

RADIO FREE EUROPE

AUDIENCE RESEARCH

HUNGARIAN PRESS AND RADIO RESPONSE
TO WESTERN BROADCASTS

July 1958 to April 1959

July 1959



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1. SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

1. As in the past, Hungarian regime media referred to RFE more frequently than to BBC or VOA. The total number of references to Western broadcasts, however, continued to decrease during the ten-month period under review. In the cases of BBC, VOA, and other Western stations this decrease was sharper than in the case of RFE. Therefore the trend, observable since the revolution, towards more frequent attacks on Western broadcasters other than RFE was slightly reversed.

2. The differing approaches of attack employed against Western broadcasters did not change considerably during the period under review. Nevertheless, there was a shift in emphasis. Attacks against, and polemics with, specified broadcasts continued to increase proportionally as well as absolutely, amounting to 44% of all references made. Regime media are endeavoring to discredit the reliability of Western broadcasts by becoming more concrete in their attacks.

3. Hungarian regime media continued to attack Western broadcasters for trying to incite revolts and for interfering in the internal affairs of sovereign states, especially Hungary. The claim that the revolution of October 1956 had been instigated by Western broadcasters was still in evidence.

4. The Hungarian elections on November 16, 1958 were the subject matter of a large number of references to Western broadcasts. The collectivization campaign was marked by numerous sharp attacks against RFE. Economic matters received increasing attention in the form of references to individual Western broadcasts.

5. Neutral references to Western broadcasters decreased sharply. Only BBC remained a regular news source for the Hungarian radio. Other Western broadcasters were quoted only when they carried an important and exclusive item.



TABLE I

Frequency of Hungarian Media References
to Western Broadcasts

July 1958 - April 1959

	1957 Jan-June	1957 July-Dec	1958 Jan-June	July 1958 - April 1959
Total Units	361	375	231	244
References to				
RFE	239	220	112	171
BBC	50	51	55	44
VOA	46	37	18	22
OSWB	12	52	40	19
UWB	77	75	45	30
Monthly average of references	61	63	38	24



II. REMODELING OF REGIME PROPAGANDA
AND FREQUENCY OF REFERENCES TO WESTERN BROADCASTS

In the period under consideration the monthly average of references to Western broadcasts by Hungarian media decreased by 36% as compared with the first six months of 1958.

Notwithstanding this drop in the number of references to Western broadcasts, this average is still much higher than it ever was before the revolution. Before the revolution of 1956, Hungarian regime media attacked RFE and related operations in exceptional cases only. The attacks were almost exclusively confined to the revelations of a few RFE staff members who had redefected and the leaflet action of FEC. "Counter-propaganda" relied on jamming and on oral propaganda about which we have very scanty information. After the revolution this attitude toward Western broadcasts changed, and the first indication of this new approach was the notable upsurge in the number of references.

The causes of this change may be found first in the fact of the revolution and secondly in the remodeling of the entire regime propaganda program.

To find a scapegoat for the revolution was a political and propagandistic necessity for the "consolidation period" of 1957/1958. To designate Radio Free Europe as a scapegoat was an obvious choice. In the first six months of 1957 about one third of the 361 references dealt directly or indirectly with the revolution. This "unmasking" of the past "counter-revolutionary" activities of RFE and other Western broadcasts had to be supplemented by the "unmasking" of their current operations. This may partly explain the big upsurge of references dealing with subjects other than the revolution. After the completion of the consolidation period with the November 1958 elections, the revolution slowly disappeared from regime propaganda. It is therefore natural that the number of references falling into this contextual category decreased to a considerable extent. It is furthermore probable that a decrease in this field brought about a certain receding tendency to attack Western broadcasts in other related categories as well.

But this is only one side of the coin. The second cause of the original upsurge in the number of references to Western broad-



casts lies in the remodeled approach of regime propaganda. This deserves separate and detailed study. Here we can point only to one of the most important features of this change. While the propaganda approach of pre-revolutionary times was mainly absolute and affirmative, that of the present is relational and argumentative. In the past, aims were extolled to the utmost and contentions were asserted dogmatically, irrespective of the facts and of public opinion. For instance, from 1950 to 1953 it was affirmed as dogma that Hungarian living standards were rising and that the West was on the brink of economic collapse, in spite of the fact that at that time everybody was keenly aware of his own falling living standard and a big section of the population had knowledge of the rapidly rising standards in the West. On the other hand, present regime propaganda draws comparisons with the past and argues with the enemy, i.e. Western broadcasts, the Western press, scare rumors at home, etc. It admits present shortcomings but says that in the past they were worse. It admits, for instance, that there is a greater number of cars in the West but points out "that they were bought on instalment credits which cannot be paid by a large number of buyers; consequently the end result is that not only the car but even the paid up instalments are lost." How far these "arguments" are convincing and logical seems in most cases to be a secondary question. The main point is the argumentative approach. In the framework of the "big debate", Western broadcasts have their place too. Here lies the second cause of the significant upsurge of references to Western broadcasts after the revolution. After the November 1958 elections in Hungary, the "consolidation period", in which the main task was to "fend off enemy influence", was closed and a new period of the "building of Socialism" began with such aims as collectivization of agriculture and the tightening of the plan targets. It is possible that during this new period the discussions with the enemy will recede to a certain extent. It may be that the latest decrease in attacks is already a sign of this tendency.

