self-fulfilling prophecies of Western broadcasts based on the information distilled from the severely biased „information items”.<sup>65[104]</sup>)

Subsequent studies have tried to test and make use of both the „most like” and the „informed judge” approaches, and came to the half-tested conclusion that „it can be assumed with some confidence that the opinions of recent refugees... are not greatly different from the opinions of the home populations if we except from the latter the Communist minority... There is little ground left for doubt that these respondents, even allowing for some bias in their statements, are essentially reliable and valuable indicators of certain areas of opinion of their parent populations”.<sup>66[105]</sup>

The interviews, the opinion- and audience researchers, and analysts focused primarily on the private listener in his (the overwhelming majority of the refugees were young, single males) private - mostly not-owned but subtle, shared, communal - and crowded - home environment, listening secretly, mostly in the evening hours, to the voice of the Free World, be it the Voice of America, the Voice of Free Hungary, the Hungarian broadcast of the Israeli Radio, the Vatican, Monte Carlo, Radio Tirana, or whatever. The researchers concentrated on the solitary listener, who was worried, with very good reason, when the voice from the radio - the only secret connection to the world beyond the Iron Curtain - loudly announced more than once every hour: „This is Radio Free Europe on the 16th, 19th, 25th, 31st, 41st, and 49th short-wave bands”. This was the moment when the listener, in horror, was almost convinced that he had been uncovered: the eavesdropping co-tenant in the shared bathroom of the communal apartment had certainly overheard the call-sign of the enemy radio station from the adjacent room. Judging from the „information items” collection, quite a few interviewees

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<sup>64[103]</sup> Karacauer, Siegfried – Berkman, Paul L.: Satellite mentality; political attitudes and propaganda susceptibilities of non-Communists in Hungary, Poland, and Czechoslovakia. New York, F.A. Praeger, 1956. 76. p.

<sup>65[104]</sup> Siegfried Karacauer, The Challenge of Qualitative Analysis, In: The Public Opinion Quarterly Vol. 16. No. 4, 631-642.pp.. Ibid.

<sup>66[105]</sup> Richard C. Sheldon and John Dutkowski, Are Soviet Satellite Refugee Interviews Projectable? In: The Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. 16. 593-594. pp. Quoted by István Rév: op. cit. 17. p.

complained about indiscreet and loud announcements on the Radios, which were unusually audible despite the constant noise and jamming.<sup>67[106]</sup>

Early communication theory considered noise the antithesis of message; the source of the difference between the transmitted and the received signal. Jacques Attali came up with a different notion: „A network can be destroyed by noises that attack and transform it, if the codes of the place are unable to normalize and repress them. ... Although the new order is not contained in the structure of the old, it is nonetheless not a product of chance. It is created by the substitution of new differences for the old differences. Noise is the source of these mutations to the structuring codes. For despite the death it contains, noise carries order within itself; it carries new information. This may seem strange. But noise does in fact create meaning: first, because the interruption of a message signifies the interdiction of rarity; and second, because the very absence of meaning in pure noise or in the meaningless repetition of a message, by unchanneling auditory sensations, frees the listener's imagination.”<sup>68[107]</sup>

The sound that the East European jammers generated did not simply aim at making the enemy broadcasts inaudible; the noise also established and confirmed the presence of the Communist authorities in the air, and thus in the private sphere of the secret listener. The interviewees do not leave the jamming unmentioned: they return to it, sometimes several times in the course of one single interview, as if they had tried to decipher, retrospectively, the exact meaning of the noise even to themselves. The noise generated by Soviet noise generators did not just overwrite the message coming from the West but constantly reminded the listener of the continuous surveillance, of the fact that he was not alone even behind the closed doors of his apartment. Jamming meant negating the possibility of privacy, and aimed at establishing the appearance of the omnipresence of the Communist authorities: „The absence of meaning is in this case the presence of all meanings...The presence of noise makes sense, makes meaning. It makes possible the creation of a new order on another level of organization or a new code in another network”.<sup>69[108]</sup> Listening to the barely audible broadcast behind the noise, the listeners could see themselves as resistors, who manage to outfox the earsplitting but impotent authority.

When on 24 October, 1956, on the second day of the revolution, Gusztav Gogolyak, head of „Post Office No. 118.”, the covert site of the technical headquarters of the jamming operation in Budapest, ordered the radio technicians all over the country to immediately close down all the facilities, shred the documents, and lock the doors of the jamming stations, surprised listeners were able for the first time to listen to the voice coming from Munich without to the signal of the presence of the Communist authorities.<sup>70[109]</sup> The lack of intentionally generated noise in itself amounted to a clear statement: „we are here, and they have gone”. In this unforeseen moment the (lack of) noise was the immediately decipherable message, as unconditional promise. The disappearance of the noise of jamming was probably one of the most reassuring radio propaganda tools: there was no real need for other promises to convince the inhabitants of the country that help was on the way; the audible voice was already in the living rooms, and through the open windows, in the streets as well. It was difficult to imagine that western soldiers would not soon follow. But they did not.

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<sup>67[106]</sup> „The Iron Courtain stands between RFE and its audience. Therefore, most of the techniques that have been developed to measure the effect of communication can not be used.” Holt. R. T. op. cit. 121. p

<sup>68[107]</sup> Noise: The Political Economy of Music. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1985. 33. p. Quoted by István Rév: op. cit. 19. p.

<sup>69[108]</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70[109]</sup> Author's interview with Gusztav Gogolyak on 26 March, 1996. op. cit.

4. 2. When after the defeat of the 1956 revolution, in the Spring of 1957 the ominous noise reentered the dilapidated apartments, it announced the return, the restoration and consolidation of the post-revolutionary Communist regime. On 1 May 1957, barely six months after the defeat of the revolution, János Kádár waved to the marching two-hundred-thousand-strong crowd from the tribune built on the site of the former Stalin monument<sup>71[110]</sup>. The noise became once more the message: Communism was here to stay, the agreement that had allegedly been made in Yalta, had to be taken deadly seriously. It was sensible to comply.

Jamming continued until 1964, and was briefly resurrected after the invasion of Czechoslovakia on 21 August, 1968. As a result of the success of social conditioning, when jamming was replaced by undirected atmospheric noise after 1972, listeners continued to attribute the poor quality of reception to the deliberate countermeasures of the Communist jammers. It was hard to believe that the authorities were not responsible for all the noise coming from the ionosphere.

The meeting of the (HSWP) Politburo on October 8, 1963 have got a report on the situation concerning the protection of the hungarian language enemy broadcasts,<sup>72[111]</sup> first of all RFE by Ministry of Transportation and Postal Services István Kossa.<sup>73[112]</sup> The Ministry endorses the first variant and proposes that the Politburo should adopt this position. „We do not see any sense in supporting the second variant. Even if the jamming capacity were to be concentrated in certain areas or at certain times, we could only jam fractions of the programs broadcast by Radio Free Europe and Patrol. We need to get the equipment ready, and if the Ministry of the Interior deems it necessary, we can start jamming the station periodically. By the way, even if we jam the station, most of the jamming will be concentrated on the Budapest and Pécs regions. Otherwise, even if jamming were to be maintained, the hostile radio programs could be heard freely almost in the whole of Hungary.”

János Kádár's first sceptical question was that does anybody have any information as to how this thing is handled in our friendly countries? What is the real difference between the first and the second variant from a technical and financial aspect?

István Szurdi stated: some comrades in this office had a chance to monitor for a few days how jamming was done in some friendly countries. The results of monitoring are as follows: the broadcasts of state-owned radio stations are not jammed in the Soviet Union, but the programs of private stations, including Radio Free Europe, are. In Czechoslovakia every Western station is jammed, even hostile programs targeting Poland in cities near the Polish border. Bulgaria also jams every Western station, so does the GDR, though they mostly jam broadcasts from West Berlin. In Poland only certain hostile programs are jammed that are broadcast in the Polish language. No broadcasts are jammed in the People's Republic of Romania.

At the moment I believe the second variant is to be favored – said Gyula Kállai: „As for the arguments that are brought up by the comrades to support the first variant – our system is stable, the political atmosphere is good in the country. I agree, but I think we should not underestimate the effects of these hostile radio programs.” The international political situation is rather unstable, and we need to take into account that they could cause some trouble. The

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<sup>71[110]</sup> See Ripp, Zoltán: The Legitimation of HSWP at the Beginning of the Kádár-era. op. cit.

<sup>72[111]</sup> Of the meeting of the [HSWP] Politburo on October 8, 1963. HNA M-KS-288.f. 5/316.ő.e.

<sup>73[112]</sup> The report October 1, 1963. to the HSWP Politburo on jamming hostile radio stations see Appendix III.

Soviet Union, where the system is more stable politically and the people can resist more firmly than in Hungary, stopped the jamming of state-owned stations only. Whichever variant will be adopted by the Politburo, he propose the following two things to consider before one of the two variants is implemented: 1.) They should consult with our friendly countries on this issue. What they are going to decide on is a very important political issue and it emerges as such in every country, as an extremely important political issue. The consultation he was proposing would be important also from the point of view of following a uniform procedure. 2.) If the jamming of state-owned radio stations is going to be stopped, Hungary should perhaps start negotiations with the BBC and the USA; that is, they should not stop jamming their stations without a „price”. They should tell them that they will stop jamming their stations, and in return they should give up broadcasting hostile programs to Hungary. Kállai though this is a feasible proposition.

István Szirmai proposed that the Politburo should adopt the first variant and make a resolution of it. His arguments supporting this variant were as follows. It has been established that the efficiency of jamming in the periods most frequently listened to by people is 10% even with maximal efforts using all the apparatus at our disposal in our country, including foreign assistance. So anybody who wants to listen to these Western stations can do so even on a small radio. The whole thing has only political significance, and the Politburo should consider whether this political impact is positive or negative. In his view it is negative, so there is no point in jamming with an efficiency of 10% as far as our political power is concerned. The fact that the Soviet Union also jams stations is a different matter, for their efficiency is not 10% but much higher. However sophisticated technology were to be installed in Hungary, they would not be able to jam these station entirely. The territory of Hungary is small; this is why they made an agreement with the Czechs, the Poles and, the Romanians that they would jam the broadcasts from an appropriate distance. In case we decide to adopt the second variant – and here answering comrade Kádár’s question –, it would not involve any budgetary deficit or require special austerity. It would simply mean that the available equipment would be used to jam only certain predetermined broadcasts. 143 wavelengths were used for such broadcasts but the available equipment is capable of jamming only 22. That means they could jam only 22 of the 143 wavelengths. They have eight jamming stations with a 15 kW capacity and one with 100 kW. These were not used to jam broadcasts targeting Hungary but rather Russian language programs targeting the Soviet Union on the basis of mutuality. These stations must be maintained in the future too. However, if possible, it would be a good idea to free this middle wave station and use it for broadcasting their own programs. In this context he would like to call the attention of the Politburo to the fact that – as has been amply demonstrated in the introduction to the report– enormous technical development is taking place in Western countries, while Hungarian radio technology is lagging behind and the capacity of the available radio stations is fully utilized. They have two 100kW broadcasting stations transmitting propaganda programs in 9 languages by the Hungarian Radio. So István Szirmai wanted to urge you to devote more attention to development.

One more thing that he wanted to add: He also believed that if the Politburo, and as a result, the government adopts the first variant, they should call the attention of the editors and the owners of hostile radio stations to this fact. Perhaps they should not enter into negotiations with them, but they should let them know when jamming will be stopped and make it clear to them that in return they expect them to strike a more objective tone in their programs. The Poles were in the same situation, and the broadcasts targeting them are much more objective now. There was another proposal on the table that the jamming apparatus should be transferred to the Ministry of the Interior. Szirmai believed this was not a political issue, and

it should belong to the Ministry of the Interior. It would be important to involve the leaders of the radio and the television in this work.

