MEDIA OF COMMUNICATION AND THE FREE WORLD
AS SEEN BY HUNGARIAN REFUGEES

Prepared for
Division of Radio Program Evaluation
Department of State

International Public Opinion Research, Inc.
Empire State Building
New York City
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Introduction

This report presents part of the findings of an interviewing study made among recent refugees from satellite countries by International Public Opinion Research, Inc. (IPOR) under the sponsorship of the Program Evaluation Branch of the Voice of America. The immediate purpose of the project was to obtain from the respondents data about the effects of VOA programs behind the Iron Curtain, about the most effective appeals which could be broadcast on the programs, and about the opinions of the refugees and the population which they had left concerning the United States and various major world political developments (Korea, Marshall Plan, United Nations, Cominform, etc.).

Approximately 100 recent refugees from each of three countries—Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland—were interviewed. Separate reports on the findings of the interviews with each national group will be presented, plus a summary report of comparative findings and a report on the technical and methodological aspects of the interviewing of refugees. The present report deals with the Hungarians.

Interviewing was carried out by trained nationals from each of the three countries concerned. Some of these interviewers were themselves fairly recent refugees and thus were in many cases able to check aspects of the validity of the respondents' reports about current conditions in their home countries.

The Hungarian interviews were conducted from September, 1951 to April, 1952.

IPOR, Inc.
The Sample

How Respondents Were Obtained

The principal base of operations for the field work with Hungarians was near Linz, Austria. By arrangement with military authorities who handled recent refugees, new arrivals from Hungary were sent to an IFOR interviewing center after military screening and interrogation. After a preliminary period during which the IFOR operation was set up, practically every Hungarian newly arrived in the American Zone of Austria was sent to the IFOR center and interviewed.

While the refugees were in military hands they were isolated, for security reasons, from contact with the local population, including earlier arrived refugees who had settled in Austria; and in the IFOR interviewing center, where they were housed and fed, they were restricted from local contacts because they had not yet received papers from the Austrian government which gave them legal permission to be in Austria. Although most of the refugees had left Hungary some weeks before their IFOR interview, their status as new or "uncontaminated" refugees was

The following table indicates the time intervening between escape and interview by IFOR for the 100 Hungarian respondents. None of these had left their native land more than six months before the date of the interview. The table includes a few refugees who had lived for a short time on the local economy and who will be discussed directly. Interviews took from one and a half to three days depending on the quality of the respondent, the number of respondents on hand for interviewing, and the pressure of the need to make room for new arrivals.

Table A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME LAG BETWEEN DEFECTION AND INTERVIEW</th>
<th>CASES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than two weeks</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two weeks to a month</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One to two months</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than two months</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cases</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
preserved by virtue of their isolation. During the last two months of the field work, the IROR interviewing was conducted for the most part directly in the military establishment which handled newly-arrived refugees, where isolation was complete.  

Upon a few occasions during the course of the field work the influx of brand-new refugees was so slow that previously-arrived individuals who were living on the local economy were interviewed in order to keep interviewing going on continuously. No more than five such individuals were interviewed, however, and particular care was taken during their interviews to separate out the impressions and knowledge which they had brought with them from Hungary from those which they had received since their residence in the West.

Composition of the Sample

Nearly two-thirds of the sample consists of urban workers and peasants. The number of those who may be considered middle class or intelligentsia is extremely small. Only 6 per cent of the total sample are college trained. The tables that follow show the occupational, educational, and residential distribution of respondents.

* Refer to Technical and Methodological Aspects of the Interviewing of Recent Refugees from Soviet Satellite Countries, the companion report on the methodology of this study, for a fuller description of the location, conditions of life, and obtaining of satellite interviewees in both Austria and Germany.

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IROR, Inc.
Table B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OCCUPATION</th>
<th></th>
<th>EDUCATION</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled workers</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>College trained</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled workers</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>27*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peasants, farmers</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Elementary school</td>
<td>67**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed, shopkeeper, artisans</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government employees</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White collar workers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sailors, merchant marines</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students, housewives, etc.</td>
<td>(not in labor force)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are many more men than women in the sample, and the majority of the men are less than thirty years of age. The few women tend to be slightly older than the men. This is probably explained by the fact that the small number of women who cross the border generally do so in family groups or with their husbands (11 of the 16 women in the sample were married). The high proportion of youths in the sample is, of course, related to the difficulty and general risk involved in unauthorized crossing of border zones. The fact that young people are less likely to have compelling family obligations or strong property ties also undoubtedly contributes to the youthfulness of this group of defectors.

Table C

SEX AND AGE COMPOSITION OF THE SAMPLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 20</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 to 25</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 to 30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 to 40</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older than 40</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Academic high school, 10; vocational high school, 17.
** Includes one respondent with no schooling.
Representatives with Respect to the Population of Refugees

During the first weeks of the interviewing, while facilities for feeding and housing respondents were being equipped, liaison with the military was being set up, and interviewers were being trained, it was not possible to handle all the refugees who were crossing the border. After full efficiency of operations had been achieved, however, practically every new Hungarian refugee entering the American Zone of Austria was interviewed. The sample, therefore, may be considered to be thoroughly representative of recent refugees in this area.

Refugees from Hungary escape primarily into three regions: the American Zone of Austria, the British Zone of Austria, and Yugoslavia. Travel inside Hungary to the western and southern borders of the country is extremely difficult, so that escapes consist primarily of people who are already residents of the border areas (approximately 65 per cent of the respondents in the present sample were such residents). Since residents of the border areas ordinarily cross over to the region of safety nearest their own section of the border, the American Zone of Austria receives a high proportion of people who lived around Győr and Sopron; the British Zone furnishes haven to most refugees from the Szombathely area; and people from the South of Hungary go into Yugoslavia. The present sample of refugees, therefore, is not representative of the broad population of recent refugees in terms of the geographical origins of this population.

The staff of the present study does not possess data showing the proportion of refugees who escape into the British Zone and Yugoslavia. Since the social and economic composition of inhabitants of different areas of a country often differ from area to area, the present sample may contain a secondary social and economic bias dependent upon its geographical determination.

TRR, Inc.
Representativeness with Respect to the Home Population

The question of the sample's representativeness with respect to the population of Hungary is discussed fully in the accompanying report, Technical and Methodological Aspects of the Interviewing of Recent Refugees from Soviet Satellite Countries. The essential question discussed is whether people who are willing to leave their country as refugees are so biased that they cannot be considered as representative of the population of their country at large. The conclusions reached by the staff of the present study will only be summarized most briefly here. The major point is that with the exception of a small Communist minority (perhaps 20 percent), the population at home is as dissatisfied with the regime as are the recent refugees, and for the same reasons. The reasons are not ideological in nature but rest simply on the fact that the physical and economic conditions of living (adequacy of food, clothing, and wages; demands for excessively hard work without adequate compensation; amount of time and facilities for leisure-time activities; etc.) are extremely unsatisfactory. With some exceptions, neither the home population nor the refugees have any particular ideological opposition to Communism as such, although what appears to be ideological opposition comes in the wake of blaming the regime for not fulfilling the promises of a better life which

Those people who were really ideologically opposed to Communism fled during the early period of the regime's power and did not wait until material conditions drove them out. For this reason there was a difference in bias between the earlier refugees and the home population, but this difference no longer exists with respect to recent refugees.
it made when it took power. In this kind of ideological stand, however, the refugees and the home population are alike. What differentiates the two groups is not general orientation of opinion but the presence or absence of certain permissive conditions facilitating escape (residence near the border, lack of family or property ties, youth and good health etc.) or of certain impetuses to escape (military call, excessive requisition of farm products, etc.).

These permissive conditions and impetuses inevitably result in a sample which is biased in terms of its social and economic makeup. As Table C showed, the sample consists overwhelmingly of men, most of them young men. The fact that most of them come from the border region around Gyor and Sopron has also been pointed out. For reasons which are more obscure, other evident flaws in the representativeness of the sample appear. For example, although we do not know what the proportions in the Hungarian population of the different occupational and social groups are, there certainly is a vastly higher percentage of peasants than the 20 per cent of the sample. No doubt other proportions in the sample do not correspond to proportions in the population.

The sample appears to be representative, therefore, in its attitude toward the regime but not in the proportions of the different groups which make it up. With regard to other characteristics it is impossible to know whether or not the sample is representative. It is possible, for example, that degree of listening to foreign broadcasts or intensity of interest in politics (and hence knowledge of politics) is in some way connected with a predisposition to become a refugee, but such a hypothesis cannot be tested. It seems possible, too, that at
least among rural people, possession of higher than average intelligence is a characteristic of those who become refugees. Nearly one-third of the rural respondents who had had only elementary schooling were specifically pointed out by the interviewers as being intelligent and informed beyond what one would presume from their background. This fact appears to have affected the foreign station preferences reported by the respondents. The two principal foreign stations, as far as the Hungarians are concerned, are the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe. Respondents of higher education and intelligence tend to prefer the VOA, whereas RFE has a higher popularity among the less sophisticated individuals. For this reason, the presence in the rural group of the sample of a sizable proportion of individuals more intelligent than usually found in such a group has apparently raised the percentage of VOA preferents.*

* See pp. 74-75.
Inferences to Be Drawn from Sample Responses

From what has been said above it follows that certain kinds of statements which the refugees make can be considered with some degree of confidence to reflect the opinions of the home population. For example, since the sample and the population are both strongly anti-regime, if an overwhelming majority of the sample say that they listen to the Western broadcasts in order to maintain contact with those countries which are their only hope of liberation from the Communists, it is probable that the population listens for the same reason. In general, it may be considered that sample responses which are directly related to the attitude toward the regime (and there are an enormous number of such responses) reflect what the population thinks. But since the social and economic makeup of the sample is not the same as that of the population, the actual percentages in the sample are probably not the percentages in the population. The degree of error in percentages cannot be estimated. The best the percentages can do is to indicate a definite trend in one direction or another.

As the preceding discussion has indicated, responses such as those which give the percentage of the sample who prefer the VOA and the percentage who have an accurate knowledge of the Marshall Plan cannot be projected directly to the population. However, it is probable that certain kinds of responses of the foreign broadcast listeners in the sample indicate fairly accurately the attitudes of the foreign broadcast listeners in the population. For example, the overwhelming majority of the VOA preferring in the sample say that they prefer the VOA because it

[Signature: IPOR, Inc.]
is the official voice of the most powerful anti-Communist power (and hence speaks with authority) and because it has an excellent coverage of international news, whereas almost all the RFE preferences say that RFE is their favorite station because of its attacks on the regime and its coverage of the domestic (Hungarian) scene. These reasons for preference would seem to be safely projectable to the population.

It should not be thought, therefore, that because the sample consists of refugees, the results of the study cannot throw considerable light on the opinions of the Hungarian people themselves. Certainly the study can in no sense be considered comparable to a poll in Hungary, but on the other hand it is more than just a poll of refugees. Careful logical considerations applied to the responses of the interviewees will indicate what kind of inferences about the home population can be made from the responses of this group of defectors.

A Note on the Statistical Significance of Sample Responses

Because the number of cases in the present sample is small, many good-sized differences in response percentages are not statistically significant. This is particularly true when subgroups in the sample are compared. There are, for instance, 33 individuals in the group of VOA preferents and 11 in the group which listened to VOA but preferred other stations. If these two groups' opinions about a given topic are compared, the difference between them must be something over 20 per cent before it can be stated that the groups have a statistically significant difference of opinion. Other subgroups in the sample are so small that statistical significance with reference to them becomes practically meaningless.
Practically speaking, therefore, the sample size is so small that only extremely large differences of opinion can be measured at all if it is required that each difference be statistically significant, and normal sampling variation will prevent a considerable number of even large differences in the population from being recognized.

Even when a difference of opinion large enough to be statistically significant occurs in the sample, it does not necessarily follow that this difference exists in the population, because the sample, as we have seen, is so far from a random sample that the assumptions upon which tests of statistical significance are based are not applicable.

Before any difference can be projected to the population, logical considerations have to be applied in order to determine whether such a projection is reasonable.