References to BBC and Other Specific Western Broadcasters decreased in number between July 1958 and April 1959. This was due to a large extent to the gradual discontinuation of one of the sali-



ent features of Radio Kossuth newscasts during 1957 and early 1958: the use of BBC and a number of Continental radio stations as credited news sources.

TABLE II

Single and Multiple References to Western Broadcasts in Hungarian Regime Response

RFE alone	142
RFE with other stations	29
BBC alone	11*
BBC with other stations	17
VOA alone	7
VOA with other stations	15
Other Specified Western broadcasts alone	12*
Other Specified Western broadcasts together	10
Unspecified Western broadcasts alone	21
Unspecified Western broadcasts together	6

The most salient feature of the above table is the predominance of newspaper and radio attacks on RFE, both alone and in conjunction with other Western broadcasts. That RFE is the Western radio station most often attacked is further demonstrated by the fact that in almost every second case in which regime media referred to unspecified broadcasters together, the station named was RFE.

An inspection of references to BBC, VOA and other specified Western broadcasts shows that multiple references outnumbered single references in the case of BBC and VOA, and furthermore that single references to other specific Western broadcasters were absolutely as well as proportionately more numerous than single references to BBC or VOA. The reason for this is that erroneous statements and awkward formulations emanating from one or another small Western radio station (e.g. Paris, Rome, etc.) were pounced upon by Hungarian propaganda for sardonic comment and refutation more often than the "Big Three". (See also section dealing with direct program reactions).

* Neutral references are not included.



III. THE CONTEXT OF REFERENCES TO WESTERN BROADCASTS

TABLE III

	1958 July-Dec	1959 Jan-Apr
Items entirely or primarily devoted to Western broadcasters	29%	25%
Hungarian diplomatic notes, official statements	9%	11%
International affairs	10%	10%
Economics (including agriculture)	9%	16%
The fate of the Hungarian refugees in the West, exiles	9%	7%
The 1956 "counter-revolution"	7%	3%
The 1958 elections	6%	-
Report from the West	3%	10%
Report from within the country	5%	11%
Ideological questions	3%	3%
Neutral references to Western broadcasts as news sources	<u>10%</u>	<u>4%</u>
	100%	100%

Table III presents the context of references to Western broadcasts of the last ten months divided into two periods to show some of the changes in the trends which were observable during this time.

By far the largest contextual category in both periods (roughly one third of the total if neutral references are disregarded) was the one entirely or primarily devoted to counterpropaganda against the influence of Western stations, first and foremost RFE. Such press and radio items ranged from short editorial glosses to full-length articles or talks pegged generally to some topical occurrence or to quotes - and misquotes - from Western broadcasts. Their specific arguments (to be discussed at some length in the next section of this paper) were aimed against Western radio stations on two specific levels: (1) that they were purposefully untrue and inconsistent and (2) that they were part of the "imperialist plot". In both instances the fundamental aim appeared to be the



undermining of the listener's trust in Western communications on the grounds that these were not only "erroneous" but were motivated by an intent to deceive. The latter charge was particularly often directed at RFE.

International affairs, the second largest contextual category, included attacks on Western broadcasts in connection with the Near East and Far East crises and the Berlin question. "Indirect aggression" was one of the leitmotifs of this type of attack. This, coupled with emphasis on the West German location, the U.S. control, and the spying activities of RFE was also the subject of the Hungarian diplomatic notes and official statements during the period under review.

Economic and agricultural articles and radio talks generally insisted that progress had been made, in spite of the "carping enemy voices". It should be noted that economic arguments against the trustworthiness of Western stations were frequent in media items entirely devoted to counterpropaganda. The 9% and 16% respectively comprised articles and radio talks whose primary purpose was to make positive propaganda points rather than to attack Western radio. The rise in the number of attacks in this type of context from 9% to 16% may be indicative of the fact that regime propaganda is increasingly focused on positive aims connected with the building of socialism, i.e. collectivization, higher economic plan targets, etc.

The fate of Hungarians in the West, painted in increasingly dark colors by the regime press and radio, offered an opportunity to contrast the easy life of the "traitors" financed by FEC with the unemployment and misery of their "victims". Almost invariably redefectors from the West blamed their "stupid decision to escape" on RFE and increasingly on other Western broadcasters. Nevertheless, this charge has become less frequent since January.

Articles and radio talks devoted to the 1956 "counter-revolution" were numerous at the beginning of the period under review (following the execution of Imre Nagy and his companions) and in October and November 1958. Since January, however, this subject has been relegated to the background.



Parliamentary elections in November 1958, accompanied by a significant increase in attacks on RFE (see Frequency of References chart, page 2) gave rise to a strident propaganda campaign in favor of the single-party system and the achievements of the Kadar regime.

Passing references to RFE were not infrequent in reports from the countryside, from industrial enterprises, etc. Such references were also made in newspaper articles describing visits in the West or shortcomings of "capitalism" on the basis of concrete examples. Attacks in this context became even more numerous in the second part of the period under review. In both cases the attacks on RFE and other broadcasters were only loosely linked with the substance of the articles.