This proposal was submitted to the Politburo in 1957 – declared by Béla Biszku. The situation was different at that time. Then the apparatus was overseen by the Ministry of the Interior. He suggested that they should conduct consultations before they make a decision. They have to inform the relevant friendly states that such a problem arose in Hungary and that he would like to consult with them on this issue. They should not underestimate this problem even if efficiency is only 10%. Whenever the situation gets more difficult, the enemy broadcasts immediately jump on rumors and it costs more to the country than the HUF 40 million mentioned in the report. He proposed that they should adopt the second variant.

There are at least two reasons why we need to consult with them – stated Miklós Ajtai. On the one hand Hungary should ask them of their opinion about the situation, and on the other they should ask them what to do with the 100kW station if we stop using it for jamming, since it practically works for them at the moment. Another question that they should work out a proposal by the middle of next year to develop the technical background for foreign language programs together with the leaders of the Hungarian Radio and Television and the Ministry of Transportation and Postal Services. He did not think the Politburo should accept this proposal in its present form. The preparation of a complex development plan of the Hungarian Radio and Television is underway which also includes the development of domestic and foreign language programs. This issue should be dealt with in this framework rather than separately. Final decision can only be made when the third five-year plan is approved, for extra investment is not feasible in the remaining two years of the current plan.

Rezső Nyers endorsed the first variant. The adoption of the second variant would entail that the situation would be maintained, and this is inconsistent. At the moment they are capable of jamming the stations in the central areas of Budapest, but even in such areas there are broadcasts that can be easily tuned to and freely listened to by anybody. He agreed with negotiating their plan with the socialist countries, though they have not conducted any such negotiations before. The Soviet Union did not discuss the issue with them either when it decided to partially stop jamming. The way the second variant is described is rather inaccurate, for the efficiency of jamming can not be enhanced without investment. The adoption of the second variant only makes sense if they make a decision on some investment. If they fail to do so, they can still say that any capacity that can be freed should be used to strengthen the existing capacity, but that will not make jamming any more efficient.

„All the time I was thinking how ignorant the Politburo is of some very important issues” – pondered János Kádár. The things contained in the report are an integral part of their propaganda campaign. When he read the report he was amazed to see what is going on in this respect. And he was sorry to have to say this – to comrade Szurdi – but instead of tapping phone lines for getting the required information negotiations should have been conducted with the friendly countries. He cannot comment on this issue because the actual situation is very different from what they all believed to be the case. This issue was raised first in 1957, and then they were told that they should jam these stations. They voted for it because that was proposed to them, though it cost a lot of money. Now it turns out that practically they are not jamming their stations. The present situation is – and this is the political significance of this issue – that listening to foreign radio stations is not forbidden by law in Hungary. However, the common view is that these broadcasts should better be listened to in secret. What they need to decide on was whether they are going to maintain the current situation or not. The

comrades are telling them that it essentially involves only Budapest and Pécs; that is, they can only jam the stations in these regions. Making jamming more effective in the Budapest region would really be a substantial development, for it is a long-lasting lesson from the past that if they can have a hold over Budapest, they can control the whole country. „Budapest is the center, and everything starts from here.” There is another thing that he do not understood. He wonder why the results of surveying the efficiency of jamming show that the least effective period is from 3 PM to midnight, right when the most people listen to these programs.

István Szirmai answered, that is because external assistance is stopped during this period, for they are all engaged in doing their own jamming. János Kádár replied, Szirmai mentioned how intensive a development was carried out in the West. This should caution them, for if it is worth for them spending so much on it, it would also be worth for them being able to jam their broadcasts. So the issue is that either they jam the stations, and allocate the required money to it, or they do not continue with jamming. Common sense tells him they should not.

But there was another issue concerning Hungarian radio programs targeting foreign countries. These programs should be improved and developed, it is a good thing. But it is a totally different issue. In principle they should endorse the expansions of these broadcasts, for their sister parties also say that they are useful for them. However, they cannot make a decision on this issue now. Consultation should be given priority in the resolutions. The Poles stopped jamming at the end of 1957 but they asked Hungary to continue jamming. They should consult with every country with which Hungary collaborate: the Soviet Union, the Poles, the Czechs and the Romanians. They have to tell them honestly: the Politburo discussed a report on jamming and concluded that hostile stations could only be jammed – even with external assistance – with an efficiency of 10% in the most frequented periods. It incurs enormous costs and it seems that there is no point in continuing with the jamming. Therefore, as of January 1, 1964 jamming will be terminated and Hungary will no longer need the assistance that they provided for us. At the same time they are ready to provide assistance for them in the same framework in the future too. The issue of political supervision has also been raised. If the resolution of the Politburo holds the above, then it is only of secondary importance. The apparatus, the technical equipment should stay where it was at that time, and political supervision should be provided by the press subdivision of the party center. Hungary should talk with England and the USA, or rather they should send them a statement in which they say they have decided to terminate jamming temporarily, and if they are willing to broadcast programs with at least some sings of objectivity, Hungary will not resume it either. The consultations should be conducted within six weeks and the results should be brought to the Politburo for further discussion. “The Politburo should then confirm its position and the statement should follow! – closed the issue István Szirmai.

5. The western analysts were primarily interested in the effect of the broadcast on the target audience, narrowly defined as the groups of listeners and their relatives, friends, colleagues, and close acquaintances, who might be indirectly influenced through communication with the listeners. Besides these groups there was another, numerically modest, but politically very important, cluster of people, who were not able to ignore the impact of the enemy broadcasts. The public opinion experts rarely ventured to investigate these individuals, despite the fact that they were regularly exposed to the programs of Radio Free Europe.<sup>74[113]</sup>

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<sup>74[113]</sup> The first measure the effectiveness of RFE and of audience response to RFE see Dessewffy, Gyula: *The Voice of Free Hungary. (A Szabad Magyarorszag Hangja) Látóhatár*, München, 1953. 2.

MTI, The Hungarian News Agency, was already making use of the information acquired from foreign radio programs during World War II. The News Agency monitored the Hungarian, and even the Rumanian language broadcasts of the BBC (which started immediately after the beginning of the war, in the fall of 1939) and the programs of Radio Moscow. After the war the monitoring activities were extended to the Voice of America, Deutsche Welle, Radio Ankara, Vatican Radio, the English language broadcasts of the BBC, on so on. After 1953 monitoring took place in the building of the new headquarters of the News Agency, but in 1959 the monitoring department moved to Gödöllő, just outside Budapest. Here reception was ten times better than in the center of the city, where besides constant jamming, the equipment used at the Photo Agency of MTI also contributed to interference. The secret monitoring service, which reported to a special department of the News Agency under the control of the Ministry of Interior, transcribed the recorded programs and between 1951-1989 produced summary transcripts of the RFE Hungarian language broadcasts for the so called „daily confidential information bulletin”, distributed among the select members of the highest leadership of the party. Between 1981 and 1991, besides the programs of RFE, the daily confidential bulletin included selected material from the programs of Voice of America, the BBC, Deutschlandfunk, Deutsche Welle, Radio Beijing, Radio Vatican and Israeli Radio.<sup>15</sup> Each issue contains about 30-40 mimeographed pages, half of which are usually verbatim transcripts of RFE programs.

According to the directives, the technical personnel working at the monitoring station had to transcribe the recorded program word by word, without corrections, without adding or deleting anything from the recorded text. Until the beginning of the 1980s the transcripts were not edited; the Foreign Policy Desk, which was nominally in charge of publishing the daily bulletin, hired an editor to take charge of the transcripts only at the beginning of the decade. The transcripts show the signs of difficulties of comprehension, the distorting effects of jamming and atmospheric noise, and the spelling problems of the transcribers. Even obvious misunderstandings and misspellings had to be kept in the final text; sometimes only a (sic!) mark referred to an obvious distortion in the edited bulletin, unaccompanied by remarks, commentaries, or interpretations. The monitoring apparatus was instructed to transmit the verbatim text of the daily broadcasts directly to the political leadership.

The technical staff was directed to pay special attention to the following programs<sup>75[114]</sup>:

1. Hungarian domestic issues and their foreign reception;
2. The activities of the opposition and the churches;
3. Interviews with and statements by the representatives of Hungarian emigration;
4. The life of the Hungarian minority in the neighboring countries;
5. International news and commentaries relating to Hungary (in the spheres of the economy, social policy, international statistics),
6. Reflexions on the publications of the Hungarian press (domestic issues, the economy, the activities of the government and the parliament, statements by Hungarian political leaders);
7. Opinion of foreign experts about the most important issues of Hungarian political and economic life;
8. The role of Hungarian-born businessmen;
9. Comparative international information programs, talkshows;
10. Presentation of Hungarian firms, companies, and economic actors.

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<sup>75[114]</sup> IM International Dept. 41-Sz-1017/1976. HASSS 1-11-12. NKO 48/1/1997.



The list was extensive and covered wide areas of contemporary political, social and economic life. Until the early 1980s the transcribers were instructed not to include texts about the private or even the public life of either Hungarian or other Communist leaders. It was explicitly forbidden to include texts, - even in the strictly confidential internal bulletins – which dealt with the problems of succession in Communist countries. According to the internal instructions, certain types of text had to be transcribed in full. These included manifestos and open letters by opposition groups, migrants and civil organizations, sent to RFE or to the BBC.

It is definitely not an overstatement to say that the Communist party leadership was far better informed about the programs of RFE than the most devoted subversive, anti-Communist private listener. His difficult situation can be seen in the resolution of the Politburo of HSWP on the experience of the fight against imperialist propaganda and its intensification in May 22, 1973.<sup>76[115]</sup>

I. 1. The regular monitoring and evaluation of hostile propaganda targeting our country has been conducted by the Central Committee since the third quarter of 1969 on the basis of the resolution of the Politburo<sup>77[116]</sup>. Since that time 15 quarterly reports and 5 thematic evaluations have been prepared. The materials are prepared by the so-called Evaluation Committee that works as a body coordinated to the Department of Propaganda of the Central Committee. The Evaluation Committee is made up of members representing the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Department of Public Administration, the Department of Science, Culture and Public Education of the Central Committee and also includes representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of the Interior, the Hungarian Press Agency, the Institute of Foreign Affairs and the Hungarian Radio. The six state bodies mentioned above analyze hostile propaganda along their own line and provide their own reports, which then make up the final report. This final report is sent to the members of the Politburo and the Secretariat, the heads of departments of the Central Committee and the leaders of the affected state organs.

This work has become an integral part of the political activities of the above-mentioned bodies, constituting an established system today. It is especially the reports prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Hungarian Press Agency, the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of the Interior that show clear signs of regular data collection and deep analysis. The Hungarian Radio and the Institute of Foreign Affairs have been able to find the most suitable method only recently.

The evaluation in these reports is aimed at pointing out the main tendencies and changes. Therefore they can provide the political leadership with useful quarterly summaries concerning hostile propaganda and at the same time call the attention to possible tactical changes, based on the comparison of data in recent and earlier reports. The reports also provide good grounds for drawing the necessary conclusions.

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<sup>76[115]</sup> HNA M-KS-288 f. 5/611 ö. E. Printed copy. The resolution adopted on May 22, 1973 – as can be seen at the top of the first page – was declared invalid ten years later by a resolution made on October 11, 1983

<sup>77[116]</sup> The resolution that set up the Department of Propaganda of the Central Committee and defined its organization, tasks and working methods was adopted by the Politburo on March 10, 1969 (HNA M-KS-288. f. 7/323 ö. e.). The evaluation Committee was set up later. The first report of the Evaluation Committee was discussed by the Politburo as part of the Miscellaneous item on the agenda on December 16, 1969 (see HNA M-KS-288 f. 5/507 ö. e.)