Because of the small size of the sample and its lack of randomness, it has not been required that differences in sample response proportions be statistically significant before they can be meaningfully discussed. If there are good logical reasons for the existence of a difference (such as, for example, that VOA preferents should show a higher proportion of favorable reactions to VOA's news commentaries than VOA non-preferents), and a sizable difference does appear in the interviewees' responses, the difference is presented and the reasons why it should appear are discussed.
Such sample differences are discussed and the hypothesis posed for future testing, that the differences exist in the population. (It should be remembered that even if a difference is not statistically significant, it does not follow that the difference does not in fact exist in the population). And even statistically significant differences are presented only as reasonable hypotheses about the population, since the sample is not random. In each case, the inference to be made from the statistics has to be judged upon its own logical merits and upon its congruence with other known facts or tested hypotheses.
PART I

THE MEDIA OF COMMUNICATION IN HUNGARY
CHAPTER I

DOMESTIC NEWSPAPERS AND RADIO

Although only four out of the 100 Hungarian refugees named the domestic press and radio as their most important sources of information for foreign and domestic events, a majority did read and listen to the domestic media. Moreover, few of these respondents report that they read or listened to domestic media only because of Communist pressure. Pressure was indeed exerted in various situations at work and at school and in the Army, but papers are read and the radio is listened to quite apart from these compulsory situations.

This is not to say, however, that the contents were accepted without discrimination. On the contrary, respondents assert that they knew that the Communists lied and that their judgments of the credibility of the output of the domestic media directly affected their selection of what to read and what to listen to; one-third read or listened only to the bare outlines of the political and economic news, and one-third restricted their exposure to the less manipulable sports news and reports on rations, quotes and government edicts.

Among these four, one person also named foreign broadcasts as his important source and another spoke of word-of-mouth reports in conjunction with the local press.
To What Extent Did They Read and Listen to Domestic Media?

In order to evaluate the role of the domestic media in Hungary, several dimensions of exposure must be considered: how frequently are people in contact with the media; what pressures are exerted by the Government to compel the Hungarians to read and listen; what content does the audience select; does this selection work in actual practice or is the audience actually exposed to the propaganda output of the regime to a greater extent than they realize or claim?

How Widespread was Exposure

A majority of the 100 Hungarian respondents were exposed to the domestic press and radio. Fifty-two per cent acknowledged regular or occasional newspaper readership and 70 per cent acknowledged frequent or occasional radio listening.*

Table 1

FREQUENCY OF EXPOSURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Newspaper Reading</th>
<th>Radio Listening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasional</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rare or never</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not ascertainable</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cases (100%)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* These exposure figures are actually a minimum because in their desire to disclaim association with the regime some respondents who were actually exposed to the domestic media denied such exposure. Evidence for this is presented below in the discussion of alleged versus actual exposure.
Those with better education were regular newspaper readers much more than their less well-educated compatriots; they were not, however, more attentive to domestic radio than the poorly educated respondents.

Table 2
EXPOSURE TO THE DOMESTIC MEDIA ACCORDING TO EDUCATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper Reading</th>
<th>High School or College</th>
<th>Elementary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasional</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rare or never</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not ascertainable</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Radio Listening</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequent</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasional</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rare or never</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not ascertainable</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Cases (100%) = (33) [(33)]

Captive Exposure

Very few of these Hungarians were exposed to the domestic media only because of compulsion; only four were wholly captive newspaper readers or radio listeners. The remainder, although under pressures of various kinds to maintain contact with the domestic media, nevertheless indicated that they read or listened voluntarily as well, and could not, therefore, be classified as pure captive audiences. However, some attention to the domestic media is unquestionably exacted in many situations by the Communist regime.

IPOR, Inc.
These pressures to read and listen take various forms. In the more highly organized groups such as the Army and student groups, the regime enforces exposure to the media fairly rigorously. Among workers and the citizenry at large, although compulsion may not be quite so rigorous, it appears to be fairly pervasive.

Captive exposure in the Army was described by a former draftee:

During the period I was doing military service I lived in bivouacs for three months. Each tent received one copy of Szabad Nép, Szabad Ifjúság, and Mozson-Nagyarovari Hírlap, which was the People's Army's official publication. The tent-supervisor was obliged to read Szabad Nép aloud every day regardless of how many of the men were present or whether they were all asleep. Szabad Ifjúság gave instructions concerning how to turn the Hungarian youth into Stalin Youth. For me this meant the same as if they were telling me how to make slaves and robbers out of the people. Mozson-Nagyarovari Hírlap praised the advanced Soviet military science and tried to make the Hungarian Army a servile instrument of the Soviets. For example, individual camps competed for the most spectacular Communist decoration, and the paper informed the readers about the details of this competition. It was a Communist publication like all the others; it was full of Communist propaganda. Also, there was a movie theater in the camp. The movies demonstrated massed attacks while the papers were full of peace propaganda. (039/4-5)∗

A former student described how the administration saw to it that

the student body was exposed to the domestic media:

We had a radio at the college, too, but we listened to it less frequently. We had no time because we had to study a great deal, and what Radio Budapest said we learned about faster from the newspaper.

We had the following newspapers at the college:

∗ Hungarian interview number 039, pages 1 to 5 of the English translation. This system of identifying quotations from the interviews will be used throughout.

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Sebad Nep, Nepssave, A Szabadagharcoos, Szabad ifjusag, Ud Vilag, and Szovjet Kultura. These were sent to the college for the pupils' use. We used to have newspaper classes in which the teachers checked up on whether we had read them. One student had to report about certain articles in Sebad Nep or Nepssave, and the others had to join in the discussion of them. They did not bother about our reading of the weeklies. Only three or four Communist students read them. About one-third of the students used to read through the political section of the dailies every day; they may have been more diligent or more interested in politics than the others who used to glance through them during the class so they would be able to say something about the articles. (93/2-3)

Among the workers and the public at large it is not possible to impose exposure by such rigidly enforced examinations, but other means are used to accomplish the same end. One of the most prevalent and the most organized methods of imposing Communist propaganda appears to be the use of meetings. These meetings are held in factories, shops, neighborhoods and villages, and the Communists attempt to make attendance compulsory. Some are held at regular intervals, others are summoned for special occasions. Several things take place at these meetings: at some, the Communist press is read and then discussed; at others, production problems are discussed and Communist goals are lauded; or a drive is put on to force subscriptions to the Communist press, or membership in the kolkhozes (collective farms) is encouraged, and so on. Following are several descriptions of these meetings. A young mechanic described the meetings which were held in his shop:

Every day between 10:15 and 11 a.m. there was a shop meeting in the factory at which all workers had to appear. Those who were absent without explanation were charged with sabotage and with not

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wanting peace and the pre-schedule fulfillment of the 5-year plan. We had to attend these meetings by giving up part of our lunch hours. Party secretaries, foremen, and the shop manager would speak at these shop meetings, and they always emphasized that the output decreased if anybody was absent from work. Thus, the main reason for the shop meetings was to force the workers, even if they were sick, to work to their utmost. (022/3)

In another shop, the workers were required to participate more actively at the meetings:

This Communist proposed "press discussions," and so beginning in October we had a 30-minute session every Saturday morning at 8 a.m. . . . From that time on there was a fourth person (in addition to the manager, his assistant, and the one Communist in the group) reading the newspapers — the one who lectured on Saturdays on the topics of the week. One of us was appointed to this role every week, according to the alphabetical order of our second names. However, these lectures were only a formality because nobody ever made any remarks or comments. The whole thing was a brief report on the more important columns which had appeared in the newspapers that week. (079/2)

Village meetings, at which membership in the kolkhozes was encouraged and at which farm production problems and Communist achievements were discussed, were described by other respondents:

I obtained this information at the meetings. Meetings were held once or twice a week in the evenings. It was never said that attendance was obligatory, people were just invited to the meeting. However, it was a well-known fact that Communists noticed who attended and that penalties were inflicted on the farmers in accordance with their presence at the meetings or their absence from these meetings, which were held in the church. At the last meeting I attended the development of the kolkhozes was the only matter discussed. Peasants have been invited to join these enthusiastically. (011/2)
Recently, there were Szabad Fold winter night meetings, Communist party meetings, and village council meetings. Previously other parties held meetings, too, but they no longer do it in the village. The members of the Red Star Kolkhoz in the village had to attend the Communist Party meetings. Those who attended these meetings told me that they had to listen to speeches about the Communist big shots in the Soviet Union and Hungary. I was also told that production problems were discussed at the village council meetings. They were told what had to be done and when, what it was most profitable to grow, and what agricultural work had to be done and when.

My father had to go to these meetings occasionally, because a score was being kept on people who were absent. Internment or imprisonment could easily become the fate of people who were absent. Besides, that was how he could find out how to work our own land without getting into trouble. The Szabad Fold winter nights were held in the movie theater, once a week. They used to speak about construction all over Hungary and supposed Communist achievements at these lectures. About once a month I used to go there because I was bored and there used to be a free movie after the lectures. Lately, however, I got tired of that, too, because all the movies showed was how people in Russia were becoming more cultured and what heroic battles the Russians had fought.

Thus these meetings are used by the Communists to supplement the traditional media of communication. Although not everybody submitted to the compulsion to attend, the meetings appear to be fairly thoroughly diffused through the population. Indeed, in some cases they are the only formal contact for communication between the population and the Communists.

For example, one respondent who never read a newspaper or listened to the radio described his rather thorough exposure to Communist propaganda at his plant meetings:

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Every Thursday there was a meeting for the workers' hostel workers, where I lived, too. About 50 of the 200 workers who lived there used to be present at every occasion. Those who worked in a plant, like myself, could not avoid being present, but I always tried to leave the meeting soon after it had started. At the meetings, the plant's Communist Party secretary and the assistant farm manager, who was the political trusty, used to speak about how many strikes there were in the US, as well as misery, shortages, and standing in lines. This wasn't so in Hungary, thanks to our 'father Stalin,' they added. When the workers asked about why many necessities could not be bought, they used to tell them that this was because the kulaks were buying up everything with their money, and also because they did not bring to the market what (crop) they had, but fed it to their horses and pigs instead. The assistant plant manager also used to give us information about how the workers stood in the work competition, about how much was sown in the state farm, and he glorified those who produced more than the quota. The party secretary used to read Szbád Nap about how the Communists were advancing everywhere towards the victory of Communism, and how the American imperialists were trying to stand in its (Communism's) way. This is why they (the Americans) were destroying and robbing Korea, and killing the people there. However, they said, the Communists will be the ones who will gain victory. (Q67/3)

This emphasis on meetings, however, does not mean that the Communists neglect other means for capturing an audience for their propaganda.

One method is to compel the Hungarians to subscribe to the newspapers; this is done at the factories and plants and schools as well as among the public at large. A middle-aged respondent said:

> My son was forced to subscribe to a weekly youth newspaper at school and during the last three weeks I was persuaded at my place of work to subscribe to Szabad Nap. I had a job as a watchman, and from my very first week’s salary they deducted a one-month subscription price. (051/4)

Another worker who was forced to buy Szabad Nap at his factory said:

[No additional text provided]
Everybody has to buy it, even the street cleaner. You see him cleaning the street with Szabad Nép in his pocket. They deliver it to him on the street every morning. (038/2)

And even when there is no such direct compulsion to subscribe, the atmosphere of life in Hungary is such as to make it easier if one does. As another respondent said:

Nobody would buy a newspaper regularly on his own. People subscribed because they knew that this was the best way to avoid being troubled by the propagandists. (027/2)

Such distribution does not appear to be uniformly widespread, however, nor does it necessitate reading the newspapers. Nevertheless, it stands to reason that in an authoritarian state there are other less dramatic, but nonetheless effective, incentives for reading the newspapers. For example, the expectation on the part of work supervisors or Party leaders that the employee or citizen be acquainted with current newspaper content motivates the Hungarians to read the press. As one respondent put it:

People keep newspapers in their home only because of the propagandists. And if they read it through, they do it only so as to be able to mention one or two headlines when they are asked at factory meetings about what they have read in the newspapers. In my opinion, nobody reads newspapers regularly. (027/3)

Or the requirements of a specialized job necessitate familiarity with the contents of publications which deal with the field:

There were publications I was obliged to read because of my special branch of work. These were the following: Industrial Report, Construction Report, and the Hungarian Gazette. These announced the decrees concerning the construction industry and news of the regulation of prices and the
economical use of materials. Further, they announced personnel changes and fines for irregularities in the industry. To read these was absolutely necessary for me because of my work.