The main endeavor of the Hungarian CP during the period under review was the consolidation of its ranks preparatory to the intensive collectivization drive and the raising of the plan targets which began toward the turn of the year. This tendency was illustrated by the gradual de-emphasis of ideological debates, as shown also by the low figure for attacks on Western broadcasts in the context of ideological questions.

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IV. REFERENCE THEMES

Table IV presents the distribution of references among the main thematic categories of regime counterpropaganda against Western broadcasters which followed the pattern established in the first half of 1958.

Table IV

	<u>%</u>	<u>Out of which RFE</u>
A. Inciting, spying, disturbing international and domestic peace. "The imperialist plot."		
1. "Indirect aggression"; subversive agency and spy organization; sponsor of emigre organizations; tool of cold war and imperialism"	12	
2. Western broadcasters' role in the revolution	7	
3. Western broadcasters lured Hungarians to flee to the West	6	
4. Inciting against the regime; spreading revisionism and other hostile views.	4	
5. West Germany and Austria	<u>4</u>	
Total	33	79
B. Western broadcasters are lying, slandering, distorting facts, and intentionally misleading Hungarians.		
1. More or less polemical articles and radio talks to fend off Western broadcasters' "lies" and "slanders" dealing with		
a. Elections	4	
b. Economic questions	8	
c. Labor and factory problems	7	
d. Peasant and agricultural problems	8	
e. Youth and intellectuals	3	
f. Various topics on internal and international affairs	<u>9</u>	
Total	39	85
2. Incidental references to Western broadcasters' "lies and slander" in various contexts.	10	50
C. "Ad hominem" attacks on employees of Western broadcasters and members of the Free Europe Committee, including cartoons.	13	92
D. Western broadcasters as news sources. References of neutral character.	<u>5</u> 100%	--



This breakdown gives a clear picture of the three main aims of regime propaganda in connection with Western broadcasts. Firstly it attempts to demonstrate that Western broadcasters interfere in various ways in Hungarian affairs, and thus disturb internal and external peace. Secondly it seeks to prove that Western broadcasters do not tell the truth, that their broadcasts are full of distortions and slanders. Thirdly it endeavors to smear the employees of Western broadcasters.

The type of attack that contains the charge of "interfering", "inciting", etc. is not primarily aimed at destroying the "credibility" of Western broadcasts. A large number of attacks of this kind were incorporated in diplomatic notes; others appeared in articles on international affairs and paved the way for possible later notes or buttressed diplomatic steps already undertaken. Their real purpose is partly diplomatic or belongs to the so-called peace campaign, in which these radio stations appear as an obstacle. Their propaganda implication as regards the Hungarian public lies in the attempt to demonstrate the "nefarious, warmongering intentions" of the broadcasters themselves. These attacks also justify steps undertaken against the radio stations, such as jamming, or against the listeners themselves if they happen to disseminate the contents of broadcasts they hear.

The second type of reference, on the other hand, aims first and foremost at destroying directly the credibility of the contents of the broadcasts.

Regime media employed various methods to achieve this end. "Denigration" ranged from incidental and brief remarks about the "lying", "slandering", "fact-distorting" Western radio stations without further elaboration, and refutations of "false" and "ridiculously silly" reports made by Western stations, to attacks in which the regime clearly aimed at refuting "enemy assertions" with the best available arguments, including facts and figures. The latter type of attacks were nevertheless exceptions.

The main "arguments" of a general nature were character assassination of the author; propagandistic extolling of the "achievements of socialism" and of the Kadar regime; comparisons with the Horthy-ite past and with present conditions in the West; ridiculing



of broadcasts in a sarcastic manner, in which case the "argument" was rather the style than the content; examples of contradictions between the different broadcasters, Western press organs or the broadcasts of the same station at different times. In the latter case the quotations were mainly taken out of their actual context and were "tailored" for the sake of an easier refutation, if not altogether faked.

In general, the tone, method and arguments of the propaganda against Western broadcasts do not differ considerably from propaganda against other targets of the regime such as Western press, Western imperialism, or the other "enemies". Besides having the same argumentation used against them these different targets to a certain extent reciprocally supplement each other. Regime propaganda on the "wrongness of the West" was several times supplemented by attacks on Western broadcasts and, conversely, attacks against Western broadcasts were "documented" by the enumeration of Western shortcomings. The same applies to regime endeavors to prove that Hungarians are now better off than they were under the Horthy era or that the West is fundamentally "imperialistic". In this context it is significant that the "changed tone" of RFE was even used as proof that "the American masters had to acknowledge the establishment of an immutable social and economic order in Hungary". This "interdependence" is apparent also in the variety of themes on which Western broadcasts were attacked and the variety of contexts in which these attacks appeared. A comprehensive analysis of attacks on Western broadcasts would therefore presuppose an analysis of regime propaganda in general.

Thus the potential effectiveness of the regime's counterpropaganda against Western broadcasters is a function of the effectiveness of the regime's overall propaganda.