However, one shortcoming of these reports is that the collection of data is not comprehensive enough (it does not even utilize fully the technical capacity of the monitoring station installed in Gödöllő) and the analyses are not deep enough. They often fail to amply show how the division of labor is managed by the various outlets of hostile propaganda, they do not call attention to the characteristic features of bourgeois propaganda that impact the various classes and layers of the society – especially the youth – and they do not investigate thoroughly as to how the policy of disintegration conveyed by this propaganda becomes manifest in the area of tourism. The level of synthesizing work is not satisfactory. Several of the bodies concerned are still trying to find the most suitable methods to participate in the analysis of hostile propaganda and they replace their representatives engaged in such work all too often. Most of the real work is done at the end of quarters, it is not operative enough and there are very few evaluations prepared in between the quarterly reports.

2. The main goal of the analysis of hostile propaganda has so far been to provide information for the leaders of the party and the state. As a result, information flow was directed upwards and we failed to devote ample attention to two important tasks: providing information for the lower party organizations, which should be somewhat different from the reports sent to the highest leadership, and to the utilization of our experience gained through our fight against hostile propaganda in our political work, especially in our own propaganda activities.

3. Our sister parties show a genuine interest in learning more about our experience in the evaluation of hostile propaganda. For instance, the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party has ordered the counselor of embassy of the Soviet embassy in Budapest to gather information at the Central Committee about our quarterly evaluation reports. Similar regular information is provided for the German Socialist Unity Party, and the Polish and Bulgarian diplomats are given occasional information. It would be practical, however, to send our sister parties a biannual report and request a similar evaluation from them.

II. 1. The main methodological and substantive experience gained through nearly four years of evaluation work shows that the hostile propaganda targeting our country intends to achieve the same goals by means of changing methods and tools with a view to the conditions of peaceful coexistence and the ongoing ideological fight. This propaganda is less sharp in its tone today but much more extensive in its scope.

Some of the methodological and substantive changes can be demonstrated by the following:

– It was a striking feature of the period in question that in general the hostile propaganda was not trying to incite the people directly to overthrow the system instantly. It took great pains to be viewed as an opposition rather than an outsider or an „enemy”, which criticized the system from the „inside”, so its tone pretended to be more „loyal.” It intended to relate very closely to the everyday problems of our public life, to exaggerate our troubles and to support their messages by referring to facts and events of our daily life. These endeavors are manifest e.g. in their intention to incite dissatisfaction towards the policy of the party, to attack the leading role of the party, to turn the various classes and layers of society against each other, and to extol apolitical technocracy. They also try hard to frustrate our endeavors by trying to push our policy to the right, e.g. urging capitalistic reforms in the economy and liberalizing reforms in extending socialist democracy.

– Open, anti-Communist propaganda is more and more often replaced by campaigns heralding the „improvement” of socialism in which important issues of Marxism are also

discussed, often using Marxist terminology. At the same time it frequently propagates so-called new models of socialism, overemphasizes the importance of the divergent national features of socialist development, incites nationalism and turns the socialist countries against each other. It also maintains – often with an openly anti-Soviet tone – that there exists a so-called Hungarian model.

– The foreign propaganda paints a distorted picture of the domestic situation also by setting domestic and foreign policy sharply against each other. It suggests that Hungary can continue to conduct its liberal, reformist domestic policy at the expense of an „orthodox, Soviet-friendly” foreign policy. It recommends the same to other socialist countries too. In this context its aim was to instigate distrust among our allies, and even the cooked-up potential clash between the „conservatives” and the „reformists” was represented as a „proof of the instability” of the socialist system. It talked about a „Hungarian dilemma”, a „crisis in the leadership”, and when – after the November Central Committee meeting<sup>78[117]</sup> – the desired „disintegration” did not materialize, it started speaking about „a tightening domestic policy”, „shifting the points” and „putting the brakes on reforms.” It sticks to the same attitude even today. At the same time it takes a good stock of the tactical situation, which is illustrated by its reaction to the events of March 15<sup>79[118]</sup> or to those that took place in Balassagyarmat. It is also to be noted that it speaks differently about Hungary to the audience of capitalist countries than to a Hungarian audience.

– Within nationalist incitement the main goal of the propaganda has become to instigate anti-Soviet sentiments and to break away from the Soviet Union. A standard topic of this propaganda is the Soviet pressure on our domestic policy, distrust on the part of Moscow”, the „superpower interests of the Soviet Union” and the „Brezhnev doctrine” as far as foreign affairs are concerned. It urges to challenge this doctrine and sets the Romanian foreign policy as an example. It describes the advantages of a possible „stronger orientation towards the West” and Hungary’s ability to „play the role of a bridge.” The fact that most of the propaganda broadcast to Hungary talks about the internal situation of other socialist countries, especially the Soviet Union, also demonstrates that the main goal is to set us against our allies.

– Imperialist propaganda pays increasingly more lip service to ultra-leftist views. It uses Maoist, Trotskyite new leftist ideas to demonstrate the internal crisis of socialism and speculates on making the most of the conflicts in international labor movement by exaggerating and sharpening them to an extreme degree. It encourages openly or potentially anti-socialist trends, various extremist groups and the pluralism of Marxism<sup>80[119]</sup>.

– Utilizing the potentials of wide-ranging contacts between the East and the West it creates a lot of illusions about the capitalist system and Western lifestyle, and promotes the system of values prevalent in the capitalist world. The changes that have taken place in the policy of some capitalist countries as a result of the changes in the balance of powers are represented as if the nature of capitalist policy itself had changed, thereby giving rise to illusions about certain countries or politicians. This propaganda does everything it can to make the bourgeois mass media more appealing to a growing number of people.

## 2. The reasons for the changes in the content and methodology of hostile propaganda:

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<sup>78[117]</sup> The November meeting of the Central Committee can indeed be regarded as the prelude to counter-reforms. In a wider context it was this development in domestic policy that underlay the procedures against some philosophers and sociologists in 1973.

<sup>79[118]</sup> In 1972 young people started to commemorate the anniversary of March 15. On March 15, 1973 the people commemorating the event clashed with the police. Several people were beaten, detained and dismissed from their job.

<sup>80[119]</sup> The debates over the pluralism of Marxism can be found in earlier documents.

- the achievements of our domestic and foreign policy and the strengthening position of socialism which shattered any hope for a direct overthrow of the socialist system;
- the general crisis of the capitalist world and the decreasing appeal of it as a direct consequence of this crisis;
- accommodation to the tactics of disintegration and selective gap-bridging ;
- social changes in our country and the recognition of developing socialist mentality;
- utilization of the potential of wide-ranging contacts between Hungary and the capitalist world.

3. Among the various tools of imperialist propaganda the mass media continue to try to expand the range of people who tune in on their programs especially by playing the role of acceptable and trustworthy channels of information. Though their messages are essentially the same, there appears to be a certain division of labor among them in that for instance certain things that the radio of Washington is reluctant to say for political reasons are conveyed through the BBC or the Radio of Free Europe.

In addition to the mass media an increasingly important role is played by the propaganda conveyed through cultural relations. The embassies of developed capitalist countries are becoming more and more active, and occasionally we also witness the propaganda activities of the right-wing emigration. The hostile propaganda makes use of the potentials in tourism through the training of western tourists visiting our country as well as by trying to exert an influence on the Hungarian tourists visiting their countries.

The tools used by the imperialist propaganda have undergone intensive modernization. The United States is already planning to introduce the use of satellites to broadcast television programs to socialist countries and the Federal Republic of Germany is going to install new, high-capacity radio stations.

4. The evaluation of hostile propaganda targeting our country is an extremely complex task. Our society is constantly exposed to a wide range of concurrent effects. When weighing the impact of bourgeois propaganda, our essential starting point is that Hungarian public opinion is largely influenced by the achievements of socialist development and the major elements of socialist public thinking. However, we should not ignore – and overestimate or underestimate – some impact of bourgeois propaganda.

Bourgeois propaganda can achieve some results in issues related to some internal tension or problems in the country. For instance they have tried to give rise to some uncertainty and raise some concern over the future of our economic reforms and the correctness of our foreign policy. This propaganda also makes use of the weaknesses of our information policy. For instance, it wasted no time to grasp the opportunity when we were rather silent about the Vienna negotiations for quite a long time.

Its impact can be observed in three areas:

- some unfavorable features of public sentiment and attitude nationalism, cynicism, adoration of the West, disparagement of the achievements of the socialist countries can partly be attributed to the impact of western propaganda;
- hostile influence occasionally manifests itself in providing misleading information for the people;

– imperialist propaganda as a major tool of ideological subversion disseminates bourgeois ideas, conserves and revives bourgeois ideology.

This impact can be explained by the more intensive contacts between the two world systems, the ideological situation in our country, and our objective difficulties and subjective mistakes. The weak points of our work play an important role in its success: the shortcomings of our analyses and the failure to utilize our past experience. For this very reason priority should be given to a more offensive and active fight against hostile propaganda in the proper framework in addition to the currently ongoing evaluative and reporting activities.

### *Resolution*

1. The Politburo accepts the report.<sup>81[120]</sup> It states that the system of analyzing hostile propaganda has been established on the basis of the resolution of the Politburo and fulfills its tasks.

2. It is the achievements of socialist development and the main aspects of socialist public thinking that play the most decisive role in shaping Hungarian public opinion. The fight against hostile propaganda – due to earlier party resolutions – has become more lively, argumentative, polemical and sophisticated. The organs of the mass media have played a key role in this development both at home and abroad. However, due to the change in the balance of powers, the easing of tension and the widening range of contacts between the two world systems we expect that the ideological fight will sharpen, and hostile propaganda and bourgeois ideological subversion will intensify.

3. The fight against bourgeois propaganda is part of our entire political and ideological work. We need to counter the effects of this propaganda by representing and convincingly arguing for our achievements, ideas and values, and by providing creative responses to questions raised in real life. Our work cannot be restricted to merely rejecting bourgeois propaganda, and the fight should be fought from an offensive, positive position rather than from a defensive stand, using every tool that is offered by our domestic policy and by the propaganda campaigns targeting foreign countries.

In addition to the press and the radio we should make a better use of the television as a tool, provide verbal information for members and non-members of the party, and utilize political training and the mass organizations and movements so that our people can be amply protected both ideologically and politically against hostile propaganda.

Investigations should be conducted as to how efficient our political and propaganda work is among the emigrants living in western countries. Efforts should be made to exert an influence on the intelligentsia of capitalist countries (especially in Western Europe) that shape public opinion by means of high-quality publications (newspapers, books, scientific studies, etc.).

4. In regard to the main lines of the offensive of hostile propaganda our political work lays emphasis on the following aspects at this stage:

– The permanent and changing elements of our policy constitute unity; they can not be set into any opposition.

– The socialist nature of our society is getting stronger in every area; the socialist elements of public thinking are constantly increasing.

– The relationship between the party and the people is good and is based on confidence; the domestic political situation is stable.

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<sup>81[120]</sup> The resolution was based on the report prepared by the Department of Propaganda for the Propaganda Committee. The text was hardly changed in the resolution, so its publication is not justified.

– We rely on cooperation and firm unity with the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries based on firm principles so that we can serve our national and international interests and protect our security and sovereignty; the Hungarian-Soviet friendship is unbroken.