(076/4)

And, finally, even when there is no apparent outside pressure to read the newspapers, the necessities of living in such a highly organized state require exposure to the media of the state — if only to keep informed of economic regulations:

I seldom read Hungarian papers. That happened mainly when hawkers on the street shouted about some food distribution decree or other such things; then I would buy a paper. (027/2)

In addition to meetings and the newspapers, the State reaches out to its citizens through the radio, public loudspeakers, wall newspapers in plants, and special bulletins. Following are some descriptions of how the Hungarians are compelled to pay attention to these media. One worker described the way he was forced to listen to the radio:

I heard the Budapest radio only in the plant. There it was spread by loudspeakers. I worked with a building construction outfit, and we were building a factory. The loudspeakers were way up high on the scaffolds. This is where they also announced when they were looking for someone. Outside of that, the radio played music and Budapest news. But this was mostly during lunch hour and not working hours. We did not get the real news, only news about work competition and production results. We did not get world politics. The people were not much interested. They were mostly eating or getting washed, but in the meantime they had to listen whether they wanted to or not. (075/2)

Another respondent reported that "The new kolkhoz members, of course, have no radios and they are always herded into the Hall of Culture where they have to listen to the radio collectively." (023/6) Or rural residents must listen to the village loudspeaker to learn regulations.
Agricultural instructions were announced in our village through a loudspeaker from a near-by large industrial city in Northern Hungary. The broadcasts included instructions on what agricultural work had to be done and when, how much of the crop was delivered by neighboring villages, and sometimes music and folk songs. (060/3)

Finally, there is the following description of how attention is commanded for wall newspapers:

The Communists also place great emphasis on the wall newspapers. I heard that there were people appointed in plants who were responsible for the wall newspapers and who had to see to it that every worker should write something for it once in a while. On the streets, too, there are many wall newspapers, what the Communists aim at is to explain things according to their taste. For instance, they used to have articles in the wall newspapers on why there was a war in Korea and what sacrifices the Soviet Union made to defend the peace. There we had the well-known Communist slogans about the Americans wanting to expand in Korea and take away freedom from the people. (060/4)

Thus it is more or less obligatory to attend meetings and read the newspapers or listen to the radio in Hungary. In the more highly organized groups this requirement is enforced more rigidly, but even in the less well-organized strata there are incentives leading to exposure to these forms of communication.

Widespread though they may be, however, these obligations or pressures by no means fully account for exposure to the domestic media. For, over and above this required reading or listening, the refugees reveal that they bought papers (or voluntarily read in the required papers) for news of government edicts, sports events, announcements of musical programs, news of Korea, and so on.

IFOR, Inc.
What Did They Read and Listen To?

In the minds of these respondents, as well as from the point of view of this inquiry, the question of what they read and listened to is closely related to the question of how receptive they were to the Communist point of view. It is therefore relevant to classify the content matter of the domestic media into two categories: general political and economic matters which can be presented in such a way as to reinforce the Communists' position, and restricted matters such as sports news, entertainment announcements, and government edicts pertaining to rationing which are straightforward and less subject to bias.

Half of the respondents claimed that they never read or listened or that they limited their exposure to the second kind of news (this latter group comprises one-third of the sample). They claimed to have confined their reading and listening at most to that which was necessary for the pursuit of living — ration and food-price news, occupational news required of employees, and so on — and to cultural and sports news. They avoided any political news on the ground that it was not to be believed.

Such non-political reading was described by a young woman:

I read newspapers only when my turn came for lecturing (at 'press discussions'). Apart from this I sometimes read news of particular importance: about the new price controls, about the abolition of the doctor's degree, about music or articles on fine arts, about great sports events. But such articles rarely appeared; only a few times a month. We listened to the Budapest radio only when we saw in the program guide that good classical music records were to be played. (079/2)
Another respondent described restricted radio listening:

We listened to music on Radio Budapest, and sometimes perhaps to plays. We never listened to the news, however. Sometimes we heard the weather forecast. But recently I listened to one of Rakosi's speeches. It was the first time I heard him speak: he told about the raising of prices. (question: Did you know about the speech in advance?) No, we didn't know anything about it. I was trying to pick up some music and the broadcast came in by accident. This happened on a Saturday evening. Sunday, after Mass, we discussed this increase in prices and the same Sunday afternoon we listened again to Rakosi, because the radio repeated the broadcast. This was the speech in which he also announced the abolition of food ration cards. . . . we listened to Rakosi only because we thought the increase in prices would mean the beginning of an inflation and the abolition of the food ration cards would mean that we were short of food. When there are food ration cards the shops are obliged to hand out the rations but if this system is abolished there will be simply no food at all. These were the two possibilities we reckoned with, and that was the reason why we wanted to listen to Rakosi over the radio again. We thought if our currency began to lose value they wouldn't be able to stop it from becoming worthless. (061/2-3)

Forty-five of these Hungarian refugees had been interested in the domestically released news about general political and economic matters. Among these, 33 were people who restricted their attention to the formal, external aspects of these reports and disbelieved a priori whatever content was open to interpretation. For example, if it was announced that a political leader had visited a new construction project, it was believed that the visit and the construction had taken place. But what was not believed was the Communist interpretation that the construction testified to the dawn of a new workers' paradise.

* The most popular reason for listening to the radio was to hear music; that plus an interest in sports news accounted for the listening of almost half of these respondents. Only one-third listened to the radio for any kind of general or political news.

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The other 12 people in this group of political readers did not place such restrictions on their reading; they were interested in all the news reported in the domestic press. Although they read with caution, they read all kinds of news.

As might be expected, this broader interest in the contents of the domestic media occurs more frequently among the better educated refugees; approximately one out of four people with high school or college education read fairly widely, as compared with one out of twelve persons with only elementary education.

Table 3
EXPOSURE TO DOMESTIC MEDIA ACCORDING TO EDUCATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High School or College</th>
<th>Elementary</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complete non-exposure</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only non-political news or music</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited political news</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No restrictions</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, not ascertainable</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cases (100%)</td>
<td>(33%)</td>
<td>(67%)</td>
<td>(100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus a sizable minority completely exclude political and economic content from their reading or listening. Before examining in detail their evaluation of the domestic media, it is relevant to ask whether they did indeed keep themselves as deaf to the regime's ideology as they allege.
Declared versus Actual Exposure

The sizable proportions of these refugees who claim that they read the papers and listened to the radio only for non-political content (or did not read or listen at all) explain that they rejected such content because they were disgusted with the regime and did not believe the domestic media. In other words, for them, non-exposure was consistent with their hostility to the regime. This does not mean, however, that they kept themselves completely intact from domestic propaganda. For there is abundant evidence that many of these people who allegedly limited their exposure were actually aware of a wider range of press and radio content than their declared exposure would indicate.

To begin with, it stands to reason that people who listen to the radio or buy or read a newspaper, even for very limited purposes, will accidentally be exposed to other programs or parts of the paper. Thus, for example, a respondent who only wanted to hear the time found himself listening to news:

I used to tune in Radio Budapest every morning at five because my alarm clock was out of order and I could find out from the radio when it was 5:15, the time I was supposed to get up. The radio used to announce the exact time several times during the news and music broadcasts. While still half asleep, I was able to watch out for the time when I was supposed to get up, and I also listened to the broadcasts which were mostly very dull. (065/1-5)

He then went on to report to the interviewer in considerable detail about the contents of the news and political broadcasts of Radio Budapest.

Secondly, limited interests can obviously lead the reader or listener further afield than he may wish. An example of this kind of
incidental exposure to Communist propaganda appears in the interview with a middle-aged woman who used to look at the foreign news in the daily papers occasionally in search of news which would give promise of Hungary's liberation from Communism. Here she included news about Tito and Yugoslavia and news about the United States, especially its armament and international conferences. But a few sentences further on she said:

Sometimes my eye got caught on such lies in the newspapers as the 12 ears of corn growing on one stalk and 100 quintals of wheat growing on one acre of land in the kolkhozes in the Soviet Union. I knew enough about agriculture not to be able to believe this. I did not believe the news about the above-quoted agricultural and industrial production either. When I read in the newspaper that in the Soviet Union the course of a river was changed, enabling the growing of various useful products on lands which had been unfertile before, I thought that was a big lie. I also thought it was an impossible thing when I read about a Soviet scientist who had grafted potatoes so that the plant grew potatoes at the bottom and tomatoes on top. (O6/13)

Clearly this woman read much more of the foreign news than that which pertained directly to Hungary's liberation.

Still other readers were led astray from their intention to limit their exposure by their need to know what was going on and by their need to know what the Communists were up to. As one man put it:

People no longer have the stamina to listen to that (propaganda), but a radio is so much a part of a home that a person tunes it in anyway out of curiosity to see what they (the Communists) want to tell them. (O6/14).

This same respondent said that his family subscribed to three newspapers only to avoid trouble and he asserted that he simply read the headlines or looked at the pictures. But he then went on to describe the contents

ITOR, Inc.
of these papers in great detail. His disgust with Communist propaganda
and distortions of the news in these papers and on an electric news
on Oktogon Square in Budapest and on the radio was indeed well document
(050/3;4)

Similarly, another respondent claimed on the one hand that he
only bought a newspaper "whenever the news got around town that Sebhad
propagandists were again making their house-to-house rounds soliciting
subscriptions... In this way they were less persistent about the
subscriptions than on occasions when they did not find any newspaper
in the home," but that he never read the Communist papers and only used
them to make a fire. (027/2) On the other hand, he proceeded to reveal
a fairly careful reading of the domestic press. Following is just one
of several observations he made during his interview:

One could find nothing new in it. The most it
might report was that one month the Gans factory
is 10 per cent ahead, while in other months the
Hild Thread factory was 10 per cent behind the
quota. I found that the daily newspapers were
being used as tools in the production race.
(027/2)

And another respondent who successfully avoided subscribing to
Communist papers by telling his employer that he subscribed at home and
by telling the village solicitor that Sebhad Nen was read aloud at work,
could not resist buying a paper whose headline interested him:

At work Communist newsbooks sold the Sprotk Laparan
for 20 fillers a copy. I bought this paper about
a month ago because I saw the headline of an article
on American life. The article was supposed to be an
eyewitness report and said that in the US people
rummaged for food in dust bins. The writer described
an incident in which a woman found a big bone and
fought with a big dog which tried to take the bone

ITC, Inc.
away from her. The article reported other horrifying incidents, too. This is typical of Communist propaganda. (939/h)

Perhaps the only people among these 100 refugees who were truly not exposed to the messages of the State are the few who were too exhausted or bitter to read the newspapers or listen to the radio at all and who happened to be in isolated situations in which they could avoid meetings. But even these people were captured in other ways, sometimes by simply being enticed to attend the movies:

On Sundays the people go to see their relatives or to the movies or to the inn. They constantly show the kolkhoz in the cinema, too—plenty of tractors and how they build. When the movie was on, the inn was closed so that everybody would attend the performance. Both the cinema and the inn belong to the State. We sometimes went to the movies as there was nowhere to go, but they always showed the same thing. There has been no admission fee at the cinema since they started showing Communist films. (009/3)

By and large, then, people who deny that they paid attention to the domestic media at the same time reveal that they had indeed been exposed; particularly if they read or listened for limited purposes were they susceptible to seeing or hearing the "tabooed" content as well, and even if they avoided the actual media they were exposed to the Communist messages at meetings, through posters and public loudspeakers.
What Did They Think of the Domestic Media?

To begin with, the domestic media represented the voice of the Communist rulers, and as such were targets of great hostility. In other words, the attitudes of these Hungarian refugees toward the Communist media are facets of their attitudes toward the regime, and their reactions to the media are secondary to their hostility toward the regime. A young man who was quite familiar with Communist propaganda methods reported:

Sometimes we used to listen to Radio Budapest at home. Whatever it said always boiled down to two things: the defense of peace and the increase of production. After a while we always shut it off, saying 'The hell with this nonsense, we have had enough of it.' Everybody knows that both these things serve only to secure the rule of Communism. (060/l)

And another described Hungarian sentiment as follows:

I think that these food hoarding and other similar stories are not even believed by those who write them. I was always very much surprised that the workers, wherever I worked, were always cursing the regime. Whatever the Communists said, they said it was a lie. If they read in the newspapers that food prices have gone up in the USA, they would tell each other that food prices would

As these refugees discussed the domestic press and radio, they made little distinction between the two. Both are considered instruments of the Communist regime and they are judged guilty of the same sins. The only distinctions between the two refer to the kind of content they offer (e.g., the radio offers music) or the amount of time one or the other devotes to given subjects. But neither of these differences is relevant to a discussion of the credibility of the domestic media, therefore no distinction is made in the following discussion. As one respondent reported:

We did not find it worthwhile to buy other papers as they all wrote the same Communist Party slogans, with which we were fed up. The same melody was to be heard on Radio Budapest, to which we therefore listened very seldom. (007/7)

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be raised again in Hungary. Nobody believed the lies of the Communists. For this reason I always wondered about how this regime could maintain itself in power. When I was younger, and when I had met so many other workers yet, I thought that there might be some people who believed in them and that the regime leaned on these people. Later, however, I realized that nobody believed in them but that the regime could still maintain itself in power. (023/5)

How Much Did They Believe?