The argumentation and tone of the individual attacks on Western broadcasters are based on communist terminology and logic which probably appeals only to communists. Nevertheless, the continuous repetitions, the misquotations, the assertions of spying and subversive activities of RFE etc. may have a confusing effect on the listeners. For instance, it may be possible that the stressing by regime



propaganda of RFE's alleged spying and subversive activities contributes to the fact that the uneducated listeners attribute a certain "mystical" power to RFE. On the other hand, it may subconsciously lower the objectivity rating of RFE with the more educated listeners.

In the main reference categories contained in Table IV, the mean ratio for RFE increased in comparison to the previous period. The trend which could be observed since the revolution was therefore reversed. Apart from the non-critical references, the proportion of references to RFE amounted to 78%. Whereas in the first six months of 1957 it was 80%, in the second half of the year it sank to 75%, and in the first half of 1958 it was only 67%. The reversal of this trend is a consequence of the higher drop in references to Western stations other than RFE.

With regard to the different techniques, aims and topics of Hungarian propaganda against Western broadcasts, it should be noted that accusations of "inciting" were included in 33% of all references, or slightly less frequently than in the previous period, when the proportion amounted to 37%.

Polemics increased from 21% to 38%. This is a consequence of the relative as well as absolute increase in direct program reactions which were mostly polemical and dealt only in exceptional cases with "incitement".

The proportion of "incidental asides" on the "lying" and "slandorous" character of Western broadcasts remained unchanged at 10%. At the same time, the percentage of ad hominem attacks rose from 8% to 13%, due partly to the fact that one of the main "arguments" in direct program reactions was the "wicked" character of the author himself.

References to Western broadcasters of a non-critical character, crediting Western stations as reliable news sources, decreased from 23% to 5%.

RFE's mean ratio in the four categories was not identical either. RFE was most often mentioned in connection with ad hominem attacks on Western broadcasters (92%) and least frequently in the incidental references to "lies and slanders" (50%). As an "incitor" RFE scored 79%, and was mentioned in 85% of all polemical references to Western radio stations.



This distribution is roughly the same as it was in the first half of 1958. An explanation of this distribution, particularly as regards the low proportion of incidental references describing RFE as a "liar and slanderer", could be provided by the following facts. Firstly, mainly unspecified Western broadcasts were blamed for lying in general without further substantiation, and secondly, in connection with concrete attacks it was mainly Paris and Rome that were accused of broadcasting false and silly reports, without further argumentation.

It is also interesting to note that attacks dealing with the peasants and with the agricultural problem have since the revolution invariably referred to RFE. This seems to strengthen our former hypothesis that the regime considers RFE to be popular with this segment of the population.

V. ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL ON REFERENCE THEMES

Indirect aggression; subversion; spy organization; tool of cold war and imperialism; emigre politicians.

Hungarian reaction to the charge of "indirect aggression" raised by U.S. officials in connection with the Lebanese-Jordanian crisis was prompt. The charges brought up against the Arab broadcasts of Egypt were immediately reversed against the Western broadcasts.

Magyar Nemzet (August 6) Hétfoi Hírlap (August 11), and Népszabadság (August 26) in articles titled "Indirect Aggression" and dealing with the Near Eastern crisis turned this charge against RFE, VOA, and RIAS.

Later, during the UN session, the Hungarian delegate Endre Sik, quoted by the Hungarian press and radio on September 30, accused "the broadcasts of VOA, BBC, RFE and Free China of indirect aggression...and inciting..."

Radio Kossuth (December 5) quoted the speech of the Hungarian delegate delivered at the third committee meeting of the UN, according to which "all radio stations and other propaganda aimed at interference in the home affairs of another nation should be abolished".



The "spying activities" of RFE were attacked in a press conference by Laszlo Gyaros. The Hungarian press, especially Magyar Nemzet (September 14) stressed "how American agents sent to Hungary are communicating with their superiors...via RFE...and how employees of RFE are also selecting, enlisting and training agents..." Similar charges were voiced in Nepszabadsag (April 19).

Articles such as that of Nepszabadsag (November 13) Vas Népe (November 8) or radio talks such as that of Radio Kossuth (February 11) Radio Homeland (February 2, 14 and 18) describing the dissensions among the emigree politicians - a topic often discussed by Hungarian media - charged that these men were supported by RFE or FEC and that they in turn were giving support to RFE in its inciting activities. The article of Béla Horvath, a former member of the Hungarian desk, published in an emigree paper entitled Latohatar and attacking RFE and American policy, was quoted in full by Radio Homeland (March 13 and April 14) and by Nepszabadsag (March 17).

Radio Homeland (December 19) accused the Free Europe Committee of "financing those who are enthusiastic about the Habsburg restoration".

In the past ten months the "peace campaign" ebbed considerably in Hungary, giving place to others, such as the election, collectivization, etc. Probably this is why charges of "warmongering" and "imperialism" became scarcer than they were in former periods; they mainly supplemented the charges of indirect aggression, spying and inciting.

Nevertheless, from Soviet sources some attacks on the charge of "warmongering" were forthcoming. Nepszabadsag (January 31) published a speech by J. A. Furceva attacking the "organizers of the cold war" for supporting Radio Liberation and RFE. Nepszabadsag (February 3) quoted P. N. Pospelov's attack on VOA. The attack of TASS on RFE in connection with the opening of the Brussels branch office was published by the entire Hungarian press on April 9. The attack stated: "Everybody who supports in any form whatever the criminal activities of RFE is furthering the cold war".