– Peaceful coexistence between countries with a different social system means cooperation as well as fighting at the same time. We are ready to act against any shortsighted, sectarian isolation but will never allow to obscure the ideological differences and make any concession to anti-Marxist views.

– We endorse the exchange of cultural values between nations living under different social systems and promote the expansion of tourism and information flow but we reject any endeavors that are based on the principles and practice of the cold war and the false theory of the free flow of information and ideas.

– In regard to the developments in tourism we stress the importance of state discipline, responsibility and the obligations of our citizens, and we will firmly hold our citizens accountable for their behavior both at home and abroad.

5. In order to strengthen our fight against hostile propaganda we intend to accomplish the following:

a) establish a more coordinated and operative system of monitoring and analysis followed by drawing the necessary conclusions. The observations made at different places should all be used for the preparation of coordinated reports that include every possible aspects of monitoring work.

The various departments of the Central Committee that take part in the analysis should summarize their work and ensure that their results are utilized in the reports in a systematic way. In the future the State Office of Church Affairs and the National Information Council should also prepare reports on any hostile propaganda efforts that can be observed in their sphere of activity, and if needed, other state and social bodies and organization should do the same concerning their experience in this respect.

More thematic evaluations should be prepared in relation to certain important events. The bodies concerned should investigate the activities of hostile propaganda targeting the various classes and layers of our society, with special attention to the bourgeois propaganda targeting our young people. The analyses should investigate how the division of labor works between the various outlets of bourgeois propaganda (e.g. radio stations) and what sort of other tools this propaganda intends to utilize in addition to the outlets of mass media: tourism, relations with emigrants, propaganda among the national minorities.

The quarterly reports should be continued, but it is also important to process the incoming reports and any other information on a daily basis. To that end the monitoring of hostile radio broadcasts should also be developed. The personnel problem that hinders the full utilization of the monitoring radio station in Gödöllő should be promptly resolved. The full content of monitoring should be sent to the Hungarian Institute of Foreign Affairs. This institute should be turned into the scientific center of the long-term analysis of hostile propaganda.

The information materials concerning hostile propaganda coming from different sources should be coordinated, such as the press reviews prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the confidential materials of the Hungarian Press Agency and the various reports that process the materials published in the newspapers of the Hungarian emigration.

b) The experience gained from the analyses should be used more effectively in our domestic political work and foreign propaganda. By unveiling the slanders and false statements we should deprive bourgeois propaganda of its credibility. We should do our best to exert an influence on the public opinion of the capitalist countries by presenting our own arguments and facts. In the meantime we should be aware of the danger of letting the enemy

to decide what questions and issues should be raised in our work. We should generally refrain from direct disputes and engage in arguments only if it is justified by our political interests.

Taking into consideration all the experience gained through the analysis of hostile propaganda and building on the quarterly reports made for the leading bodies we should prepare materials which contain data, arguments and facts that can be used to refute any falsification and assist the fight against hostile propaganda and send them to lower-level party organizations through existing information channels.

Regular recommendations should be made as to what sort of tasks should be performed in our political work in order to counter the effects of hostile propaganda effectively. We should specify concrete tasks in this respect for the mass media organizations working at home and addressing a foreign audience.

The special tasks of each relevant area (such as tourism, political work concerning the emigrants, the national minorities, etc.) should be regularly analyzed in the fight against hostile propaganda.

The Institute of Social Studies should take an active part in the analysis of hostile propaganda and point out the relationship between the bourgeois ideological subversion and this propaganda in its research studies and reports.

c) We should expand our cooperation with our sister parties. This should be achieved gradually, in a sensitive manner, through bilateral negotiations with each party. We should offer the option to the parties of all the European socialist countries (except for Albania) that in addition to the use of our existing channels for the exchange of information verbally we are ready to send them a written biannual report on our experience with hostile propaganda. We should also urge similar cooperation with those of our western sister parties in whose countries this hostile propaganda against our country is very sharp (Italian Communist Party, French Communist Party, German Communist Party, the Communist Party of the US, Austrian Communist Party).

6. The Politburo proposes that the Propaganda Committee should review the system and methods of the press-administration involved in countering the effects of hostile propaganda and take a position on its modernization.

7. The Politburo deems it necessary to establish a new political post at the Department of Propaganda of the Central Committee with the function to implement the provisions of the resolution and coordinate the analysis of hostile propaganda.

6. A *new report* of Central Committee Department of Propaganda was discussed by the Secretariat of Hungarian Socialist Worker's Party at its meeting on December 4, 1978. on the execution of the resolution of the Politburo made on May 22, 1973 concerning the strengthening of the fight against imperialist propaganda; proposal for future tasks.<sup>82[121]</sup>

I. The imperialist propaganda targeting our country – during the five years since the Politburo made a resolution on strengthening the fight against imperialist propaganda at its May 22, 1973 meeting – has not changed substantially in its basic goals and main line. Most of its efforts are still focused on attacking the socialist system from the outside while trying to disintegrate it internally. At the same time it incites anti-Soviet sentiment, tries to turn the people against the other socialist countries and our sister parties and gives rise to illusions about capitalism. The hostile propaganda that intends to exert an influence on Hungarian

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<sup>82[121]</sup> HNA M-KS-288.f. 7/566. ö.e.

public opinion is no different in a strategic sense from the imperialist propaganda that targets the other socialist countries.

However, the propaganda campaign of imperialism has found itself under new circumstances, both due to our internal development and as a result of geopolitical changes in world politics. International ideological fighting has received priority and become more complex. The imperialist power centers have decided to intensify their anti-socialist propaganda and the ideological tension between the two world systems. In certain issues – such as issues of human rights and democracy – they have even managed to take the initiative temporarily. The propaganda offensive that has emerged recently can not be traced back to the endeavors of some capitalist circles only, or to the transitional functioning of a particular government. What we should expect is that the offensive behavior of the imperialist propaganda centers will remain a lasting component of the struggle between the two world systems.

II. There have been significant tactical changes in the imperialist propaganda targeting our country – while the strategic goals are still maintained – as a result of the concurrent impact of changing internal and external conditions of the ideological fight. The essence of these changes can be summarized as follows: the propaganda campaign has become more complex in its content, more extensive, versatile in its methods and more focused in using various tools. It paints a very distinct picture of Hungary, giving a semblance of a country which ‘maintains a system that is more acceptable than that of the other socialist countries, distancing herself from the Soviet model.’

The hostile propaganda campaign attacking Hungary relies heavily on the everyday problems of the people, practically ‘building on’ the practice of developing socialism and its existing conflicts. The propaganda campaign that was initiated in relation to the so-called new Hungarian model in our economic management system has gradually been extended to all aspects of domestic policy, using it as a tool to set our country against the rest of the socialist countries. The bourgeois propaganda centers take great pains to make it appear as if they were true representatives of the interests of our people.

These endeavors manifest themselves mostly in the campaign concerning human rights and national minority issues. Our country is not the main target of the campaign that was launched on the pretext of safeguarding human rights, but recently it has become more intense even in relation to Hungary. Nationalist incitement has intensified in the ethnic minority issue, because this is area is regarded by the imperialist propaganda as the most suitable to turn part of the people against the policy of the party and incite conflicts among the socialist countries. These hostile propaganda centers are also busy working on establishing ‘an opposition’ in Hungary. They want to argue that the ‘Hungarian opposition’ is also part of the ‘Central European opposition movement’. As a result of the stable internal situation and the political decisions made in concrete cases this imperialist propaganda could not fulfill its expectations. It is quite likely though that it will try to make the most of our economic problems in widening the scope of those who could act as ‘the opposition’ to our socialist system.

The imperialist propaganda organizations have undergone several structural changes in the past few years. In order to enhance their efficiency they want to use all their tools directed towards this aim on the one hand, and they intend to introduce new methods on the other.

As a new feature, the hostile radio stations broadcasting in Hungarian do their best to get official recognition in Hungary. Radio Free Europe announced that it would be willing to air critical opinions of their own programs.

There is a new development in the area of radio propaganda. The Radio of Beijing has started a Hungarian language program speaking sharply against the Soviet Union and détente,



though poor technical conditions make the reception of its broadcasts difficult for the time being.

As far as propaganda through the television is concerned, the United States is currently broadcasting experimental programs through satellites. This means that within a few years Western television programs will probably be received easily in the socialist countries, including our country too.

III. The hostile propaganda, which mainly targets the intelligentsia, young people, the lower middle-class and those with a petty bourgeoisie mentality, can not influence public opinion, political thinking and the frame of mind of the people in the country in any significant way. Hungarian public opinion is largely shaped by the results of socialist development, the policy of our party and the constantly strengthening elements of socialist public thinking.

The decrease in the listening rate of the programs of Radio Free Europe, and in general, Western radio broadcasts, is due – in addition to the stable political situation in Hungary – to the fact that the work of the mass media in the country is much more efficient and up-to-date, and the level of providing information for the people has improved significantly. However, the viewing and listening rate of hostile radio stations and television programs that can be received easily in the western and southern parts of the country may temporarily increase in relation to some domestic or international events that are ignored by the national mass media for some reason, or their reaction is somewhat subdued and late.

Wrinkles in socialist awareness, a still existing instinctive sentiment, remnants of bourgeoisie views and habits and their reproduction, occasional instances of intensifying individualism and acts and behaviors that violate the norms of socialist morals all create potentially favorable conditions for the imperialist propaganda campaigns. To some extent these factors, coupled with insufficient political-ideological vigilance and lack of effective propaganda, help maintain non-socialist view in public thinking, prejudices and a moral standing inherited from societies of the past, and manifestations of anti-social behavior. However, it should be admitted that sometimes real mistakes and shortcomings are criticized, which are then attributed by many exclusively to the results of hostile propaganda.

Closely related to bourgeois propaganda is the intensification of nationalism, a still strong anti-Soviet sentiment, the occasional desparagement of the achievements of socialism, the entertainment of illusions about the capitalist system, the dissemination of false information and the overstatement of our internal and external problems. The hostile propaganda is especially efficient in making use of the shortcomings of our information system in relation to issues concerning the situation in each socialist country, to the position of the sister parties and the way in which relations among the socialist countries and the sister parties are viewed.

From time to time we give a head start to the bourgeois propaganda campaigns by failing to recognize the imperialist endeavors in time, due to subjective and objective reasons, by wasting time in drawing the necessary conclusions or by not making use of the right conclusions in our national and international propaganda. In certain cases there are international obligations that restrict our ability to provide the necessary information.

IV. On the basis of the resolution of the Politburo dated May 22, 1973 the fight against bourgeois propaganda has become an organic part of political and ideological work. The need for this fight has been confirmed by the 11<sup>th</sup> Congress of the party and by several resolutions of the Politburo and other party organs on information and emigration policy. As a result of the resolution of the Central Committee dated October 26, 1976 – specifying the current tasks and the further development of party propaganda – more emphasis has been given to a more

effective ideological training of activists at local party organizations, which is a prerequisite for acting against the hostile views propagated by bourgeois propaganda.

Our national and international propaganda and information policy takes up the fight against hostile propaganda and ideology by representing our general policy in a more convincing fashion, by painting a more appealing picture of existing socialism, and by unveiling the true nature of imperialist policy and the reality of capitalism. We respond to western campaigns launched against us and the entire socialist community in specific issues in a very cool and principled manner by providing positive arguments. With certain exceptions we refrain from entering into direct disputes with outlets of bourgeois media.

In the past five years a harmonized and operative system of observing, analyzing and evaluating hostile propaganda has been established. The state organs responsible for monitoring foreign propaganda provide regular and scheduled reports. The Central Committee of KISZ (Communist Youth Organization) has recently started the regular monitoring and evaluation of bourgeois propaganda targeting the youth of our country.