It is obvious that in a sample of refugees one will not find people who wholly believed the Communist press and radio. The very fact that they came to the West, despite the Communist disparagement of conditions in the West, demonstrates their rejection of Communist reports and verifies that they believed that the Communists lie.* Nevertheless, there are different degrees of skepticism even among these refugees.

The differences among these refugees as to how much of the domestic output can be believed is reflected in what they read and listened to. Somewhat over half — those who were not exposed or exposed only to non-political news — feel that only these limited items are trustworthy. Indeed, some respondents are even suspicious of some of these items, for example, when sports news dwells on Russian athletic superiority:

It was the sports section which I could read calmly, because I knew that here they (the Communists) cannot deceive us. However, this is not quite true, either, because when Soviet athletes met with Hungarians, the latter had to let themselves be beaten. I know this from people who were in Budapest and saw a Hungarian-Soviet wrestling match. (033/3)

* One Hungarian told about a worker who confronted a meeting leader with this argument: he asked at a meeting "if everything is so good about Communism, why is it that people only escape to the West while nobody escapes to the East?" (047/3)
An additional third of these Hungarians — those who read reports of such things as political visits and the construction of new factories — believed the facts that these events occurred, but discredited the Communist interpretations of the events. For example:

We used to listen to the Hungarian news of Radio Budapest at 7 in the morning. Lately, its news was only about crop deliveries, the praising of Stal신ovites, the overfulfillment of the production plan, and voluntary (production) affairs. In other words, it only had news that was completely uninteresting for us. We knew that neither the peasants nor the workers had any choice, and that what the Communists called ‘enthusiastic voluntary sacrifice’ they (the Communists) stole from, or forced out of them. (051/2)

But a sophisticated minority of 12 feel that although the news about economic and political affairs is presented with Communist bias, it contains some elements of truth about what is going on and can be used to ascertain the true situation. These are the people who read all kinds of news, but they read between the lines. One way of reading between the lines was as follows:

Ludas Matyi wrote the truth. It ridiculed the West, but in the meantime, everything it printed could be understood as actually happening in our country. For instance, it satirized the bad lot of the workers in the USA, because there they switched to war production, cut wages and increased prices. Actually all this was done in Hungary. It said that in America the jails are filled up to capacity because workers who speak against the regime are arrested and imprisoned. This is exactly what we have (in Hungary). It said that in America the workers have no bread because grain is dumped into the sea. This also happens in our country, except that the grain is not dumped into the sea but is sent to Russia. Ludas Matyi ridiculed the system of rationing in foreign countries and a few weeks later rationing was introduced in our country. It charged that the English are only seemingly the masters in their own country, while actually the Americans are
directing them, even in their internal affairs. This is also the actual fact in our country, except for substituting the Russians for the Americans. They had cartoons on the election where the voters had to the polls between police cordons and where those who did not vote for the government were immediately imprisoned. I don't think that the editors do this on purpose, but I heard many times from people that there is no better way to learn about the present and future situation in Hungary than from Ladas Matyi. (023/3)

An even simpler way of "reading between the lines" was described by some respondents who merely believed the reverse of what they read or heard:

It (Szabad Nap) showed only hatred for the free peoples and the non-Communists, as well as one-sidedness and propaganda. Its slogan was 'Produce more' and this demand was also the primary content of its reports. Other main themes were: glorification of Communism, of 'distinguished' Russian men, and of the 'Korean heroes.' Falsification of history was also its characteristic; it credited the Russians with every invention. Two objective lines about world events would have been worth more than all its contents I mentioned. However, it still gave some information about world events, in the sense that you had to believe exactly the opposite of what Szabad Nap reported. The facts it reported were always packed in a mass of colorful slogans, but if you pealed them off something (some truth) remained. (060/3)

Finally, a more dispassionate Hungarian who listened to Radio Belgrade, Radio Moscow and Radio Budapest, in addition to VOA and BBC, explained that he could thereby really arrive at the truth:

I figured that -- as the judge listens to the accused and the accused -- I could become most objective if I listened to the Communist radio as well as the Western stations. (078/7)

To all of the refugees, then, the domestic media were suspect.

The respondents differed only in their judgment of how far Communist distortion could go. Thirteen per cent rejected all the contents of the
media; 36 per cent accepted entertainment and sports news, reports of quotas and government edicts as facts not susceptible of Communist distortion; an additional 33 per cent included limited political news such as reports of presumably objective facts (visits, construction, etc.); and 12 per cent, although agreed that only the limited facts about sports, quotas, edicts, etc., could be accepted without reservation, felt that they could glean the truth from broader economic and political news despite the biases in the presentation of such news. None felt that the domestic media on the whole could be accepted without considerable reservation.

What Kind of News Was Most Suspect?

Although few items fully escape suspicion, even sports news when it dealt with Russian athletic prowess, some kinds of news were questioned more readily than others.

The most suspect news was that which reported economic and socialization successes in Hungary. Sixty per cent of the entire group of respondents stated that these claims were patently false:

Most of the time I just threw the papers aside, because if I looked at them I only found things I knew more about on the basis of my experience. Thus, in connection with the supposedly great results achieved in the field of production, work methods, and the organization of collectives, I knew very well all about their conditions and the delays that accompanied all these programs. (046/2)

*The remaining 6 per cent did not express a judgment of the extent of the credibility of the domestic media.
Among these 60 per cent many people mentioned more than one subject: half spoke disparagingly of the Communist claims about the meeting of quota goals; almost half (28 per cent of the sample) referred to the false claims about the success of the socialization program; and almost as many (26 per cent of the entire group) discredited the stories of shockworker or Stakhanovite successes.

The next frequently mentioned biased subject, in the opinion of the refugees, was the reports dealing with Korean news. Thirty-three per cent of these respondents pointed to such news in describing the untrustworthiness of the domestic media:

If in Korea, for example, the Communists are retreating, the Saebyun Hap report is: 'The Communists firmly hold their positions,' or 'There is vigorous fighting.' (00h/1)

Approximately the same number of these Hungarians disparaged the Communist reports of the low standard of living in the West. Thirty-two made statements of this order:

The Hungarians liked to present biased propaganda, too, about the extent to which Americans and the nations of the West in general must struggle with scarcities, delays and losses because of strikes and the selfishness of the capitalists. (011/2)

One-fifth of the refugees talked about the distortion by the domestic media of the goals of the Western world, for example, the practice of labelling the Western leaders as warmongers:

At the factory we listened to Radio Budapest. . . . It spoke about the imperialists' warmongering activity. The boys often had angry words against the broadcast. (011/2)
And, finally, one-fifth railed against the Communist reports of the achievements of the USSR and other satellite countries:

According to Radio Budapest everything was discovered by Russian scientists and inventors. (058/2)

Whatever I read in the newspaper always turned out to be a statement about how good it is to be a Communist. I did not believe at all in the glorification of Russian culture in the newspaper, since we had learned by experience that the Russian soldier did not even know how to use a fork. (029/3)

The Process of Disbelief

There were many things which enabled these Hungarians to support their basic prejudice that the Communists misrepresent the facts. Close to half said that they knew the reports were lies from their own experience; approximately the same number mentioned foreign broadcasts or news from relatives in the West as contributing toward their disbelief of domestic reports; smaller proportions referred variously to the method of presentation in the media—the standardization of reports, the incompleteness or one-sidedness of the news, the omissions, and the logical absurdities, as evidences as well as hallmarks of Communist distortions of the news.

Apparently the most direct and convincing proof of the misrepresentations in the domestic media is that the reports repeatedly contradict the direct experiences of the Hungarian citizenry. Reports about small events as well as general statements in the press and on the radio are easily controverted by what the people themselves witness or remember.
As one Hungarian put it: "So many bad things had happened to us that we didn't wish to know about the 'people's well-being' the Communists wrote about." (050/2) Indeed, so averse were these Hungarians to accept the word of the Communists that a store manager who knew that no one in his family's village had joined a kolkhoz refused to believe that anyone anywhere could profit from kolkhoz membership in any way:

Radio Budapest's characteristic reports were those about work competitions honoring the birthday of Stalin or Rakosi, and pro-Communist news on the Korean war. It also had a broadcast, for instance, about an individual farmer, whose name was given in the broadcast, saying that he had been unable to succeed until he joined the kolkhoz. The latter enabled him to acquire everything his family needed, and his daughter was succeeding well as a nurse. I knew that the broadcast was a phony because in the village where my family lived the Communists had not managed to persuade anybody to join the kolkhoz. I regarded its (Radio Budapest's) broadcasts about the rise of the standard of living the same way (as phony). I gained enough experience at my various places of work to know that the truth was exactly the opposite (of what the Communists said). (053/7)

The bitterness with which the Hungarians received these misrepresentations was expressed by a middle-aged woman:

I was very sad about the Communist posters, which were all over the town, promising prosperity, when all we could experience was the continuous worsening of the situation. Thinking about this, I was outraged by the Communist poster having the inscription 'blossoming town, happy people.' I kept about the priests about whose arrest and other sufferings the Hungarian Communist newspapers were reporting, and I felt the same way when I read about repressions against other Hungarians, and when I heard from people that certain persons were taken away (arrested) at various places. I used to think about the difficult fate of these people, while the Communist posters were saying 'yours is the country, yours is the factory.' (051/3)
With such evidence of distortion in hand, it is an easy step to
discredit reports about events beyond one's actual experience. This kind
of generalization was described by one young man:

It was also Hopsport which published the results
of MK (Ready to Work Ready to Fight Youth Move-
ment) contests throughout the country. Thus, for
example, it wrote that last fall in my native
village, 300 contestants passed the
MK tests successfully, that is, they fulfilled
the requirements in the various branches of sport.
A few weeks later I went home and learned that
only 150 finished the tests successfully. Thus I
could see for myself the extent to which they ex-
aggerate MK results for the sake of propaganda.
I saw from this how little the results relating
to other towns and communities could be trusted.
(053/3)

In addition to people's own knowledge of events, foreign broadcast
serve to discredit the reports of the domestic press and radio. By issuing
reports which coincide with Hungarian experiences, by reporting all the
facts of a given event or by presenting two sides of an issue or event,
and by presenting explanations which are logically or ideologically ac-
ceptable, they continuously dramatise the distortions by omission and
commission in the Hungarian press and radio and reinforce Hungarian dis-
belief in the domestic media. Furthermore, by telling the Hungarians that
they want to hear (that Communism is being opposed in the world at large)
the foreign broadcasts promote belief in all the items which they transmit.

The hallmarks of propaganda -- standardization, one-sidedness or
omissions -- too, serve as constant reminders of the untrustworthiness of
the domestic media. By these methods, as well as by cut and past
cleanliness, the discussion of foreign broadcasts in later sections of this report
will amplify and illustrate these comments.
the press and radio not only reveal their unreliability but also irri-
tate their audience and encourage ridicule.

The standardization of the contents of the Hungarian radio
and press takes two forms: the facts are always the same and they are
always dressed with signs of propaganda. "It was always the same story,
about the life of workers and about the supposed beauties of Communist
life." (045/3) Or, "I almost got sick from listening to this news. The
news sounded like a poem... The announcer reported the news as if
he had memorized the whole thing." (026/2) These statements — that
every paper says the same thing and that they all have to write according
to central instructions — were volunteered by one in four respondents:

We used to look at the Korean war reports only
for fun: it was interesting to compare them with
the previous reports. Sometimes we put five or
six newspapers one beside the other, and the re-
ports in them were all identical; only the words
varied. (077/3)

Even technical journals do not escape propaganda:

It was my habit for years to buy the weekly
Klet es Radomany regularly. While I was in
school this weekly was delivered there — then
I used to buy it in a tobacco shop. I bought it
because it was a technical paper. It wasn't worth
much though, because it reported only about the
technical development in the Soviet Union. (077/3)

As might be expected, the standardization of the content of the media
alienates the Hungarian audience because it is boring, in addition to
revealing untrustworthiness:

I didn't read newspapers. In the factory, they
forced me into buying Szehad Neps from the very
first day. But I never read it. It couldn't
hold my interest. There were only articles in
it which didn't concern me at all. Again and
again about the shockworkers and about the
building of the new iron plant in Dunaújváros.
I knew that everything was a lie. (038/2)
Another demonstration for these refugees of the unreliability of the domestic media is that their news is one-sided, visibly presented in a pro-Communist light:

During recent months I sometimes read the news about Korea in which I could see the one-sidedness of the Communists, because they only reported their defensive operations, and nothing about the successes of the Americans and their Allies. (029/3)

As this quotation suggests, a related criticism on the part of these respondents is the failure of the Communist news services to report unfavorable news items or give news unfavorable to Communism. Their belief that the news is distorted is supported by the absence of news about production failures, industrial accidents, purges of key personnel, and Korean defeats.