The visit of Mikoyan to the U.S.A. gave occasion to Esti Hir-lap (January 8) to remark: "Naturally, Radio "Free Europe" is quick to greet Meany who does not share the view that in the interest of peace, discussions with the Soviet Union should take place".



Active Role of Western Broadcasters in the Hungarian Revolution

With the passage of time the "counter-revolution" ceased to be the main subject of Hungarian propaganda. Articles dealing with it have become scarcer and since January they have almost disappeared, as have those attacks against Western broadcasters which contended that they, and primarily RFE, played "a major role in triggering the counter-revolution". The accusation itself was also couched in less forceful terms compared to former periods. In the large majority of cases it confined itself to such remarks as "the ill-famed RFE largely contributed to the unleashing of the bloody events" (Radio Kossuth, September 4).

Nevertheless, some events connected with the revolution occasioned longer and more documented attacks on Western broadcasts. Thus the Hungarian note to Yugoslavia broadcast first by Radio Kossuth (July 22) attempted to substantiate the charge that Imre Nagy had been guilty of contacting RFE while enjoying asylum at the Yugoslav Embassy in Budapest. This charge was brought forward in Volume V of the "White Book on the Hungarian Counter-revolution", which was extensively reviewed by Radio Kossuth and Magyar Nemzet (August 12) and Esti Hirlap (August 12) although repeating the old charges.

A new element appeared in the series of articles entitled "The Mask Drops" in Népszabadsag (October 19 and 21), written by the redefector, Miklos Szabo. He "described" the way in which Mr. Griffith, with the help of Messrs. Bede, Borsanyi and Mikes, allegedly doctored the tapes of RFE to erase the proof of the incendiary broadcasts during the revolution.

Western Broadcasts Lured Hungarians Abroad

In the past ten months the regime showed a growing interest in the fate of defectors, partly within the framework of the redefection campaign and partly in the campaign aimed at the denigration of the West. Many of these articles, reports and letters described RFE as the "seducer" who "lured" defectors out of the country "by depicting the West in too favorable colors", "by lying about the Western Eden", and "by extolling the Western living standards". Since January this type of attack against RFE has almost disappeared, although interest in the fate of defectors remained.

The fate of the defectors was also used as an example of the



"forgetfulness" of the West, perhaps to strengthen the apathy concerning hopes of eventual Western help (Népszabadsag, November 26)

Inciting Against the Regime - Spreading Hostile Ideologies

The generalized charge of inciting, without further specification, was often laid at the door of RFE in former periods. In the last ten months this charge was mainly complementary to the charges concerning the alleged role played by Western broadcasts during the revolution and of "indirect aggression".

"Inciting" and "setting one segment of the population against another" was very forcefully stressed in the Hungarian press and radio reports on the press conference held (September 12) by the Deputy Chairman of the Committee for Soviet Cultural Relations in Moscow on the operations of Radio Liberation, RFE and VOA.

"The inciting broadcasts directed against the Hungarian people by RFE and VOA" were one of the topics of the note which the Hungarian government dispatched on September 20 to the U.S., protesting against "hostile American propaganda".

Beside the charge of inciting, Eszakmagyarország (June 22) and Belpolitikai Szemle (July) objected to RFE's support of revisionism within the Party.

A long commentary of Radio Kossuth (April 11) dealt with the new tone of RFE. "(This station) previously incited and threatened with full-throated shouts", but now the "American masters have come to realize that the tone should be changed because in Hungary an immutable social and political system was established, "...thus they are trying, at least formally, to separate themselves from pre-war Hungary."

Austria and Germany

Concentrated attacks against Austria for conniving with RFE were not resumed.

Attacks against Germany on the grounds that hostile radio stations such as RFE and RIAS, are operating on its territory were voiced now and then. This argument was especially forcefully stated in a commentary of Radio Kossuth (November 11) on Khrushchev's Berlin statement.

The statement of **Endre Sik**, Hungarian Foreign Minister, on the Soviet peace draft on Germany, published by the Hungarian press and radio on January 16 and commented upon by Népszabadsag and Népszabava



on January 17, stressed Hungary's interest in the peace treaty partly on the ground that this would put an end to the "inciting activities" of RFE, located in Munich.

The "inciting activities", "Nazi relations" and Munich location of RFE were again mentioned by Népszava (March 28) and Radio Homeland (April 2) in items dealing with the report of the Bavarian Socialist Party on the activities of former Hungarian Nazis in Bavaria.

The election campaign.

Immediately after the scheduling of the new elections for November 16, 1958 at the end of September, a big campaign was launched to popularize the event. Hungarian media reacted violently to Western broadcasts during the whole campaign, mainly on such questions as compulsory voting and the multi-party system. In connection with the Western broadcasts the campaign had two phases. Before the election the aim was to fend off misleading enemy propaganda.

Against the charge of compulsory voting, voiced strongly by RFE, Népszava (October 21) argued that "in the course of the electoral preparations the workers have nominated the best men of our nation at tens of thousands of meetings".