The four departments of the Central Committee of HSWP involved in this work – the Departments of Propaganda, Public Administration, Foreign Affairs and Science, Culture and Public Education – and six other state bodies – the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Defense, the Institute of Cultural Relations, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Hungarian Radio, the Hungarian Press Agency – set up an evaluation team which fulfills its tasks well. The team constantly monitors hostile propaganda materials and broadcasts, and prepares a comprehensive evaluation report in every quarter.

Based on this well-established system the Department of Propaganda of the party conducts an up-to-date monitoring and evaluation of the hostile propaganda targeting our country. The data are utilized in the following five ways: quarterly summaries are prepared on the main tendencies; thematic summaries are prepared on the bourgeois reception of our political measures and statements; weekly reports are made on the hostile evaluation of events that influence public opinion in the country; occasional information on certain specific bourgeois propaganda campaigns; the various departments of the Central Committee are continuously informed of the bourgeois commentaries that are relevant to their work. As a result, the level of providing information for the leaders has improved significantly. However, the utilization of the conclusions that can be drawn from these analyses for our domestic and foreign propaganda work is still not sufficient.

In the past few years the members of our party have become more prepared and trained for the fight against hostile propaganda. The most important element of this increased competence is that they show ideological and political unity, they are well trained and informed about the propaganda targeting our country, and they are provided with information materials that contain some good argumentation. However, the members of the party, especially the activists working at the local organizations call for a more prompt response to the rumors of hostile propaganda at every level of the hierarchy of the party and require that they should be provided with ample information materials on a regular basis by the competent party committees and that the necessary information should be made available verbally to all the members of the party.

The work of the radio tapping station that monitors most of the propaganda against our country does not meet the increased requirements, mainly due to technical problems, the lack of political selection and personnel problems. The information about hostile propaganda is still not comprehensive enough, e.g. information concerning the experience that could be gained in areas like the churches, tourism and social organizations is still lacking. Furthermore, there is no evaluation or analysis that could predict the possible future tendencies of imperialist propaganda.

As a result of the work conducted in the scientific institutes of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Institute of Foreign Affairs there has been some progress recently in the scientific analysis of the propagandistic machinations of bourgeois ideology. The institutes mentioned above have established extensive relations with similar institutes of our friendly countries. However, the coordination of their work at home is still not ensured, and there is no rational division of labor among them. Although it has prepared very valuable materials concerning certain important issues, the Institute of Foreign Affairs has not yet become a scientific center that can provide long-term analyses of hostile propaganda. Another unresolved issue is the investigation of the impact of hostile propaganda.

The system of press-administration that is used to protect our country from hostile propaganda works quite efficiently. Its tasks have multiplied by now, so the staff in this area is working under a lot of pressure. The technical and personnel background supporting their versatile work in organizing and selecting information requires considerable development.

The work concerning the protection of our country from hostile radio broadcasts should be revised. As a result of the resolution of the Politburo dated October 8, 1963 the jamming of the programs of western radio station in the Hungarian language was terminated as of January 1, 1964. However, the resolution also stipulated that the technical system used for jamming should be maintained and re-installed, if necessary, within 48 hours. The transmitters, antennas and accessories that were installed 26 years ago are by now totally out-of-date, and for technical reasons some of them had to be eliminated. Under such circumstances, the system is only partly capable of fulfilling its task, if the need should arise for it. Without overall reconstruction and the replacement of missing devices, within a few years the whole system will become unable to meet any of the requirements set forth by the resolution of the Politburo. Full reconstruction and replacement would require significant financial resources.

Since 1968 our jamming stations – upon a Soviet request – jam western programs broadcast in the Czech and Slovakian languages. We have no information at all as to how efficient the jamming of these stations is, or whether jamming is still needed.

The exchange of views concerning hostile propaganda has become part of the ideological cooperation among the sister parties of the socialist countries. The party delegations visiting our country and the Budapest embassies of our friendly states regularly request and are provided with information about our experience gained in dealing with imperialist propaganda. We also receive such information from some of our sister parties through their embassies. We have also exchanged ideas on this issue with several western sister parties, such as the Italian Communist Party, the French Communist Party, the Austrian Communist Party and the German Communist Party. The relevant state bodies of socialist countries have also established a similarly comprehensive framework of cooperation. However, international experience is not utilized efficiently in our everyday work.”

The Secretariat accepted the report. It establishes that as a result of the execution of the resolution made by the Politburo at its meeting on October 8, 1963 the fight against imperialist propaganda, as an organic part of ideological and political work, has become more oriented towards its main goal and more argumentative and organized in its character.

The impact of propaganda targeting our country should continue to be countered – on the basis of the resolution of the Politburo – by firmly representing our policy, by presenting an authentic picture of our problems and accomplishments and by taking the initiative and the offensive in issues that demonstrate the advantages of a socialist system. The preparedness, discipline and alertness of party members, the provision of ample information within the party and the development of verbal propaganda are all of primary importance. To achieve this

goal, regular information materials and recommendations should be worked out on the basis of the monitoring of hostile propaganda so that the activists of the party, the state and social organizations that are involved in propaganda work targeting the masses could argue more convincingly for our interests, position and policy and respond to hostile views more instantaneously. It is especially important to provide a better training for those who are involved in giving information to foreigners who visit our country, especially for tourist guides. The recommendations prepared quarterly or in relation to certain important events, which are meant to assist political work, should become an integral part of analyzing and evaluating hostile propaganda. When analyzing the attitude of the people on a regular basis the party organizations in Budapest and the counties should pay special attention to the views that reflect the actual presence and impact of foreign propaganda. On this basis they should draw the necessary conclusions for their own propaganda work.

The scientific basis for the long-term analysis of hostile propaganda should be strengthened considerably. Since the strategy of hostile propaganda is unlikely to change and its tactics can be monitored by systematic methods, there is no need to set up a new and big staff for the long-term analysis of this propaganda. Instead most of the attention should be focused on a better utilization of the existing bodies and institutions and on establishing more effective cooperation among them. To this end, the Institute of Social Studies of the Central Committee should continue to investigate the trends of bourgeois ideology, while the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Central Committee and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should ensure that the Hungarian Institute of Foreign Affairs continues to analyze the strategy and tactics of imperialist propaganda as part of its research activities. Building on the work of these two basic institutions our work should be concentrated on the systematic analysis of the relations between bourgeois ideology and propaganda, making use of information and experience that we gain through our party and state relations.

The Mass Media Research Center of the Hungarian Radio and Television should be provided with all the conditions that are necessary to conduct research into the effects of hostile propaganda by using tools of opinion surveys on a regular basis and with due care.

There is no need to further enhance the range of bodies and institutions that are involved in the analysis of imperialist propaganda campaigns. The main task is that the bodies and institutions of the party, the state and various social organizations involved in monitoring hostile propaganda should cooperate in their activities much more efficiently in the future. To this end the State Office for Church Affairs, the People's Patriotic Front, the National Council of Trade Unions, the Communist Youth Organization and the bodies supervising tourism should, in every quarter, make available all the information that they have to the team that is engaged in evaluating hostile propaganda.

In addition to periodical reports, special reports should also be prepared which investigate how a significant event related to Hungary has been received by hostile propaganda. In the future evaluation work should also be extended to the Chinese propaganda that targets our country. It should be ensured that the information on hostile propaganda campaigns provided for the highest party and state leadership is more to the point and coordinated. Monitoring work and evaluation should be followed by processing relevant information and experience and by drawing the necessary conclusions.

The network of jamming and monitoring hostile radio broadcasts targeting Hungary should be brought up to a level that can meet the new requirements today. The reception center of the

Hungarian Press Agency stationed outside Budapest should gradually be developed into a high-capacity radio-monitoring center by installing modern devices in accordance with our available financial resources. In this way a new service should be set up that can meet the special demands of all the state organizations involved in monitoring hostile propaganda at a high political and technological level. In addition to monitoring hostile broadcasts, this center should also be responsible for recording the broadcasts of press agencies transmitted through radio waves and, very soon, through satellites as well as the Hungarian language programs broadcast by neighboring socialist countries. The Department of Propaganda, the Department of Public Administration and the Department of Foreign Affairs should consult with the affected bodies (National Defense Committee, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Information Office, Hungarian Press Agency) and based on these negotiations a development plan which takes into consideration the realities of our economic possibilities should be made to set up a modern radio center – in several phases, if necessary – that can be used in several ways. The development plan should be submitted to the Secretariat by the Department of Propaganda in the second half of 1979.

The broadcasts of the Austrian Television that can be received in a significant part of the country and those of other western television stations received through Austria should be put on the list of programs to be monitored regularly, and the leadership should be informed of any aspects of these broadcasts that may involve Hungary. The Secretariat commissions the president of the Hungarian Television to work out the necessary system of monitoring in cooperation with the state bodies concerned. The party committees of the counties by the Austrian border should provide regular information on how these programs affect the people in their county.

Investigations should be conducted to assess the possible impact of broadcasting television programs directly through satellites, and the political and technical tasks in regard to this new development should be specified without delay.

The working conditions of the system of press-administration that is involved in protecting our country from hostile propaganda should be improved considerably. A short-term and a long-term plan of what measures should be taken to achieve this goal in accordance with our current financial possibilities should be submitted to the competent state bodies by the president of the Information Office, after consulting with the leaders of the Hungarian Post.

The Secretariat deems it justified that relevant sections of the resolution made by the Politburo on the protection of our country from hostile radio propaganda on October 8, 1963 be revised. To prepare for the necessary decisions, the Secretariat commissions the Department of Propaganda, the Department of Public Administration and the Department of Industry, Agriculture and Transportation of the Central Committee to make a report for the Politburo on this issue. Together with the Department of Industry, Agriculture and Transportation of the Central Committee the Department of Foreign Affairs should discuss the efficiency of and the need for jamming western radio programs broadcast in the Czech and Slovakian language.

Besides the „strictly confidential” mimeographed daily news-bulletin, the special section of the Hungarian News Agency internally published other regular, confidential information-bulletins about the programs of the foreign radio stations: „Appendix to the daily news-bulletin”, „RFE-Western radio stations weekly-bulletin”, „Weekly bulletin about the Hungarian language programs of the Western radio stations”, „Addendum to the Weekly

bulletin about the Hungarian language programs of the Western radio stations”, Military bulletin - Hungarian language programs of Western radio stations”, „Special editions”, and „Expert editions”.

Departments of the Central Committee, ministries and the Information Office of the Council of Ministers had the right to order special monitoring services. The Information Office regularly ordered transcripts of Hungarian news-survey programs of the Western radios, while the Ministry of the Interior acquired the full text of all programs which were based on the letters or messages sent by Hungarian listeners. (In this way the Ministry tried to follow the changes of the mood of the population as they were represented in correspondence with the western stations, in order to complement the heavily biased internal population attitude polls and the reports of party functionaries and professional and so-called „informal” secret agents.) The Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Defense Committee of the Council of Ministers, were all entitled to give special assignments to the monitoring section and to order specialized thematic bulletins.<sup>83[122]</sup>

The list of those members of the nomenclature who were to receive the confidential bulletins was kept in a safe in the headquarters of the MTI. After the political transition the list was allegedly lost, but according to former employees of the News Agency, while at the beginning only a few dozen functionaries were on the list, later on the mimeographed daily news-bulletin was internally published in between 150 and 300 copies, while the weekly editions reached a much wider audience.<sup>84[123]</sup> These are not insignificant numbers: it is safe to state that the wider leadership of the Hungarian party received regular, almost objective information about all the politically significant programs of RFE; the information was not intentionally distorted, was not commented upon, and the most important issues were covered extensively, with full-text versions of the transcripts.