The Budapest radio only reported advances and said that the Communists had inflicted losses. They never reported any setbacks. Nobody believed what they said because they never reported any setbacks. (032/6)

A middle-aged tool maker described the omissions of facts and unfavorable interpretations about what happens in Hungary:

People learn from each other what happens in the town or in the whole country. There is nothing about murders in the press. Nor is it published if someone disappears, or when the AVO barracks broke down and 70 people died, or if a tourist boat on the Danube is blown up. All these people only learn from each other. But if a kulak is supposed to have made a black slaughter (without permission) the newspapers are sure to give an exact report of the case. They don't mind spending words on these. But nobody is interested in this. People are not interested in Stalin's birthday either, and full pages are written about it, or they print word by word the speeches of Gero and Revai. Lies are told about voluntary work offers, but all that really happens in the country never appears in the newspapers. The newspapers short change events, but nothing is written about how the Reds prepare for war. (055/2)
It should be noted that both of these evidences of Communist misrepresentation -- the one-sidedness and the omissions of their reports -- are dramatized by the foreign broadcasts which give the lie to the pro-Communist picture and fill in the gaps of the domestic reports.

In addition to all of these more or less adroit techniques of presentation, the Communist press and radio gave away their manipulations by reporting absurd or self-contradictory stories. Two examples of such reports are:

For instance, there appeared day by day in every newspaper, and with almost the same text, a Communist war communiqué saying that the Korean Communists, in collaboration with Chinese volunteers, had thrown back the attacks of the enemy, and shot down so and so many planes. Whenever I and my friends added up the number of shot-down American planes reported in the newspapers over a long period, then I had to believe that the American Air Force no longer existed. However, the war communiqués kept coming, reporting on the destructive American air raids. So it became clear that the Communist war communiqués were lies, and that the achievements of the American Air Force were great. Regarding the land fighting, the names of towns mentioned in Communist war communiqués betrayed, within two or three days, the military successes of the enemies of the Communists. It was enough to pull out the map and realize, on the basis of several days' communiqués, how the Americans were advancing towards the North. (04/9/3)

I also felt it was a ridiculous lie when the newspapers and the radio back home were boasting about 375 million Chinese having signed peace petitions. One day the Communist propaganda said that a grave responsibility rested on the Americans because of the illiteracy of the Chinese masses, and then, according to the Communists, all of a sudden almost every Chinese was able to write. It was difficult to understand how all these masses were able to learn the difficult Chinese writing so soon. (04/9/4)
Finally, Communist propaganda is also perfectly visible in instances such as this:

Last year it (Radio Budapest) had a program called "Heart Sends it to Heart" (request songs) which was good, because it contained such things as a boy sending a song to a girl. But all they have now is what one comrade sends to another comrade for his good production achievements. (059/3)

Thus, to a large extent, the Hungarian can evaluate the contents of the Communist press and radio on the basis of his own senses. He cannot be grossly misled about economic and political conditions at home because he sees what exists, and his hostility to the regime leads him to generalize the witnessed lie to the unwitnessed lie. Moreover, the visibility of the techniques of distortion -- the standardization of the reported facts and their interpretations, the omissions, and the crude contradictions and violations of logic -- contribute to the general doubts about Communist reports. Finally, foreign broadcasts, by filling in gaps and contradicting Communist reports, reinforce the Hungarian's skepticism of what he reads and hears.
Summary

Because the press and radio are clearly instruments of the Communist regime, these refugees bitterly denounce the contents of these media as well as the propaganda to which they were subjected at meetings. No one trusted Communist assertions without reservation — particularly when economic conditions and achievements within Hungary were described. Their own experience and knowledge of conditions belied the claims of the Communists, and their recognition of Communist techniques of distortion, together with supplementary and complementary reports from foreign broadcasts and from relatives who were outside of Hungary, reinforced their disbelief.

Nevertheless, a considerable majority did read and listen to the domestic media far beyond the requirements of compulsory exposure. Moreover, they appear to have read and listened to even more than they acknowledged, not only more frequently but also a wider range of subjects. That is, although they claimed that their exposure was consonant with their belief, people who said that they did not read or listen at all because it was all intolerable gave evidence of being familiar with the contents of the media, and people who said that they limited their exposure to incontestable items revealed that they were familiar with the broader interpretative items.

Although they may have been more exposed to the Communist press and radio than they acknowledge, however, it seems safe to conclude that a majority were exposed on a fairly superficial level. Only 12 per cent
read or listened with some intensity, but with a jaundiced eye, especially for the big lies.*

*In this connection, the experiment by Carl I. Hovland and Walter Weiss reported in "Source Credibility and Communication Effectiveness", Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. XIV No. 1, is noteworthy. The findings indicate that immediately after exposure to a communication from a source considered unreliable by the audience, the audience is likely to discredit the contents of the communication, but that, after some time has passed, the audience tends to disassociate the content with the source and to accept the material originally considered untrustworthy.
CHAPTER II

HOW AND WHY THEY LISTEN TO FOREIGN BROADCASTS

Circumstances Surrounding Exposure to Foreign Broadcasts

Attitude of Regime Toward Foreign Broadcast Listening and Measures Taken to Prevent It

Listening to foreign broadcasts in Hungary takes place in a special social situation which is characterized by a number of circumstances resulting from the existence of the Communist regime in that country and from its attitude toward people's exposure to foreign stations. Statements made by the respondents provide a comprehensive description of these circumstances, even if the respondents appear to disagree among themselves on certain points.

The legal status of listening to Western broadcasts is one of the points on which opinions differ. Seventeen per cent of the respondents stated that foreign broadcast listening was subject to an official legal prohibition on the part of the Hungarian government. Most of the statements to this effect are quite positive, such as, for example, the following remarks made by a young Budapest secretary:

About a year or a year and a half ago a decree was made public which said that whoever listened to Western stations was in the service of the enemy, and that it was the duty of every one who should learn about such a thing to report it (to the police). I read the decree in a newspaper. . . . (099/13)
Another respondent, a young agricultural laborer from Western Hungary, said:

There is a regulation prohibiting the listening to Western stations. The village order announced it in the spring of last year. They did not announce the punishment, but they said that it (listening to foreign broadcasts) was prohibited. A few people were taken down to the police station because of that. But they were released a few days later. (Ol3/10)

However, the overwhelming majority of respondents, eighty percent, stated that there was no official legal prohibition, in other words, no law or regulation which would make it a criminal offense to listen to foreign broadcasts. It cannot be inferred from this that people in Hungary are free to engage in listening to foreign stations unmolested. On the contrary, it is made clear by all the respondents who denied the existence of a formal ban that exposure to Western broadcasts takes place in an atmosphere of caution, suspicion, and even of anxiety. These respondents reported that, the absence of a legal prohibition notwithstanding, an individual who wanted to engage in foreign broadcast listening with reasonable safety had to be very careful and had to take all manner of precautionary measures to prevent the Communist authorities from finding out that he listened. It appears that to be known to the authorities as a foreign broadcast listener can only be detrimental to the person's welfare, because of a number of de facto measures taken by the regime against such individuals. It is not improbable that those who referred to the existence of a formal ban confused these de facto measures with the really nonexistent de jure measures. Neither is it
impossible that in certain limited areas such an official prohibition was actually imposed and enforced by the local authorities for special reasons. In fact, the restrictions imposed in the Western border area of Hungary appear to be greater in many fields than in other parts of the country. However, no clear explanation is to be found in the interviews.

Several respondents mention the fact that listening to foreign broadcasts is considered evidence of a hostile attitude toward the regime. This offers the Communist authorities a means of bypassing the absence of a formal ban by dealing with the person involved as an "enemy of the people" rather than as a foreign broadcast listener. For example:

There is no law against listening to Western broadcasts . . . (However) the Communists could . . . find out who was listening to Western stations and then do something against that person on some other pretext. For instance, they would cancel their pensions without any explanation. People back home were generally convinced that they risked various reprisals for listening to the Western broadcasts. The deportations increased such worries considerably. Deportation occurred without any explanation and on the basis of confidential information. It is very likely that deportation befell persons who were (known as) foreign broadcast listeners. Because of these reasons we used to listen to Western stations only behind closed windows and locked doors. If a stranger came to our apartment, we immediately switched the dial to the wavelength of Radio Budapest . . . (093/22)

A few respondents said that persons known to the secret police (AVO) as foreign broadcast listeners are likely to be prosecuted and punished on trumped-up charges of a different nature. For example:

IRK, Inc.
It is permitted to listen to Western broadcasts, but when they (the Communists) learn that a person listens to it, they invent some other charge for which they can arrest him. I know of such a case in Budapest. The man was a shoemaker, and they accused him of buying leather on the black market. He was taken away. (061/9)

If somebody listens to Western stations ... he is interned or loses his job. Such persons are not punished directly because they listened to the radio. They (the Communists) find other means of trapping, compromising and punishing them. For example, they accuse them of spreading panic-provoking rumors. (019/11)

Intimidation and brutalities administered by the police are frequently referred to by the respondents. For example:

If it can be proved that a person listened to Western broadcasts, particularly to the VOA, then he is taken to the police station for a few hours or days and manhandled brutally. (067/13)

Secret Police informers are on the lookout to detect and identify the foreign broadcast listeners among the population. For example:

In my native village, informers continually eavesdropped under the windows trying to find out where people listened to Western broadcasts. People were afraid of getting into trouble if they were discovered with their radio sets tuned in to Western stations. (065/8)

The tailor (who was the respondent's informant) got into trouble last summer. The AVO people overheard him when he listened to RFE .... They threatened him that if this should happen again they would confiscate his radio set and put him in prison. Somebody had denounced the tailor and that is why the AVO had been watching him. (091/5)

Several respondents reported that listening to foreign broadcasts in groups including persons who do not belong to the household is liable to be punished. For example:
Listening to the radio in groups is dangerous in Hungary. I mean that if other persons, aside from members of the family, sit at the radio, they are likely, if they are discovered, to be taken to the police station, manhandled, punished, and even to disappear... (04/9/18)

These and similar reasons compel the foreign broadcast listeners in Hungary to keep it a closely guarded secret that they tune in to western stations. The general atmosphere in which listening to foreign broadcasts goes on is rather forcefully described by one of the respondents:

You cannot be cautious enough when you listen. Even with closed windows and an unlighted room you have to watch every noise and every movement outside the door, so as not to be surprised. (04/9/18)

One out of four respondents reported that, aside from the risk involved in the act of listening to foreign broadcasts, an additional danger was incurred by those who spread the news broadcast by foreign stations. Only some of these respondents claimed that dissemination of such news was punishable under the law of the country, but all were aware that a certain danger was involved. Here is a rather typical statement:

There is no formal prohibition, but if the AVO learns that someone listens he will be declared an imperialist hireling and will be accused of spreading the panic-provoking news heard on the (foreign) radio. For this he is liable to be severely punished. I had an acquaintance who got into trouble because of listening to the radio. He just told his neighbors what he had heard on the radio, and there was a stranger present who denounced him. Next day he was arrested, and released after three days. In the meantime, he was thoroughly beaten up by the AVO. He was not sentenced, though, but they made him sign a declaration that he had suffered no harm. (05/8/10)

* Under a law passed in 1946, dissemination of panic-provoking rumors is punishable in Hungary.
In general, it is rather difficult to arrive at a clear understanding of the official status of foreign broadcast listening in Hungary, largely because the respondents themselves seem to be unable to differentiate between, as we have pointed out earlier, what might be qualified as de jure and de facto measures taken by the regime. This may be accounted for by the fact that the educational level of the present sample is rather low, but it may also be a reflection of the actual situation which prevails in Hungary in this respect. In fact, it seems quite possible that the Hungarian Communist government has thus far relied chiefly on non-legal ways of deterring the population from listening to the foreign stations and from spreading the news. Intimidation, police brutalities, trumped-up charges and similar methods may be believed to be just as effective in creating fear and discouragement as any explicitly prohibitive decrees.