The multi-party system, the cornerstone of the October 1956 revolutionary demands, was ridiculed with examples taken from the West, where all the different parties were said to represent in the final analysis the same capitalists. For example, Radio Kossuth (November 3) referred in this context to the Harriman-Rockefeller contest in New York state.

In the second phase of the campaign, Western broadcasters were ridiculed for their "faulty forecasts" (e.g. Népszabadsag, November 19) and the results were defended against charges of "cooking" by Premier Munnich himself in his statement of November 19, quoted by the entire Hungarian press and radio. He even referred to an alleged "acknowledgment" by RFE "that the elections were perfectly orderly and the secrecy of the ballot was duly observed". Needless to say, this "acknowledgment" was never made by RFE. This can be considered an attempt to weaken the morale and increase the sense of isolation of the large majority of the public by implying that the West, including RFE, accepted the status quo in Hungary by admitting the election farce.



Economic problems.

As in former periods, broadcasts dealing with economic questions continued to receive the most thorough treatment in Hungarian media. For instance, Istvan Foldes, a leading economist, took issue with RFE in Népszabadsag (July 6) trying to prove the correctness of Hungarian planners in distributing the national product between consumption and investment by matter-of-fact arguments supported by ample documentation. The same question was dealt with in Népszava (January 18) in response to an RFE commentary.

An example of how Western shortcomings are used as "arguments" against Western broadcasts is given by Radio Kossuth (August 5), commenting on a broadcast of RFE which dealt with the Hungarian overproduction of coal. The commentary stated: We are not asking anything more from Mihaly Peter than that he have some respect for the facts...since in our days the signs of the crisis of the capitalist system are multiplying...especially in the field of coal..."

The question of living standards almost disappeared in the second half of 1958, although it was in the forefront of Hungarian regime propaganda in the first half of that year. With the propagation of the "adjusted Three-Year Plan" and the work competitions, this propaganda topic reappeared and was used to discredit Western broadcasters. For instance, Pest Megyei Hirlap and Radio Kossuth (January 8 and 26) took issue with Western stations on the question of whether or not the people could afford the goods displayed in the shops. Pestmegyei Hirlap (February 26) again argued with Western comparisons, saying: "...for RFE and its bosses the principle - namely, to produce more in order to live better - is unintelligible ...because in the West every rise in production raises the living standards exclusively of the capitalists".

Factory problems.

The questions on which Western broadcasts were most frequently attacked in this context were factory democracy, leadership in the factory, the position of the shop stewards, factory councils, and the pace of work and work competition.

The arguments brought up against them were almost invariably Western examples and comparisons-with the West. For example Népszabadsag (August 13) asked: "Who leads the capitalist factories



in the West?" Nepszava (July 18) raised the following question: "Has Kobele, (editor of RFE programs for Hungarian workers) that drunkard...ever tried to organize a factory council in the enterprise of the Ford company, which plays a leading role in the financing of RFE?" Népszabadsag (March 10) reminded RFE "that 35,000 Hungarians returned from the West because they could not get accustomed to the work-pace prevailing there".

The Peasantry - Agricultural Problems

Propaganda addressed to the agricultural population increased steadily throughout 1958. At the end of the year, after the election, this propaganda developed into a major collectivization campaign which lasted through the first three months of 1959. Due to this collectivization campaign, references to RFE doubled in number in comparison with the preceding period. A considerable part of these references appeared in the provincial press. The articles took issue with specific broadcasts as well as with the general agricultural policy of RFE. About 60% of the attacks endeavored also to discredit the editor himself as a former landowner, a drunkard, or an imbecile unfamiliar with agricultural matters.

In the second half of 1958 the reference themes were varied. They included the village youths' emigration to the towns, the reluctance of cooperatives to employ expert agronomists, or the fate of the agrarian proletariat, discussed previously by RFE.

The series of RFE programs dealing with large-scale farming versus peasant holdings was criticized by Szabad Fold (August 10) as follows:

"The ill-famed farmers, Balint and Marton, of RFE are consciously confusing socialist large-scale farming with large feudal estates".

In a lengthy commentary Radio Kossuth (November 27) gave the following answer to the question of whether the regime was favoring the peasants at the expense of the industrial workers:

"Both the peasants and the workers are better off than they were in the past...even though RFE's agricultural expert, Farmer Balint alias Balint Cupy, a former small holder, wants to demonstrate in what terrible misery the Hungarian peasants are now living".



During the collectivization drive and the propaganda campaign of January-March 1958, several articles attacked the anti-collectivization campaign conducted by RFE. Szabad Fold (March 15) refuted an RFE broadcast, according to which collectivization was initiated at the orders of Moscow".

Népszabadsag, Magyar Nemzet and Radio Kossuth (February 26) attempted to demonstrate that the suspicions of Western broadcasters concerning the article by Béla Kovacs (a veteran opponent of the regime) published in Magyar Nemzet (February 20) in favor of collectivization was a sign of their confusion.

Dunantuli Naplo (February 28) and Vas Népe (March 1) took issue with the RFE claim "that it is impossible to raise the productivity of agriculture and at the same time to transform its structure according to the socialist model".

At a press conference on April 10, László Gyáros, a spokesman of the government, denied the RFE charge "that the Hungarian peasants took the road to socialist agriculture under pressure".