7. On 24 March, 1969 the Politburo of the Hungarian party decided to set up a „Foreign Propaganda Sub-Department” inside the Agitation and Propaganda Department of the Central Committee.<sup>85[124]</sup> The Sub-Department was instructed to monitor and regularly evaluate the „enemy propaganda directed against our People's Democracy” and to set up an „evaluating committee” with representatives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Defense and the Interior, as well as delegates from the Institute of Cultural Relations (an important intelligence cover organization), the Hungarian News Agency and the Hungarian Radio. The committee had to prepare quarterly reports about the recent tendencies of „enemy propaganda”. The first report covered the third quarter of 1969. The reports were sent to the members of the Politburo, the Secretariat, to the Department Heads of the Central Committee and to a few other high-ranking officials, whose work was specifically related to either international or domestic propaganda. and counter-propaganda. According to a memorandum sent by the then head of the Agitation and Propaganda Department to János Kádár, First Secretary of the party, the work of the evaluation committee was not exceptional in the socialist countries, and the party

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<sup>83[122]</sup> Márta Szomor: Radio monitoring and its publications at the MTI (Rádiófigyelés Kiadványai az MTI-ben). Budapest, mimeo. July, 2004. 5-6. p.

<sup>84[123]</sup> The members of the nomenclature were the so-called *cadres*. This military term is usually applied in communist parlance to young workers or peasants brought to work outside their trade in the communist-party bureaucracy or state apparatus, and therefore strongly dependent on the party for their livelihood. This made cadres averse to reforms and strongly supportive of the existing party leadership. For the party, cadres became all-purpose officials ready to accept any post to which they were assigned. They would often serve successively in the state apparatus, in production and in the party apparatus. They provided one of the broadest and most important bases for the communist party.

<sup>85[124]</sup> See HNA M-KS-288. f. 5/486. ő. e.

leaderships of the GDR, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and the Soviet Union had suggested to the Hungarian Central Committee that they share experiences and exchange the evaluation reports. (In the spirit of mutual distrust, the Secretariat decided in the end to share the information only with the specialized agencies of the Soviet Union.)<sup>86[125]</sup>

Following the decision of the Politburo, from the third quarter of 1969 onwards, the evaluation committee started producing and distributing its reports, thus supplementing the copious information already available about enemy radio programs. The evaluation reports quote extensively from the publications of the western press, from the programs of the „enemy radio stations”, referring verbatim to the propaganda materials of western organizations. They employ only the minimal necessary markers to distance the stand of the evaluators from the views of the western media: they use quotation marks when referring to the „evaluation” and the „analysis” of the western „experts” and „specialists”; when quoting from the western media, the evaluators preface quotations with expressions such as: „falsifying the actual situation, western analysts state...”, or „misinterpreting recent developments, they claim...”, or „allegedly focusing on...”, or „creating the illusion...”. The Communist counter-propagandists refer to „the center of imperialist propaganda machinery”, to „those who are interested in the loosening of control over the society”; to those, who use „objectivity” (in between quotation marks), who are careful to convey the „appearance of objectivity”, who talk or write „objectively”.

Still, compared to the transcripts of the programs, there were very important differences. The transcripts were verbatim full texts of broadcasts; the technical personnel had nothing to do with the content, they did not become involved in any possible way. The evaluation reports, however, were no longer impersonal: the members of the committee were known; the head or the deputy of the Agitation and Propaganda Department signed the report.<sup>87[126]</sup> Judged on the basis of both the style and even the content of the reports, these texts were more personal than the program transcripts. The tone of the reports was not very far from the voice of an attentive, cautious, somewhat uneasy observer. It is not an unfounded claim that, in a certain way, the evaluators, and to a certain extent even the readers of the reports, interiorized, in somewhat perverted way, the perspective and the actual content of the narrative.

The evaluators no longer claimed that the other side aimed at overthrowing the Communist regime; they usually used the expression „their aim was to loosen up the control of the regime over society”. Reading the report it is obvious that by the end of the 1960s the Communist experts had become convinced that the Western propagandists were not in the business of inciting a rebellion. On the contrary, those were the times of uncomfortable, involuntary - if not peaceful, at least inevitable - coexistence between the two sides of the Cold War.

The end of the 1960s significantly differed from the previous decade, especially from the voice of pre-1956 times, when the most popular RFE program was the so-called „Black Book”, which exposed and named especially cruel Communist functionaries and petty officials at specific institutions, factories, firms and localities, thus creating the impression that the Radios were actually there, in the vicinity, inside the workplace, ready to uncover

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<sup>86[125]</sup> Memo to Comrade János Kádár from Sándor Jakab, head of the Agitation and Propaganda Department for the meeting of the Politburo of the HSWP. 16 December, 1969. See HNA M-KS-288. f. 5/508. ó. e.

<sup>87[126]</sup> After 1973 the hard-liner Károly Grósz, Deputy Head of the Department, later on the last Secretary General of the Hungarian Party, put his signature on the submitted documents. (The „hard-liners” in the HSWP leadership showed no inclination to make political changes or concessions.)

those who were responsible for the daily suffering of the local community.<sup>88[127]</sup> The „Black Book” program was based on the supposed quick collapse of the regime, after which those who had been named and singled out as responsible for the cruel repression would be dully punished. Before 1956 the time horizon was limited: the period was still considered to be transitory. Former aristocrats turned cab drivers were still addressed by the concierge of the nationalized apartment building as if they had managed to keep their former title and social status.<sup>89[128]</sup>

The 1956 revolution, or its defeat - when the discrepancy between the „liberation theory” or the liberation rhetoric of the American administration and cruel reality became evident - in a strange and paradoxical way contributed to the world-wide stability of the divided world. The launch of the Sputnik signaled the end of the period of transition and the arrival of involuntary *de tente*. Both sides gave up their hopes of imminent victory, and tried to readjust to hopeless long-term coexistence.<sup>90[129]</sup>

The reports of the evaluation committee are characteristic traces of this period. It would be highly instructive to conduct a serious, laborious philological analysis and compare the language, the vocabulary, and the career of certain formulae in the course of the East-West dialogue on the air. Communism or its representation was a joint construct: the result of a not-so-obvious but permanent dialogue between the strategists on the two sides. RFE monitored, recorded, and transcribed the broadcasts of the official East and Central European radio stations. The summary transcripts<sup>91[130]</sup> with short English summaries, together with so called „situation reports” and background papers were sent as telegrams to Washington, where in the morning when the officials arrived at their offices in the State Department and in other specialized agencies, they found the daily transcripts on their desks. Responses were sent to the Political Analyst Department and to the programs of the Radios with instructions about how to respond to the Communist propaganda.<sup>92[131]</sup> And as we already know, in Budapest and in Gödöllő, in all the East European capitals, monitors and technical staff were busy listening, jamming, recording and transcribing verbatim the enemy radio broadcasts and sending daily bulletins to the select group of addressees at the Agitation and Propaganda Department of the Central Committee, at the Ministry of the Interior and at other covert or even not-so-covert agencies, which had to right to instruct the national radios about how to counter the „enemy propaganda”. The evaluation team regularly analyzed the tone and content of the RFE programs and submitted suggestions to the Secretariat and the Politburo, about how to instruct the media, especially the national radio service in the foreseeable future. What the unsuspecting listener heard in the solitude of his room, while listening either to the national radio or secretly to the RFE programs was just one single voice, one side of this ongoing dialogue above his head between the programmers, the political strategists, the public opinion experts on the two sides.

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<sup>88[127]</sup> Besides the „Black Book”, according to the interviews, the other highly popular program was the regular broadcast of gypsy music - unauthentic, urbanized fake folk music - the favorite of the dclass middle class. See: A re-examination of the program-reference of Hungarian listeners of Radio Free Europe. Audience Reserach, RFE, July 1959.

<sup>89[128]</sup> Urban, George R. (1921-): Radio Free Europe and the pursuit of democracy: my war within the Cold War. New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1997. *passim*.

<sup>90[129]</sup> Michie, Allan A.: Voices through the Iron Curtain: the Radio Free Europe story. Dodd, Mead & Co., New York, 1963. *passim*.

<sup>91[130]</sup> Which are strikingly similar to the Hungarian mimeographed daily news-bulletins, and which are stored – as mentioned above – in the OSA in Budapest.

<sup>92[131]</sup> Hart, Henry O.: Emergent collective opinion and upheaval in East Europe and the role of radio communication: a further extension of basic models. *Speech Communication*, March 1980.



The possibility of perpetual alterations encouraged the perpetual hope of change. Even after the reforms had run aground - in the first half of 1968, immediately after the introduction of the first reform measures - it was still possible to keep hoping that alterations would - one fine day - mean change. The alterations institutionalized ambiguity, uncertainty, and the institutionalized impossibility of foreknowledge. Nothing was what it purported to be, everything had become a sign of something else from which quite different conclusions could be easily drawn. The initiated claimed to discern battles between modernizers and conservatives, independents and adherents of the Soviet neo-Stalinists, between the forces of good and evil, progressives and regressives, whatever these categorized might have meant.

In the meantime reform had become completely disembodied; its condition reduced to a ghostly state in which its own anti-thesis had become an element of its existence. The leadership was in need of support from the West, the help coming from (interpreters and evaluators of) the Western propaganda. They needed to show themselves up as martyrs of progression, who try the impossible in the face of the constant pressure coming from the inflexible East. They pretended that without the limits set by Moscow, Hungary, and socialism would move quicker and further in the direction of the envisioned end of history. By making good use of the consciously misperceived Western reactions they not only presented themselves as martyrs of the (whichever) faith, but started to see themselves in this light, under this new description as well.<sup>93[132]</sup>

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At the beginning of the changes in 1988, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev ended jamming, allowing Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty signals to reach a broader audience and allowing RFE/RL services to enter into a closer relationship with the people and journalists to whom they were broadcasting. RFE/RL's contribution to the end of communism in this region was acknowledged by virtually everyone<sup>94[133]</sup>. Polish leader Lech Walesa said its role was comparable to the one the sun plays to the earth. Former Estonian President Lennart Meri nominated Radio Free Europe for the Nobel Peace Prize and then-Russian President Boris Yeltsin personally intervened to help create an RFE bureau in Moscow after the failed August 1991 coup. Former Czech President Vaclav Havel spoke for many when he said that „we need your professionalism and your ability to see events from a broad perspective”.

Because of Radio Free Europe's role in fighting communism, many thought that the radios had fulfilled their mission and could be disbanded. But officials across the region stressed the continuing need for precisely the kind of broadcasts RFE has brought to this region. Radio Free Europe did cut back in some areas even as it expanded in others. It closed its Hungarian service in 1993, and the Polish Service in 1997, while its Czech Service was substantially reduced and joined with Czech Public Radio to establish a new public affairs radio program.

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<sup>93[132]</sup> The sources which published the documents of the political transition are also significant for their examination of the international background of the Hungarian transition. See: The 1989 Minutes of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party (A Magyar Szocialista Munkáspárt Központi Bizottságának 1989. évi jegyzőkönyvei.) Vols. 1-2., Anna Kosztricz, János Lakos, Karola Vágyi Némethné, László Soós, György T. Varga, (eds.) HNA, Budapest, 1993.

<sup>94[133]</sup> Brzezinski, Zbigniew: The Grand Failure: The Birth and Decay of Communism in the Twentieth Century. Charles Schribner's Sons New York. 1989.