A number of respondents reported other measures which are calculated to reduce the number of short-wave sets in operation among the population. For example:

Instructions were issued to radio mechanics to alter each set which they are given to repair in such a way as to make it impossible to pick up short waves from them on. I learned this in Budapest. I spoke to a man who had his radio set repaired and when he got it back he was not able to pick up the VOA or BBC any longer. (061/9)

At present there is much propaganda in newspapers and by means of door to door calling teams for the so-called "wire distribution system". In large houses one radio set is installed in the apartment of a trustworthy tenant who is then responsible for the set, while only loudspeakers are installed in the other apartments. These are connected with the central receiver. It is this man's responsibility, of course, that no anti-Communist broadcasts are tuned in and distributed (over the network). (007/10)
Aside from the different measures discussed above, several respondents mentioned what might be called propaganda policies the purpose of which is to discourage listening to foreign broadcasts. These policies fall essentially into two categories. On the one hand, the Communists endeavor to ridicule the broadcasts and the listeners.

The Communists try to ridicule the habit of listening to Western stations by mudslinging and abuse. I heard that... Radio Budapest was experimenting with this sort of propaganda. This propaganda was directed in the first place against the VOA... (05/31/22)

On the other hand, attempts were made to refute certain selected news items broadcast by Western stations about domestic events.

Occasionally the local press and the radio pick up a report of the VOA and try to make it look ridiculous or to prove that it is a lie. This happened, for example, in the case of the (VOA) news about the imminent exchange of the Hungarian 100-forint bills. (09/15)

Communist propaganda against listening to Western stations consists in calling Western newscasts a pack of lies. Another such (propaganda) measure was when they announced that the amnesty granted to people who illegally escaped to the West would also include those who were persuaded to escape by Western radio propaganda. (04/29/82)

The whole aggregate of the measures described above is calculated to counteract and undermine the influence of foreign broadcasts upon the population of Hungary. This indicates that the regime believes that these broadcasts are important factors in the process of the formation of political opinions among the Hungarian people.
Effect of the Preventive Measures

The degree of effectiveness of these different measures is discussed by one out of every two respondents. The overwhelming majority of these respondents (68 per cent) claimed that the attempts of the regime to discourage listening had no apparent effect and that people listened nevertheless, neither being intimidated nor becoming dissatisfied with the foreign stations.

These risks, however, did not keep anyone who had a radio from listening to Western broadcasts.

(034/11)

Everybody longed for the exact information expected from Western broadcasts so much that no obstacle could stop their listening. (025/9)

A number of respondents (16 per cent of those who discussed the effectiveness of the Communist measures) stated that the restrictions against listening to foreign stations had a detrimental effect upon the listening habits of the Hungarian people, because a considerable number of people were in fact prevented from listening through deportation, arrest, confiscation or alteration of their sets.

The deportations reduced to a very large extent the opportunity of listening to the radio. Nobody took their sets along to their forced residence places. The deportees were permitted to take along only a very limited amount of baggage, and they usually took with them only absolutely necessary things. They took books rather than a radio because they feared that the mere possession of a set capable of picking up foreign stations would be held against them by the Communists. (031/22)

Policemen inspect the houses of the kulaks every night around 9 o'clock. There were two kulaks in our street who completely dismantled their sets (and stopped listening to foreign broadcasts) because the police bothered them every night. (006/3)
Jamming

However, if the regime has been unable to discourage effectively the listening habits of the population, it has found a means of hindering the clear reception of foreign broadcasts by resorting to the purely technical method of jamming them.

On the basis of the data supplied by the respondents it is next to impossible to arrive at any clear picture of the degree of intelligibility of the various foreign stations under the jamming practices of the regime. On the one hand, it is rather safe to assume that there is no systematic pattern followed by the regime in the matter of jamming. Not all the foreign stations are jammed to the same extent and with the same regularity. The jamming devices are not equally effective when applied to a number of stations which vary in power and in distance from the target area. Also certain considerations extraneous to the technical standpoint in this respect, such as the political expediency of jamming one station at a particular time as against another station, or one particular program as against another program, can cause considerable variations in the degree of jamming of the different foreign broadcasts.

A few respondents made comments upon this point:

Jamming of Western radio stations is being done in a completely haphazard way. Sometimes there was no jamming at all for about a week, and then it was there every day. (07/4/10)

On the other hand, the information supplied by the respondents with respect to the intelligibility of foreign broadcasts loses much of its meaning if it is not related to, and compared with, the make and power of the radio sets on which the actual experiences referred to by these
respondents were made. There is clearly a difference between a small
two tube set and a powerful seven tube radio; while the former can
afford a clear reception of foreign broadcasts only occasionally, the
latter may pick up the broadcasts consistently, without any trouble.

Under these circumstances, we can only present some tentative
conclusions. The analysis of the statements of respondents reveals that
RFE seems to be the most heavily jammed foreign station and BBC the least
heavily jammed, while the VOA seems to hold an intermediate position be-
tween these two.

Table 4

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<th>VOA</th>
<th>BBC</th>
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<td>Poor</td>
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<td>10%</td>
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<td>Fair</td>
<td>54%</td>
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<td>Good</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>42%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cases (100%)</td>
<td>(74)</td>
<td>(59)</td>
<td>(62)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reader must be cautioned that the above table represents
only the generalized appraisal of the intelligibility of the major foreign
stations, based on statements like the following:

We tried to listen to the broadcasts of RFE on a
very good set, but we were unable to get them at
any time of day because of heavy jamming. . . . we
tried to listen to Paris, the VOA, BBC and RFE.
The reception of BBC was almost completely un-
disturbed, while Paris and the VOA were jammed,
but only so that a few words could not be under-
stood, while jamming did not make it impossible
to understand most of the broadcast. (063/14)

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Statements of this sort cannot be completely relied upon because there is considerable evidence that jamming varies both in time and with respect to different stations, or even different programs of the same station. Here is an example:

Jamming was especially strong when the Western stations were speaking about political matters which involved the Soviet Union, Hungary or the other Satellite countries. (06/10)

The VOA broadcasts at 9:45 p.m. and at 7:30 a.m. were jammed. . . . Certain parts of the programs, particularly the important news items, were often jammed at other hours, too. The other parts of the programs were not disturbed as much. I hardly could hear anything when there was jamming. However, it also occurred sometimes that I could hear interesting news. This happened when the radio unexpectedly announced an interesting news item in the middle of a less interesting part of the program, thus taking the Communists by surprise. (06/15)

In view of this evidence, there is no possibility of clearly defining the degree of intelligibility of any one station.

Effects of Jamming

One out of two listeners to foreign broadcasts made some comment about the effects of jamming.* Within this group of respondents, the overwhelming majority claimed that jamming did not discourage listening: three out of every four of these respondents made statements to this effect. A few others (6 per cent) went on to say that jamming actually increased their interest in the broadcasts:

* The effects of jamming, like the effects of other preventive measures, were so generally considered to be nil that many respondents regarded a question about the effects as being foolish, and others simply implied that of course there was no effect, without directly stating so.
Instead of making people give up listening to Western broadcasts, jamming made them all the more anxious to listen to them. They thought that the broadcasts were being jammed because unpleasant things were said about the Communists, and so people wanted to hear this all the more. (066/10)

A few respondents (16 per cent) said that jamming had a discouraging effect on the listeners in that it made them give up listening to the jammed program. The RFS broadcast at 6:30 p.m. was particularly jammed every day. On account of this, my in-laws (with whom the respondent listened to foreign broadcasts) sometimes even gave up trying to listen to this program. (053/8)

There is no evidence, however, that jamming modified the listening habits of the population in any more permanent manner.
Foreign Broadcast Listening Habits

Listeners and Non-Listeners in the Sample: Personal Factors in Listening

Aside from the various circumstances which we have described above under the general heading of the attitude of the regime toward listening to foreign broadcasts, the actual exposure of people to these broadcasts is also influenced by certain factors pertaining to the personal situation of the individual. For example, not everybody can be a foreign broadcast listener because many people do not own radio sets or do not have any access to a radio set. On the other hand, certain people, while in a position to do so, may not dare or want to listen to foreign broadcasts.

The present sample comprises a considerable proportion of respondents who never listened to foreign broadcasts at all: as many as 20 per cent of the respondents belong to this category. Most of them did not listen because they had no access to a radio at all or because the sets to which they did have access were not strong enough to receive the broadcasts of foreign stations. Three respondents were non-listeners because they did not own sets and were afraid of exposing themselves to the dangers involved in listening to foreign broadcasts in other people's homes. Three individuals said that they were just not interested in politics and did not care to listen.

Set ownership is obviously an important factor in listening, because an individual who owns a set has easier access to foreign broadcasts than his neighbor who does not and who therefore can only listen...
to foreign stations if somebody else affords him the opportunity to do so. Many people who are not radio owners themselves have close friends or relatives at whose places they are able occasionally to hear programs of Western stations. In the case of our respondents, the plurality of all foreign broadcast listeners were in this personal situation.

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ownership of Sets on Which Foreign Broadcasts Were Heard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Own set</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another's set</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Public&quot; set</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not ascertainable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cases (100%) =</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is a rather interesting fact that so large a proportion of respondents managed to listen to foreign broadcasts despite the handicap of not having direct access to the radio in their homes, in many cases with surprising regularity and frequency. While these exact figures cannot be safely projected to the Hungarian population in general, they indicate a real trend toward finding elsewhere, at some personal inconvenience, the opportunity of listening to foreign broadcasts which is not available at home.

There is another personal situational factor which should be taken into consideration because it has a decisive influence upon the listening habits of many individuals. People who, for whatever reason, are compelled to live in close community with strangers may find it virtually impossible to get access to the radio and to engage in listening.
even furtively, to foreign stations. This will be the case with soldiers, sailors, members of regimented labor brigades, residents of worker dormitories; this is also the case with convicts, labor camp inmates and deportees. The respondents classified in the preceding table as having listened on a "public" set are individuals who listened to radios even in one of these special situations (mostly in worker dormitories). On the other hand, the present sample comprises respondents who, under similar circumstances, had to forgo listening completely. Moreover, 16 per cent of the sample were individuals who had been arrested at one time or another and who therefore were prevented from listening to foreign broadcasts over a longer or shorter period of time.

Audience of the Different Stations

As we have already pointed out, 60 per cent of the respondents in the present sample were foreign broadcast listeners. The general term "foreign broadcasts", as used throughout the present report, refers to all stations located on this side of the Iron Curtain, regardless of whether or not they broadcast in Hungarian; it refers, for example, to several Austrian stations (Rot-Weiss-Rot, RAWAG, Alpenland), and to two Yugoslav stations (Belgrade and Zagreb).*

Among this group of 60 individuals who listened to foreign stations, the audiences of the different stations are as follows:

* The present sample comprises only two individuals who admittedly listened to Hungarian language broadcasts of Radio Moscow, and one respondent, a Hungarian expellee from Czechoslovakia, who listened to Radio Prague.

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Table 6

AUDIENCE OF FOREIGN STATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Station</th>
<th>Audience (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VOA</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFE</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBC</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madrid</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yugoslav Stations</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ankara</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austrian Stations</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Stations</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Cases (100%) = (80)

As this table indicates, most foreign broadcast listeners listened to more than one foreign station. Only three stations, the VOA, BBC, and RFE, were listened to by more than half of the respondents. These three stations can be considered as broadcasters of major importance for the Hungarian listeners.

The VOA listeners in the present sample listened to other stations as well in the following proportions:

Table 7

OTHER STATIONS LISTENED TO BY VOA LISTENERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Station</th>
<th>Audience (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RFE</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBC</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madrid</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yugoslav Stations</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ankara</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austrian Stations</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Stations</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Cases (100%) = (76)

* The percentages add to more than 100 per cent because many respondents named more than one station. Throughout this report, whenever percentages add to more than 100 per cent, the percentage sign will follow each figure in the table (rather than the first figure only).
Frequency of Listening

The analysis of frequency of listening to foreign broadcasts regardless of station discloses a high proportion of respondents who were exposed to foreign broadcasts very frequently and intensively.

Table 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absolute Frequency of Listening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 3 times per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 3 times per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not ascertainable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cases (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is noteworthy that almost three out of four respondents who listened to foreign broadcasts were frequent or very frequent listeners, and two out of five were daily listeners. Thus, exposure to foreign broadcasts was, in most cases, very intensive, even if we consider that some of these respondents may have achieved so high a frequency by alternating between two or more stations.