The Youth and Intellectuals

Regime propaganda aimed at converting Hungarian youth to communism made little effort to find arguments against Western broadcasts on this subject, in contrast to the practice followed in connection with propaganda concerning elections, the peasants, or the workers. Therefore, references to Western broadcasts in connection with youth matters confined themselves to denying the allegedly false reports on Hungarian youth. For instance, a BBC program dealing with young men working on the draining of the Hansag moors was rebuked by Népszabadsag (July 29) which argued "that our sons live better than their parents used to".

A report of the Paris Radio on the moral attitudes of a part of the Hungarian youth was refuted by Népszabadsag (September 11) with the counter-charge that "there are still some remnants of the moral cesspool of the past...but...an easy way of replying would be to quote the Western press on the houses of prostitution". A typical example for these attacks were comparisons with the shortcomings of the past, and with alleged conditions in the West.



The attitude of the writers, especially their silence, was discussed several times by regime media which sometimes attacked this attitude and sometimes imputed the "allegations about the silence of the writers" to Western propaganda and to RFE (e.g. Magyar Nemzet, November 23).

References Dealing with Various Internal and International Topics

Under this heading we include in the first place "incidental asides" against the "lies and slanders" of Western broadcasts. For some of the more "sophisticated" remarks of this type Magyar Ifjusag (October 19) must be quoted: "We understand that the collaborators of RFE who have grown old in telling lies are in a grave situation, since on higher orders they have to deliver fairy tales daily": or Nepszabadsag (April 26): "The slander fabric of London crying shame upon everything gets muddled...when it has to explain our successes."

Western broadcasts are occasionally sarcastically accused of stupidity. For instance, the report of Radio Paris on the "cloak room attendants of the Hungarian pavilion in Brussels who are disguised professors wanting to make a trip to the West" was ridiculed by several newspapers, among others by Nepszabadsag (December 25). A report of Radio Rome which mistook A. F. Suslov, the secretary of the Soviet Artists Federation, for M. A. Suslov, member of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party who visited Budapest, was sarcastically rectified by Nepszabadsag (July 2).

A high number of the attacks falling under this heading were polemical. To give an illustration of the large variety of themes, we list some of them: the fishermen's fate in Iceland, and British imperialism; terror in Hungary; cultural directives of the Party; the French translation of Attila Jozsef; the teaching of Russian in Hungarian schools; the strike at the Chicago Ford factory; the Papal encyclicals; Algeria; report on Tangier, a center of the underworld and of Western broadcasting stations; Maurice Kornfeld, the feudal baron's talk over VOA; etc.

References to the European Cultural Center in Nepszabadsag (March 15) in a speech by Laszlo Gyaros, spokesman of the Government, at a press conference held in April, and in Esti Hirlap (April 14) saying among other things that "the bosses from overseas do not spare efforts to improve their battered machinery of



lies" may be indicative of concern on the part of the regime that cooperation with European cultural institutions could raise the general status of RFE and thus increase its appeal to the intellectual segments of the population.

Attacks on Employees of Western Radio Stations and Personalities Connected with CCF.

The effort aimed at character assassination of RFE Hungarian editors and employees has stepped up considerably in the last half of the year. It should also be noted that except for two cases, in which editors of BBC and VOA were mentioned in a generally abusive manner, character assassination was aimed exclusively at RFE personnel. Another interesting aspect of this problem is that recently these attacks were coupled increasingly with direct program reactions, in which they served as one of the "arguments" against the broadcasts. Character assassination also aimed at discrediting the "good intentions" of the broadcasters and especially at raising doubts about the real "Hungarian" feelings they may have, and perhaps also at counteracting the image of RFE as the "most Hungarian radio station" held by many listeners.

VI. REGIME MEDIA REACTION TO SPECIFIC WESTERN BROADCASTS

In the period under review Hungarian media carried 104 direct program reactions, compared to 56 in the previous six months. This corresponds to a monthly average of 10.4 units, in comparison with 9.6 monthly units in the previous period. The slight increase is all the more significant inasmuch as a not unsubstantial drop in the number of reference units occurred during the same period.

TABLE V

	<u>First half</u> <u>1957</u>	<u>Second half</u> <u>1957</u>	<u>First half</u> <u>1958</u>	<u>July 1958 -</u> <u>April 1959</u>
Number of reference units	361	375	231	244
Number of direct program reactions	35	50	56	104
Ratio of direct program reactions	9.5%	13%	23%	44%



Not only has the increase of program reactions been unaffected by the drop in the number of reference units, but this type of reference appears to be steadily increasing.

The distribution of direct program reactions among the different Western broadcasting stations was the following:

<u>RFE</u>	<u>VOA</u>	<u>BBC</u>	<u>Other Specific Western Broadcasters</u>	<u>Total</u>
69	6	19	10	104

Almost three quarters of all direct program reactions referred to specific RFE broadcasts, while the remainder were distributed between BBC, other specific Western broadcasters, and VOA, in that order. Though numerically low, direct program reactions to other specific Western broadcasters were proportionally the highest; 51% of all references to this group of radio stations were direct program reactions.