The Broadcasting Board of Governors in Washington ended funding for broadcasting to the Czech Republic September 30, 2002.<sup>95[134]</sup>

In January 1994, RFE/RL began broadcasts to the countries of the former Yugoslavia. In October 1998, the Persian Language (Farsi) Service began broadcasting to Iran, and Radio Free Iraq began broadcasting in Arabic to Iraq. In March 1999, RFE/RL started broadcasting to Kosovo in Albanian and in 2001 the Latvian service launched a special bridge-building program in Russian for the Russian minority in Latvia. In September 2001, RFE/RL started broadcasting to Macedonia in both Macedonian and Albanian languages. Broadcasting in Dari and Pashto to Afghanistan began January 30, 2002. RFE/RL's newest language service, the North Caucasus, began broadcasting in Avar, Chechen, and Circassian on April 3, 2002. Currently (in 2005), RFE/RL's 20 services broadcast programs in the following 28 languages: Albanian, Arabic, Armenian, Avar, Azerbaijani, Bashkir, Belarusian, Bosnian, Chechen, Circassian, Crimean Tatar, Dari, Georgian, Kazakh, Kurdish, Kyrgyz, Macedonian, Moldovan, Pashto, Persian, Russian, Serbian, Tajik, Tatar, Turkmen, Ukrainian, and Uzbek. With all these changes, the future of RFE/RL seems assured. Its services will continue to bring news and information to people who need them in the 21st century.

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty has the same five goals, constantly. First, to provide objective news, analysis, and discussion of domestic and regional issues crucial to successful democratic and free-market transformations. Second, to help to strengthen civil societies by projecting democratic values. Third, to strive to combat ethnic and religious intolerance by promoting mutual understanding among all groups. Fourth, to establish a model for local media, assist in training to enhance media professionalism and independence and, when possible, develops partnerships with local media outlets. Fifth, to seek to foster closer ties between the countries of this region and the world's established democracies.<sup>96[135]</sup>

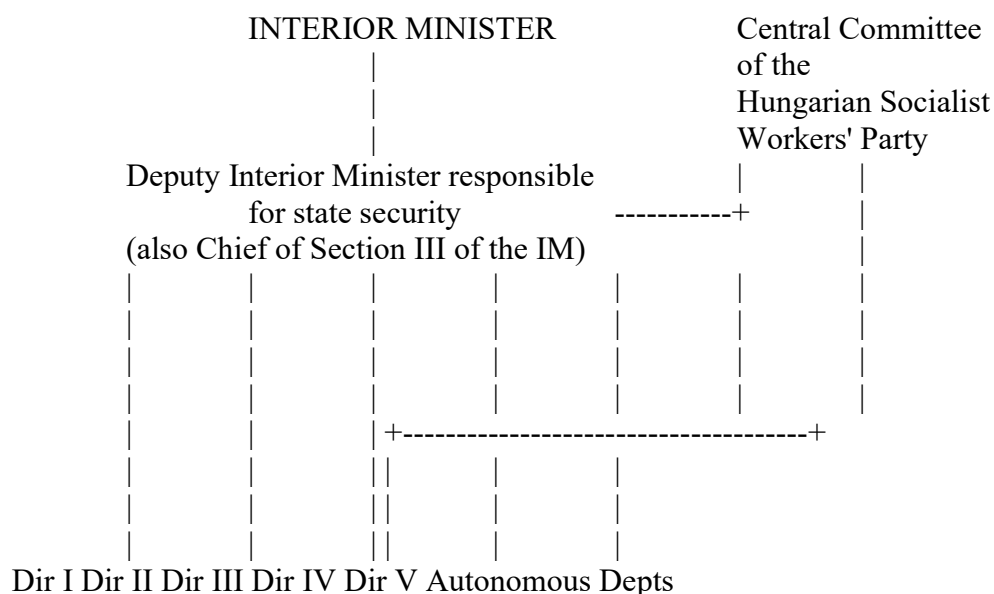
Western broadcasts had a remarkable impact in the USSR and Eastern Europe in the circumstances of the Cold War. They reached mass audiences, as documented by traveler surveys at the time and confirmed now by evidence from the formerly closed Communist archives. They reached key elites, both within the Communist regimes and among regime opponents. The keys to the mass and elite audiences were the credibility and relevance of the broadcasts. Government mechanisms were geared to providing public funding and oversight while ensuring management autonomy and journalistic independence.

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<sup>95[134]</sup> See Removing of RFE. RFE/RL Review, Week of June 12-18, 2003. New address: Vinohradska 1, 110 00 Prague 1. Czech Republic. Tel.: 011.420.2.2112.1111, Fax 011.420.2.2112.3002.

<sup>96[135]</sup> A. Ross Johnson – R. Eugene Parta: Cold War International Broadcasting: Lessons Learned. Presentation to a seminar on Communicating with the Islamic World Annenberg Foundation Trust, Rancho Mirage, California, February 5, 2005. mimeo. 6. p.

**The Organization Chart of the Former State Security Service  
(Ministry of the Interior Section III)**



**Directorate I**  
(Intelligence)

- Dept. 1: political and economic intelligence; USA
- Dept. 2: other foreign affairs
- Dept 3: West German affairs
- Dept. 4: Israel, the Vatican, Church émigré affairs
- Dept. 5: technical and scientific affairs
- Dept. 6: information and valuating
- Dept. 7: other Hungarian émigré groups
- Depts. 8: illegal intelligence
- Depts. 9: operations
- Depts. 10: personal, methodology
- Depts. 11: third countries
- Depts. 12: legal intelligence
- Depts. 13: secret codes
- I-X. Autonomous Department: operative connections
- I-Y. Autonomous Department: security of embassies

**Directorate II**

(Counterintelligence – Depts. 1-5: offensive work, 6-10: general defensive and investigative-screening work)

- Dept. 1: countering the intelligence activities of the USA
- Dept. 2.: West Germany

Dept. 3.: NATO  
Dept. 4.: others  
Dept. 5.: operative measures abroad  
Dept. 6.: defence industry, telecommunications, traffic  
Dept. 7.: international co-operation, secrets of state  
Dept. 8.: investigation of hostile intelligence agents  
Depts. 9.: information and valuating  
Depts. 10.: countering third countries  
Depts. 11.: secretariat

**Directorate III**  
(Internal Protection)

Dept. 1: countering Church reactionaries  
Dept. 2: youth protection  
    Sub-dept. A: universities, institutions of higher education  
    Sub-dept. B: youth clubs, events  
Dept. 3: countering „hostile elements” (e.g. convicted political offenders)  
Dept. 4: countering of hostile cultural activities  
A. Autonomous Sub-dept.: Protection of political leaders  
B. Autonomous Sub-dept.: information and valuating  
Secretariat

**Directorate IV**  
(Military Counterintelligence)

**Directorate V**  
(Operative techniques)

**Autonomous Departments**

Dept. 1.: state security investigation (sub. depts: counterespionage, countering of internal reaction, military counterintelligence – including prison intelligence)  
Dept. 2: undercover surveillance and environment investigation, operative observers  
Dept. 3: secret checking of the mail ( K -checking Dept.)  
Dept. 4: tapping of telephones, operative-technical wire-tapping („X”-checking Dept.)  
Dept. 5: radio countermeasures and investigation (foreign broadcasts)  
Dept. 6: Personnel  
Secretariat

Source: IM CA 10-530/1972.

**PEOPLE'S OPPOSITION  
DECLARES  
THE HARVEST OF  
NATIONAL SELF-DEFENCE**

**WHO DOES THE HARVEST BELONG TO?**

The harvesting has started. Farmers are reaping the fruits of their year's labour. At this time, we must all ask ourselves a question: „On whose table will our grain end up?“ Will it be the children who will eat pastry baked from the wheat you cultivated, will it be your wife who will slice bread baked from the rye which you sowed, will it be your relatives and friends who will receive a share from your crops? Or will it be the insatiable throat of the Soviet Union and the short-weighing state trade who swallow up the labour of your caloused hands?

**WE WILL NOT PAY FOR THE REGIME'S MISTAKES!**

Today you will decide what it will be like in winter. Remember that the recent Party Congress confirmed beyond any doubt that the regime's agricultural policy ends up in a total breakdown. Siroky had to concede that the U.A.C.'s struggle for bare existence, yields per hectare do not measure up to pre-war standards, cultivated area decreased by half-a-million hectares, milk production is dropping, there is a shortage of meat, young cattle die in droves. What does it mean? It means that the looting of the countryside by obligatory deliveries will be worse this year than ever. The regime will try to steal from our mouths what it has wasted in its irresponsible economy.

It is up to us to upset the Government's plans for blackmail. Let us state: The harvest belongs to who has cultivated it. It does not belong to the blackmailing state apparatus which has led our agriculture into bankruptcy by nonsensical interventions. The People's Opposition must step in, it cannot wait for crumbs from the nobleman's table of the regime.

Last year, in June, the people proved that the power of a totalitarian state has its limits and that the regime must take public opinion into account. It forced upon the regime lower delivery duties, higher purchasing prices and cheaper credit. Encouraged by these results, the people's opposition will realize further demands.

**THE PEOPLE IS NOT POWERLESS!**

Is it possible to fight the regime successfully in our field and meadows? True, an individual is helpless against tommy guns. But it is not necessary to run great risks. As you have, millions of harvesting farmers are finding this message, and millions of farmers are listening to the Radio Free Europe. Everybody knows that this is the HARVEST OF NATIONAL SELF-DEFENCE. The silent unity of our people is in action. What you will do, millions of farmers will do, and there is nothing the regime could undertake against such unity of the People's Opposition.

**WHAT CAN BE DONE AND WHERE?**

Every village dweller and everyone who has to do something with the harvest constitutes a link of the People's Opposition. You yourself know best what possibilities are open to you in your surroundings. Use every chance you have in your position.

#### Independent Farmers

The Sixth Demand of the People's Opposition says: „If the prescribed delivery target is not fulfilled, it means that the state misjudged the harvest.” Satisfy the needs of your family first. If this means that you cannot fulfill the delivery, it is the duty of the National Committee to revise it downwards. Nobody, too, has the right to force you to harvest together with a U.A.C.

#### U.A.C. Members

Distribute your wages in kind right at the thrashing machine! Bitter experience have taught you already that the regime will never give you your due unless you make sure to get it. Your families come first, the purchasing apparatus afterwards.

Source: Holt, Robert, T.: The Origins of Radio Free Europe. In: Holt, Robert, T.: Radio Free Europe. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1958. Appendix.

## Report to the [HSWP]Politburo on jamming hostile radio stations

Budapest, October 1, 1963.

### I.

1./ The governments of capitalist countries have been developing their radio propaganda that target other, especially socialist countries, to a significant degree. Year after year they invest huge amounts in installing new broadcasting stations and in improving the reception of their programs.

In 1959 the government of the United States used 85 stations with a total capacity of 2,000 kW to broadcast the programs of „The Voice of America”. By 1962 this capacity increased to 99 stations and 9,000 kW. Recently a new broadcasting station was opened with six 300 kW transmitters each. The construction of another six 250 kW and six 500 kW transmitters and 93 modern antennas is also underway.

According to the Information Agency of the government of the United States the Congress has again approved of significant amounts to invest in the technical development of „The Voice of America.” As part of this project the broadcasting stations in Western Europe will be modernized and expanded, including the broadcasting capacity of „Radio Free Europe.” A new radio station is being built on the island of Rodos in Greece on which the government has already spent USD 40 million. In addition, the US government has made an effort – with success – to lease the free broadcasting capacity of other countries.