Not all the stations have a similar pattern of frequency; in fact, some stations appear to command mostly occasional or rare listeners.
### Table 9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>VOA</th>
<th>RFE</th>
<th>BBC</th>
<th>Parie</th>
<th>Madrid</th>
<th>Yugo.</th>
<th>Ankara</th>
<th>Austria</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 3 times per week</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3 times per week</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not ascertainable</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>(10)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Cases (100%)</strong></td>
<td>(74)</td>
<td>(62)</td>
<td>(59)</td>
<td>(39)</td>
<td>(25)</td>
<td>(17)</td>
<td>(11)</td>
<td>(10)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The relative importance of the different stations in the listening habits of our respondents can be made clearer if we reduce the preceding table to a more rudimentary form.

### Table 10

**DEGREE OF EXPOSURE TO FOREIGN STATIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequent exposure</th>
<th>Infrequent exposure</th>
<th>Not ascertainable</th>
<th>Total (100%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VOA</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>(76)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFE</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>(62)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBC</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>(59)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parie</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>(39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madrid</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>(25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yugoslav Stations</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>(17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ankara</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>(21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austrian Stations</td>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Stations</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* It should be noted that Table 9 is not a breakdown of Table 8. That is to say, a person who listened to VOA four times a week, BBC twice a week, and RFE once a week, all on different days, would be classified as a daily listener in Table 8, but would not be classified under "daily" in Table 9. In the latter table he would appear under the appropriate category for each of the stations.

** At least once a week. All but an insignificant few in this category listened more frequently than once a week.
If we except the Austrian stations whose German-language broadcasts are easily accessible (powerful signal with lack of jamming) to German-speaking Hungarian listeners, and Radio Vatican (which had a special religious appeal to two respondents), it appears that only four stations (RFE, VOA, BBC, Paris, in that order) commanded a frequent exposure on the part of more than half of their respective listeners, and the remaining stations were listened to frequently by only a comparatively small proportion of their audience. It may appear at first glance that this situation may be due partly to the considerable incidence of "not ascertainable" cases relative to stations other than VOA and RFE. However, stations other than VOA were not asked about directly unless they formed major parts of the respondent's listening pattern. Therefore, it may be assumed that most of the "not ascertainables" would fall into the category of infrequent exposure.

Some interesting indications can be gathered from the analysis of the comparative frequency of listening to the different stations.

### Table 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Listened to this station most frequently of all</th>
<th>Listened to this station as frequently as to other stations</th>
<th>Listened to this station less frequently than to other stations</th>
<th>Listened to this station only</th>
<th>Did not listen to this station</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VOA</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFE</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBC</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madrid</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yugoslav Stations</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ankara</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austrian Stations</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Stations</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Percentages in this table add across the page to 100 per cent. One hundred in each case equals 100 per cent.
The above table indicates another aspect of the relative importance of the different foreign stations to the Hungarian respondents. As in most preceding tables, the VOA appears to hold the top position, while RFE and BBC take the second and third places respectively. No other station was listened to most frequently of all.

**Time of Day of Listening**

Aside from the frequency of listening to foreign broadcasts, another important aspect of the listening behavior of the respondents is the time of day they listened to foreign stations. The predominant pattern by far is listening to foreign broadcasts in the evening. This is not surprising, of course, since most people are free to listen only in the evening, and shortwave reception is best at that time. What may seem surprising is that as many as 24 per cent of the respondents listened during the daytime. All but one of these respondents, however, also listened during the evening. The one exclusively daytime listener tuned in the foreign stations only infrequently and listened only at 7:00 a.m. because police surveillance, he said, was too great at other times.

Most of the other daytime listening occurred because the listener at times worked nights. The women in the sample did not listen during the day more than did the men, thus suggesting that daytime broadcasts are not heard primarily by housewives. It is entirely possible that older people who are not in the labor force may form a high percentage of daytime listeners, but such people were not represented in the sample.
The following quotation aptly summarizes the Hungarian listening pattern as it appeared among the respondents and presumably exists among the Hungarian population at large:

Most of the Hungarians listened to Western stations during those evening hours. Maybe 80 percent of the listening time is devoted to those hours. During the day, people often do not have time to listen to Western broadcasts, they can keep it less secret, reception is bad, and traffic noise is also disturbing. After 10 p.m., people are tired and go to bed, while in the morning they have to rush to work. Extremely few people listen to Western stations during the night. (092/13)

The distribution of listening time between day and evening among the respondents was as follows. Daytime listening was approximately equally divided between early morning, morning, and afternoon.

Table 12
TIME OF DAY OF FOREIGN BROADCAST LISTENING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Listening Time</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evening only</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daytime and evening</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daytime only</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not ascertainable</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cases (100%)</td>
<td>(80)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Listeners to Foreign Broadcasts Among Communists

The analysis of the statements made by the respondents in the present sample has indicated a fairly safe inference that the VOA is listened to by large segments of the population of Hungary, and a later section of this report will show that further, possibly even larger, segments of the population are indirectly exposed to VOA's influence through oral dissemination of its news. Thus, there seems to be no doubt that the message of the VOA gets through to the Hungarian people to a very considerable degree, at least as far as non-Communists or anti-Communists are concerned.

A rather important problem, from the point of view of assessing the importance and effectiveness of the VOA's Hungarian broadcasts, remains however to be answered. This is the question of whether these broadcasts reach the Communist and pro-Communist segments of the population. This question is not easily answered, if only by virtue of the fact that Communists do not ordinarily become refugees who can be interviewed. Thus, no first-hand information upon this point is available. To compensate as much as possible for this lacuna, all respondents in the present sample were questioned about their knowledge of Communist listeners.

In response to this questioning, many respondents made general statements to the effect that Communists in Hungary certainly listened to foreign broadcasts but these respondents were unable to demonstrate their first-hand personal knowledge of specific cases. Since such statements are not based on known fact and usually represent merely a projection of the attitudes and wishes of these respondents, we have left them out of consideration here. However, roughly one-half of the respondents...
provided more pertinent data: 49 per cent of the interviewees said that
they were personally acquainted with Communists who listened to foreign
broadcasts.

Most of the reports concerning specific Communist listeners to
the Western stations are based upon overt admission of listening by the
Communists referred to, in the course of conversations with the respondents.

There was a farmer ... who lived on the same
street as we did, and he was a member of the
Communist Party and used to attend Party meet-
ings. I often talked to his 18 year old son.
He told me that his father and he listened to
Western radio broadcasts regularly. His father
told me the same thing. (08/17)

However, in a number of cases, the respondents gained knowledge
of Communist listeners in other ways. Some listened to foreign broadcasts
in the company of their Communist acquaintances.

... Our foreman who was a real Communist
gave a party. (During the party) he tuned in
to London, then he tuned in to the VOA, then
to RFE. We asked him whether he usually
listened. He answered only: 'Yes'. (03/03)

A few respondents surprised their Communist friends while
listening to Western stations.

The real Communists used to listen, too ....
Once I happened to visit one of them in the evening
and I noticed that he quickly switched his radio
off. I asked him why he did it. He said that he
did it because there was nothing on of any interest.
But I knew that he had been listening to America.
(01/05)

A few other cases of Communist listeners who unwittingly be-
trayed themselves are reported by the respondents.

In the village where I lived, instructions for
the population were announced through a loudspeaker
system from the building of the village Soviet
(local National Council). One day the VOA program
came blaring from the loudspeaker. It turned out that the secretary had forgotten to switch the loudspeaker off when he started listening to the VOA. So we found out that he, an official of the regime, also listened to VOA broadcasts. (097/2-3)

Two leading Communists lived on our street. Their neighbors told us that evenings, at 8 o'clock, they could hear the VOA program through the wall from the other apartment. (051/6)

Almost three out of four respondents who reported such cases also attempted to describe the motivations which may have prompted these Communists to tune in. In very few cases did they report motivations stated by the Communists in question. For example:

A Communist trusty in the MAV (Hungarian State Railroads) workshop told me that he used to listen to Western stations because (he said) 'It is good if a person keeps being informed.' (When I was in prison) I was told by several Communist prisoners who had fallen out of favor that they had listened to Western broadcasts and that these broadcasts had influenced them strongly. (092/1h)

Most respondents had no such first-hand knowledge of the factors underlying the voluntary exposure of Communists to foreign broadcasts. They made judgments about the Communist listeners' motivations on the basis of these listeners' actions and reactions to what they heard. Although the motivations for listening which respondents ascribe to Communists are for the most part conjectural, it seems probable that they closely approximate the facts. These motivations fall into four categories. The most recurrent of these alleged reasons for listening is curiosity and a desire to find out what the other side has to say.
I have a friend who is a wool carder in a factory. At first he and his wife were both staunch Communists, lately, however, only the wife still persisted in her conviction. The husband was also a Party member. . . . When I visited them this woman was listening to RFE all the time. Each time she only said curtly that they were lying. . . . Of course, she did not tune in openly because she was not permitted to listen, either. . . . The woman listened only because she was curious. However, it made her always very angry. She never told me about the things she believed (on the broadcasts), if she believed anything at all. (050/6)

Another group of respondents asserted that Communists listen to foreign broadcasts in the line of duty, as it were, in order to be able better to refute the arguments used by foreign broadcasts against Communist propaganda. For example:

In our establishment the manager and the Party secretary listened to Western stations . . . Western propaganda had no effect on the Party secretary. He listened to Western stations only because he wanted to use in his propaganda work what he learned there (on the Western broadcasts). He was a bigoted Communist and believed only what the Party said. (070/9)

. . . I heard from several Communists that they, and other Communists, listened to Western radio stations because they wanted to know the intentions of the enemy in order to be able to refute Western propaganda. (073/6)

Dissatisfaction with Communist propaganda is mentioned by a few respondents as a likely motivation for listening. For example:

In the house where I lived in Budapest, the superintendent worked for the Ministry (of Security) and, I believe, prospered under the Communist regime, but still he listened to VOA broadcasts every day and spoke approvingly of VOA news. I also know of the manager of a nationalized factory . . . in Budapest who listened to the VOA every evening . . . On the basis of such cases, it is my impression that Hungarian Communists or those close to them have come . . .
to believe the VOA by now and are more and more skeptical toward the Hungarian newspapers and broadcasts. A few years ago it may have been different but now this is the situation. (01/75)

Finally, some respondents asserted that certain Communist listeners may have been motivated by fear of what the future had in store for them. For example:

Bona fide Party members also listen to the Hungarian broadcasts of Western stations, at least from time to time. Boiling with rage they used to tell me on the street what they had heard. But at the same time I had the impression that they were scared. They were frightened not so much because of the news, but rather on account of personal threats from HFE. But the news also had a frightening effect on them, for example, the sums spent on armaments, Flying Fortresses, the atom bomb, the hydrogen bomb, the number of (US) planes, the possibility of air raids (against Hungary), etc. . . . I don't believe that fanatic Communists can be shaken in their (Communist) faith by the Hungarian-language broadcasts of the Western stations. But I think it is possible to frighten them and make them waver. (01/9/6)

Respondents who made the general statement that Communists listen to foreign broadcasts without citing specific cases had very similar views regarding the possible reasons for listening among Communists. There seems to be little doubt, then, that at least a certain proportion of Communists in Hungary expose themselves voluntarily to foreign broadcasts. It is not unlikely, either, that their basic reasons for doing so may well be those referred to by the respondents in the present sample.
Motivations Leading to Foreign Broadcast Listening

In the preceding sections we have examined the degree to which foreign broadcast listening occurred among the respondents and the conditions under which this listening took place. We shall now undertake a detailed examination of the effects of and reactions to the various stations and broadcasts. The details to be presented can best be understood if they are set forth in the broad framework of the motivations which lead to foreign broadcast listening in general. Why do these people of an Iron Curtain country tune in the Western stations, even at some personal risk to themselves? What are they seeking?

The prime motivations for listening to Western broadcasts derive from the feelings of bitterness and antipathy toward the Communist regime which the respondents hold and which, it appears, are held also by the majority of the Hungarian population.* The listeners want above all else to be liberated from the Communism which they blame for their miserable living conditions; they see this liberation coming only from the West; and they listen to the radio, their only constant source of communication from the West, primarily in order to be reassured that the day of Communism's end in Hungary will arrive.