TABLE VI

Topical Breakdown of Direct Program Reactions

	<u>1958 July-Dec</u>	<u>1959 Jan-April</u>
Elections	9	-
Economic questions	7	11
Factory problems	7	5
Agrarian policy	6	7
Youth/Intellectuals	5	-
Miscellaneous	27	20

Compared to previous periods and even to various times during the period under review, the subject matter discussed was different. Polemics about living standards in East and West, which had been high in the first six months of 1958, completely disappeared in the second half and reappeared only in January-April as a corollary of the propaganda in favor of the adjusted Three-Year Plan. In the period July to December parliamentary elections constituted the largest topical category. During the collectivization campaign the



polemics on agrarian problems increased to a considerable degree. This strengthens the view that direct program reactions are to a certain extent a function of the prevailing propaganda effort of the regime.

The very high figure for miscellaneous topics in media reactions to other specific Western stations shows, on the other hand, that other intervening factors (i.e. "errors" of Western radio stations or blows aimed at points of particular regime vulnerability) have their share too.

It should be noted that in a large number of cases the direct program reactions were polemical only in form and showed no perceivable overall pattern beyond the technique of quoting a sentence or two from a foreign broadcast and rebutting it with generalities rather than specific arguments. Indeed, by and large, direct reaction to Western broadcasts in the Hungarian media was characterized by a combination of small doses of polemics with a large dose of vilification, exemplified by the prevalence of such epithets as "lying", "distorting" and "slandorous" and finally with a sarcastic style. An objective and matter-of-fact tone was the exception rather than the rule, not only in the miscellaneous direct program reactions but even in those which dealt with problems of immediate concern for the regime as well as in those where persuasion by rational arguments would have been accepted from regime propaganda. To a certain extent, polemics on broad economic principles (investment policy, etc.) were on a higher intellectual level and were less vituperative than other topical categories of direct program reactions.



VII. HUNGARIAN REGIME REFERENCES TO
WESTERN BROADCASTS

TABLE VII

	<u>1957</u> <u>First Half</u>	<u>1957</u> <u>Second Half</u>	<u>1958</u> <u>First Half</u>	<u>July 1958 -</u> <u>April 1959</u>
1. <u>Radio Stations</u>				
Kossuth	146	97	95	56
Homeland	34	41	38	26
Petofi	1	1	3	1
2. <u>Budapest Dailies</u>				
Népszabadsag	89	113	52	50
Népszava/Népakarat	45	41	19	40
Magyar Nemzet	-	20	27	21
Esti Hirlap	14	21	11	20
3. <u>Periodicals</u>				
Ludas Matyi	2	3	2	6
Belpolitikai Szemle			5	9
Élet es Irodalom	2	4	4	2
Magyar Ifjusag	5	14	3	2
Radio Ujsag	4	8	1	1
Csalad es Iskola				1
Erdekes Ujsag	1	1		
Magyarország	6	44	3	
Hetfoi Hirek		1	4	3
Nepsport		1		1
Kortars		1	1	
Jovendonk		1		
Nemzetkozi Szemle			1	
Traktorujsg		1		
Tarsadalmi Szemle			1	1
Nagyvilag			1	
Magyar Hirek			1	
Katolikus Szó				1
Magyar Filozofia Szemle				1
Erdekes Kalendarium				1
4. <u>Provincial papers</u>				
Szabad Fold	1		2	9
Dunantuli Naplo	7	1		1
Vas Nepe	1		2	5
Pest Megyei Hirlap			1	4
Csongradmegyei Nepujsg				3
Uj Komlo	3			
Kisalfold	1	1		1
Zalai Hirlap		1		
Somogyi Neplap		1	2	
Tolna megyei Nepujsg			2	1
Eszakmagyarország				1
Bekesmegyi Neujsag				1
Delmagyarország				1
Szolnokmegyei Neplap				1



Roughly a third of the references to Western stations were published by the radio and two-thirds by the press during the ten-month period from July 1958 to April 1959. (28 or 72%). This breakdown includes nineteen neutral references to Western broadcasting stations - seventeen in Radio Kossuth newscasts and two in press reports. Without these non-critical references, the balance shifts even more strongly in favor of the press (25 or 75%). This corresponds roughly to the ratio of the previous periods. The decrease of critical references was, therefore, proportionately distributed among press and radio. The seemingly greater drop in radio references was caused by the decrease in non-critical references.

As regards the Budapest dailies, the official Party paper Népszabadság, carried the bulk of the attacks, followed closely by the trade union organ, Nepszava. The latter increased its attacks considerably in comparison to former periods, probably because the high number of attacks dealing with trade union and factory problems appeared mostly in this paper. The drop in attacks was proportionately greatest in the People's Patriotic Front paper, Magyar Nemzet.

Among the periodicals, the monthly Belpolitikai Szemle published the largest number of attacks on Western broadcasts. Due to the fact that the paper is not addressed to the public but to the employees of the Ministry of Interior and the agit-prop personnel, this could perhaps indicate that at factory or other meetings the viva-voce propaganda against Western broadcasts is quite widespread. However, about this sector of regime propaganda we have almost no information.

Among the provincial papers, Szabad Fold, Vas Népe and Pest Megyei Hirlap attacked Western broadcasts the most frequently. Other provincial publications did so only intermittently. The attacks dealt mainly with agricultural problems.