Though smaller in scope and size, the investment and development efforts of England, Western Germany and other capitalist countries with the same goal should not be underestimated either. For instance, the English government has allocated GBP 4.5 million to improve the reception of the foreign language programs of the „BBC.”

2./ At present there are 11 capitalist countries broadcasting programs to Hungary on 143 wavelengths altogether 51 hours per day. Radio Free Europe broadcasts propaganda programs in Hungarian on 40 wavelengths.

The largest number of wavelengths and the longest program times are used by the Voice of America and London. Radio Free Europe broadcasts programs in Hungarian on several wavelengths concurrently from early morning till midnight.

3./ The foreign language programs of the People’s Republic of Hungary have not been improved since 1950 – due to the lack of new stations. The Hungarian Radio and Television currently broadcasts programs in 9 foreign languages<sup>97[136]</sup> through two 100 kW and one 135 kW medium wave stations.

### II.

1./ The jamming of propaganda programs targeting our country from capitalist countries was organized by the Minister of Postal Services in 1952. At the same time a radio-

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<sup>97[136]</sup> (handwritten footnote) app. 22 hours per day

protection agreement was made between the Hungarian, the Soviet and the Romanian posts. (Today Romania is no longer part of this cooperation.)

The tasks related to the protection of Hungary from foreign radio programs is performed by the Central Telecommunications Office, while the stations are developed, run and maintained by the Technical Department of the Hungarian Radio and Television. Both organizations are supervised by the Ministry of Transportation and Postal Services.

The Central Telecommunications Office carries out its function to protect the country from hostile foreign radio programs through running so-called local jamming centers and through assistance from our friendly countries. Thus it performs a dual tasks:

a./ It oversees the work of the local jamming centers. These stations are installed in Budapest and Pécs. There are 22 stations at its disposal now, most of which have a capacity of 1 kW or smaller. Only one of them has a capacity of 15 kW, and the total capacity is 35 kW. The average monthly running time is 3,000 program hours.

b./ It organizes and coordinates protection work with our friendly countries. In this framework we receive assistance from the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia amounting to 4,050 and 480 transmission hours respectively. On our part we transmit 4,330 hours to the Soviet Union and 714 hours to Czechoslovakia.

There are eight 15 kW stations and part of the capacity of one 100 kW station at our disposal to provide assistance to our friendly countries. These stations are installed in Székesfehérvár, Diósd and Szolnok.

Except for the 100 kW station these transmitters are not capable of broadcasting radio programs and are thus used exclusively for jamming.

The technical condition of these stations, due to their strain and overuse, is not satisfactory, and some of them do not even meet essential safety requirements.

Protection is funded by the central budget, which costs HUF 40 million per year.

As part of the cooperation with our friendly countries the costs of transmitting are mutually invoiced by Hungary and the Soviet Union on the basis of an accepted tariff. There is no significant difference between the number of transmission hours broadcast by each party. Still, there is a difference in the settlement of the accounts to the benefit of the Soviet Union that amounts to HUF 20 million per year<sup>98[137]</sup> because the Soviets use stations with a bigger transmission capacity. At the moment our cooperation with Czechoslovakia does not include financial settlement of accounts.

2./ The efficiency of jamming in the whole country is as follows: 30% between 5 – 9 in the morning, 80% between 9 AM – 3 PM, and 10% from 3 PM to 1 AM. (Handwritten insertion) The efficiency of jamming changes from region to region. It is the most efficient in Budapest and Pécs. It is quite efficient in the center of Budapest, but much less so in the outer districts. (End of handwritten insertion) The above percentage figures show that our protection work is not satisfactory at the moment. The foreign propaganda programs can be

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<sup>98[137]</sup> (handwritten footnote) included in the above mentioned HUF 40 million.



received in the whole country in the early morning and in the evening, when most people are at home, and even during the day people can easily find a wavelength that is not jammed. So listeners who know the program times and the wavelengths of these broadcasts can find a wavelength they can tune on practically any time during the day.

Reasons for unsatisfactory performance:

Unlike in our friendly countries, we have not developed our local jamming stations to the required extent. The existing transmitting stations are out-of-date and lack the required capacity. The antennas are also rather outdated.

The assistance received from our friendly states is restricted to certain periods of the day, especially during daytime.

Lack of political direction. The programs are not jammed with a view to their political content. Thus, the programs of Radio Free Europe are jammed the least.

As a result of significant investment and development the propaganda programs of capitalist countries are broadcast by increasingly more powerful stations concurrently on several wavelengths.

### III.

Based on the above assessment of the situation it is now time we revised the current practice of jamming foreign propaganda programs. Revision is justified by the following:

As a result of the right policy the confidence towards the party and the government has grown significantly, and the political atmosphere in the country is positive.

The tone of state-owned capitalist radio programs has changed recently; they are no longer as sharp as they used to be.

To our knowledge the Soviet Union has terminated the jamming of American and English state-owned radio stations.

Due to the way in which radio waves are transmitted on the one hand, and to the significant development of radio stations performed by capitalist countries on the other, one hundred percent jamming is impossible, or it would require investments that far exceed our present capabilities. (Based on the current situation 80% efficiency of jamming in the morning and evening hours would require an investment of HUF 5-600 million.)

In our view the present international and domestic political situation makes it possible to terminate, partially or entirely, the jamming of foreign propaganda programs.

In the case of partial termination the jamming of state-owned stations could be terminated. The existing jamming stations and the assistance received from our friends could then be devoted to a more effective jamming of the programs of „Radio Free Europe” and „Patrol.” (Handwritten insertion) In this way we could enhance the efficiency of jamming but it still would not result in any substantial improvement. (End of handwritten insertion)

Even in the case of full termination of jamming we believe the jamming capacity should be maintained and put on reserve.

Since the Central Telecommunications Office is an administrative and executive body, political control and supervision should be made much more efficient and organized, for the Ministry of Transportation and Postal Services is neither competent nor capable of attending to this task. (Handwritten insertion) Therefore state supervision concerning the jamming of foreign radio stations should be rendered by the Ministry of the Interior. (End of handwritten insertion)

In the interest of popularizing the results of our socialist development and cultural life it seems desirable to develop our foreign language radio programs and install stations with a much larger capacity, in accordance with our financial resources.

#### IV.

##### Draft resolution

##### 1./ Alternative II (proposed by the Administrative Department of the Central committee)

The present international and domestic situation makes it possible to partially terminate the jamming of foreign propaganda radio programs.

Therefore the Politburo orders the Minister of Transportation and Postal Services to terminate the jamming of state-owned stations broadcasting in Hungarian from capitalist countries. At the same time the Politburo orders the minister to see to a more efficient jamming of the propaganda programs of „Radio Free Europe” and „Patrol”. The minister should conduct negotiations with our friendly countries providing assistance in this matter concerning the exact transmission times and wavelengths of the jamming transmissions – as specified in the resolution – and include all the details in an interstate agreement.

##### 2./ Alternative I (proposed by the Department of Industry and the Department of Propaganda of the Central Committee)

The present international and domestic situation makes it possible to fully terminate the jamming of foreign propaganda radio programs.

Therefore the Politburo orders the Minister of Transportation and Postal Services to terminate the jamming of stations broadcasting in Hungarian from capitalist countries. The minister should conduct negotiations with our friendly countries providing assistance in this matter concerning the modification of cooperation in this matter – as specified in the resolution – and include all the details in an interstate agreement.

The Minister of Transportation and Postal Services should ensure that the local jamming centers are put on reserve and maintained properly so that the technical facilities should remain in running condition.

4. The competence to supervise the jamming activities should be transferred to the Ministry of the Interior as of January 1, 1964. The Ministry of the Interior should issue orders

to start jamming certain station, if the need arises, or to terminate jamming, as well as to make a decision as to what programs and at what times should be jammed.

Received by:                      comrade Lajos Fehér  
   comrade János Pap  
   comrade István Kossa  
   comrade László Orbán  
   comrade Sándor Rác  
   comrade István Szurdi

(Unintelligible handwritten insertion) After negotiating with the president of the Hungarian Radio and Television the Minister of Transportation and Postal Services should work out a proposal for the government to improve the technical background of our foreign language radio programs so that the results of our socialist development and cultural life could be popularized more effectively especially in capitalist countries. (Handwritten insertion) The proposal should be submitted to the government by June 30, 1964. (End of handwritten insertion)

(Handwritten insertion) The Minister of Transportation and Postal Services and the Minister of the Interior should be made responsible for the execution of the above resolution. (End of handwritten insertion)

Source: HNA M-KS-288.f. 5/316.ő.e.

## Summary

The immediate roots of the Cold War lay in the intersection between a world rendered prostrate by a devastating global conflict and the conflicting recipes for international order that United States and the Soviet Union sought to impose on that pliable, war-shattered world. Some degree of conflict invariably results whenever a prevailing international order and its accompanying balance of power system are overturned. One would certainly expect no less when the overturning occurs with such shattering suddenness. The tension, suspicion, and rivalry that came to plague US-Soviet relations in the immediate aftermath of war was, in that elemental sense, hardly a surprise. Yet the *degree* and *scope* of the ensuing conflict, and particularly its *duration*, cannot be explained by appeals to structural forces alone. History, after all, offers numerous examples of great powers following the path of compromise and cooperation, opting to act in concert so as to establish a mutually acceptable international order capable of satisfying the most fundamental interests of each. Scholars have employed the term 'great power condominium' to describe such systems. Despite the hopes of some leading officials in both the United States and the Soviet Union, however, that would not be the case this time. The reasons why go to the essence of the question of Cold War origins. In brief, it was the divergent aspirations, needs, histories, governing institutions, and ideologies of the United States and the Soviet Union that turned unavoidable tensions into the epic four-decade confrontation that we call the Cold War.

The partial opening of East-bloc archives has sparked renewed interest in the study of ideological influences in Cold War policy. The fall of communism dramatically affected archival institutions in Eastern Europe. Access improved considerably, and obstacles to publication of the documents found diminished. Other countries also benefitted from the increased openness. Decidedly sensational changes affected the archival institutions of the Communist parties that were suddenly prohibited or forced to adjust. Most of these institutions were appropriated through incorporation into the various national state archival structures to resume operations as regular public archives or archival departments following a brief incubation period.

The era of a spectacular technological breakthrough in mass communications after the Second World War coincided with the period when the demand for Cold War ideologies and the war of doctrines was born. On both sides, direct political expectations were served by the media, voluntarily or otherwise. The opposing ideologies tried to win popular support for the unquestionable superiority of their own system of values both at home and abroad, in the broadest circle and with the greatest possible effectiveness. Throughout the Cold War, the task of winning „hearts and minds” around the world was of great importance to Soviet and American leaders. Both sides fought a cultural Cold War via radio waves, (later) television transmissions, propaganda, and other forms of psychological pressure.

Further research work in the fields of political sciences, media history and sociology is needed to uncover hidden facts and information germane to any studies about the activities and programs of Radio Free Europe and the relevant opinions and attitudes of the audience. Possible sources for such studies would include reports, accounts and interrogation transcripts produced by the Ministry of Interior in the course of investigating people charged with listening to the enemy's propaganda broadcasts and passing on the news. Despite their apparent biases, the documents produced by various top-level party organizations, as well as the regularly compiled reports on public morale for the party leadership, would be of paramount importance.

Any study attempting to clarify the above mentioned problems would initially necessitate research fieldwork of the sources; held in various archives, these sources usually have not yet been researched; also, they are incomplete and only occasionally appear in registries. Through a number of documents selected from the few sources already researched, we wish to illustrate the more important tendencies of this research, indicating that the first steps towards a comprehensive and systematic research have been made.