The motives for listening may be classified under three theoretically separable but highly interrelated headings: (1) hope for liberation; (2) desire to hear things which discredit Communism in general but particularly attack the Hungarian Communist regime and local Communists; and (3) desire to hear "news" or "objective news," which upon

* See the accompanying report, Technical and Methodological Aspects of the Interviewing of Recent Refugees from Soviet Satellite Countries, for a fuller discussion of these feelings.

IRHE, Inc.
analysis turns out to mean news of events or conditions which contradict what the Communists say and indicate that liberation is coming and that the Communist regime is having difficulties or that its actions will be avenged. Obviously these three headings are facets of the same overall motivation; the reason for separating them theoretically is that each respondent expresses his ideas in a different fashion, and for classificatory purposes it is useful to select major focal points around which these ideas cluster. It is only after reading a considerable number of interviews and after careful consideration of the phrasing used by the interviewees that it becomes evident that the three statements, "I wanted to get hope for the future," "I wanted to hear objective news," and "I wanted to hear the Communist informers exposed," are but three different ways of expressing the same basic desire for the end of the regime --- or, more broadly speaking, are but three statements which mean essentially the same thing.

In the sections of this report which follow, the details of the responses which indicate the above motivations, as well as other details of reactions to broadcasts, will be examined closely. In the present section it is necessary only to point out the motivations, to give some idea of their importance, and to indicate briefly how they are interrelated and how they ramify. Without such a presentation many of the details in the following sections will not be seen in proper focus.

Respondents differ in their articulateness, in their capacity for self-examination, and, as pointed out above, in their way of phrasing their ideas. Of the 80 interviewees who listened to Western broadcasts, 69 expressed clearly their general reasons for tuning in. (Additional respondents gave specific reasons for listening to specific foreign

XRE, Inc.
stations, but such reasons are not under consideration here.) These general reasons can be classified for convenience under the three motivational headings discussed above, but it will become evident that many fit almost as well under one heading as under another. The following table summarizes the motivations for listening as they were specifically expressed by the respondents.

**Table 13**

GENERAL MOTIVATIONS FOR LISTENING TO WESTERN BROADCASTS

**Hope for Liberation**

- To get hope, to feel that liberation is coming: 11%
- To find out how soon war is coming: 3%
- To learn about the rearmament of the West: 19%
- To hear about the future of Hungary: 1%

**News**

- To hear "news": 15%
- To get the "truth": 27%
- To hear "objective news": 8%
- To hear "recent" news: 3%
- To hear news about Korea: 27%
- To hear about military and diplomatic setbacks of Communism: 8%

**Discredit of Regime**

- To hear about domestic issues: 31%
- To hear attacks on the domestic economy: 3%
- To hear about escapes to the West: 8%
- To learn about internal Party disputes: 15%
- To hear denunciations of Communist informers and leaders: 15%

**Other (American life, Music, Humor, Favorite star)**: 22%

**Not ascertainable**: 14%

**Total Cases (100%)**: (80)

IPOR, Inc.
The need for hope of liberation is expressed by some respondents in rather general terms without reference to the specific kinds of broadcasts which would foster this hope for them. In its purest form it appears that the simple fact of listening to Western broadcasts -- the fact of being able to hear something from the country or countries which constitute the only possible source of liberation -- gives hope, almost regardless of the content of the broadcasts. This reaction to the Western stations appears most clearly in the case of the VOA, which is the official voice of the one country which is considered to be capable of beating Russia; in fact, it is the official connection of the VOA with the great Western power which is chiefly responsible for the VOA's popularity. A nineteen-year-old farmer's son, while comparing the VOA and other stations, put it this way:

New York was the most important, we listened to it most of the time. You listen first of all to those from whom you can expect something. It's everybody's opinion at home that the liberation cannot be expected from Belgrade or Paris but from New York, i.e., from the US. Only they can help us, an American policy fights most against the Russians. Also others wanted to listen to New York in the first place because the people expect help from America. I didn't know anybody who preferred any other radio station. (081/6)

The need for broadcasts dealing with the theme of liberation is often stated in terms similar to those of a young waiter:

The most important thing is what the (Western) radio say that the Hungarians should be persistent, and that the time will come when they will get free from Communism. (059/8)

* It should be noted here that most respondents who discussed this topic derived hope from the content of VOA broadcasts as well, not solely from the hope that one day the US would go into action on their behalf.
More frequently, the respondents stated that they wanted news which indicates that liberation is coming. The link between the desire to hear news and the desire for liberation is made with varying degrees of explicitness in the interviews. It is almost invariably present and often comes out as clearly as in the following words of a former member of the Hungarian Army:

"The Western radio broadcasts kept hope alive. While the population has become almost completely indifferent, the little hope they still have can only lie in the West, because nothing can be done against the Communists from the inside (of the country). The population is interested only in such news from which they are able to draw the conclusion that this (Communist rule) will come to an end after all." (051/3)

Other respondents were more specific about the kinds of news they wanted to receive. A young student wanted to hear about Western rearmament and armed action against the Communists:

"News which has the greatest interest back home is that about America's war preparations. For instance, people were very glad back home when they heard the news about America's partial mobilization. News about any kind of diplomatic or Korean defeats of the Communists also spread very fast among the people. Further news of great interest was that in the West they were able to produce weapons using atomic energy which only kills soldiers but not the (civilian) population." (033/5)

This respondent's statement is an expression of a desire for war. Such a desire on the part of satellite peoples may at first seem startling to Americans who assume that the great problem facing all peoples today is the preservation of peace, but practically without exception the
respondents said that they wanted war. Most of them qualified this statement by saying that of course war was an evil and should be avoided, but they saw no alternative to war between the United States and Russia if Hungary were to be liberated, and they were willing or even eager to submit to this war in order to achieve the great result which they all desired. For this reason listening to the radio in order to hear news about the rearmament of the West and in order to learn when war will break out can be classified under the general heading of "Hope for Liberation," startling as it may at first seem to find listening for news of a coming war classified as "Hope."

Lacking news that liberation was coming immediately by direct action, the respondents took comfort in any indication of Communist international or internal troubles — anything which suggested that Communism was not succeeding in the manner claimed by official Communist sources. It is natural that what the listeners wanted particularly to hear in the general context of indications of Communist weakness were reports of the troubles Communism was having in Hungary itself. The respondents listened for attacks on the regime, attacks based, when possible, on facts and figures: for example, factual descriptions of the miserable living conditions in Hungary and denunciations* of Communist informers in Hungary. The radio audience did not, in general, dislike hearing about its unfortunate standard of living; broadcasts on this subject were considered to be attacks on Communism and were

*The denunciation of these informers provided interesting and useful information, weakened the regime by damaging its internal intelligence system, hurt the informers, and marked the informers off for revenge after the day of liberation.
not interpreted as Western boosting or jeering which constituted a personal affront to miserable people. Another category of facts and figures which could be used to discredit the Communist regime was the American way of life. Few respondents had much interest in hearing about the American way of life as such; their attitudes toward broadcasts about America, like their attitudes toward foreign broadcast content in general, were colored by their basic motivations for listening. Nine out of ten foreign broadcast listeners among the respondents said that they wanted to hear at least something about American life, but of this group three-quarters stated that the presentation should be in comparative terms — that is, the good life in America should be contrasted with the miserable conditions in Hungary.* In this way the description of the successful American capitalist system serves to attack and discredit the Communist regime and to suggest that the regime is failing. The desire to hear about America in comparative terms is exemplified by the statement of a young student:

* Although the remaining quarter of those who wanted to hear about America did not state specifically that they wanted the presentation to be comparative, there are strong indications that many, if not most, of them nevertheless desired this mode of presentation. For example, some stated that figures should be given telling how many hours an American has to work in order to earn a pair of shoes, a suit, etc. Considered in the light of how the overwhelming majority of the respondents discuss the presentation of American life, the expressed desire to hear such a broadcast makes sense only if the respondent wants the broadcast to be used to indicate comparisons with Hungarian rates of pay. It should be noted here that the nine out of ten who said they wanted to hear about American life said so in response to a direct question on the subject. A much smaller number (5 respondents) said that the desire to hear about American life was an actual motivation for listening to foreign broadcasts.
This was important because the only way we could judge about the domestic standard of life created by the Communists was by using such comparisons. This was good for another reason, too, because if people at home didn't hear that one could live quite differently, they would more easily resign themselves to the present situation. The VOA had such a broadcast, too; however I don't remember now so exactly (what its details were). The VOA broadcast was about an American worker; how he lived on his wages and that he was able to buy even a car and a family house after he had saved money for a short time. I think such broadcasts are not frequent, although it encourages people because they expect liberation more when they hear also from such comparisons what a miserable life they have. (069/6)

The importance of Western broadcast discussion of Hungarian internal issues and affairs can be seen, in somewhat different perspective, by the respondents' replies to a direct query on this subject. Of the 80 foreign broadcast listeners, a sizable proportion said that domestic issues were the most important topic with which the Western broadcasts could deal, and only a small group considered domestic affairs less important than other topics.

Table 11
IMPORTANCE OF DEALING WITH DOMESTIC ISSUES AND AFFAIRS ON WESTERN BROADCASTS

|more important than anything else | 30% |
|important but other topics equally important | 36 |
|less important than other topics | 16 |
|not ascertainable | 18 |

Total Cases (100%) 80

IPOR, Inc.
The listeners derive comfort from the fact that when Communists are brought into the open and when the troubles of the regime are aired, the regime is considered to be weakening or even to be on the verge of collapse. An intelligent young woman explained how denunciations of Communists and news about domestic events and difficulties can foster hope:

We particularly enjoyed (listening) when RFE spoke about Communism in '16 (City where respondent lived) and mentioned the names of Communists. These broadcasts were very effective threats to the Communists and at the same time brought comfort to good Hungarians who saw that they had some protection. We were also very interested in the total exposure of economic life in Hungary as convincing evidence that the economic crisis must inevitably lead to the total ruin of Communism in Hungary. We also thought that it was very good that the Western radio stations reported in advance about the plans of the Communists ... The main idea in all broadcasts about events in Hungary must be that people there know these things much better (than people in the West) but it is a satisfaction to them when they see that these facts are not unknown to the free world ... The Hungarians, however, would like more encouragement as far as their own problems are concerned. When they (the foreign stations) talk about Communist mistakes and failures, they should also discuss the possibility of an overthrow of the Communist regime. In any case, such broadcasts would mean (the open recognition of the fact) that the Hungarians had been forced to submit to Communism. (073/h, 7)

This woman makes a strong case for another aspect of foreign broadcast attacks on the domestic situation, which is that by these attacks the West indicates that it has not forgotten the unfortunate Hungarian people and that the free world remains adamant in its opposition to Communism. This reaction to the broadcasts is rarely expressed.

IPSH, Inc.
succinctly and must most often be inferred. However, a former high
official of the pre-war Hungarian government put it this way:

I regard the broadcasts on Hungarian events as
the voice of the conscience of the world. It
is not their informative character that is de-
sisive. In that field they cannot compete with
news that spread by word of mouth back home.
They do, however, reduce the feeling of isolation
among people back home, and the resulting despair,
if people continually see that Western radios are
well informed. They encourage the Hungarians to be
persistent even in desperate situations. From that
viewpoint, it would be important if the Western
radios said how they understand the actions of
people back home and how silent resistance against
the Bolsheviks would be possible without mortal
danger or the danger of serious reprisals. (093/18)

Just as foreign broadcasts concerning the Hungarian domestic
situation foster the hope of liberation, so evidently do such broadcasts
form part of the "news" which so many Hungarians want to hear. When the
respondents speak of wanting to hear news on the broadcasts, they mean
primarily domestic news of this kind or international news which indi-
cates that the West is coming to their aid. Statements that the reason
for listening to foreign broadcasts is to learn the "truth" or to obtain
"objective news" must be understood in the light of these considerations.
This is not to deny that the satellite populations want to hear a good
coverage of news, a coverage that they do not find in the domestic com-
munications media; but the kind of news they want to hear is, with few
exceptions, limited. A young student said:

It is not important to announce foreign political
events which have no connection whatever with
Hungary. Those who have an understanding of politics
know anyway how to draw conclusions about the con-
sequences of these events for Hungary . . . . (Other)
Hungarians would not understand the importance which
the events could have for them. The Iranian question
is an example of this sort of news. (089/7)

IPOR, Inc.
The following is the kind of international and "true" news which had a "connection" with Hungary:

I believe that information about the world situation at present and about the plans for its solution is the most important thing. People would like to know what will happen in the near future. They would like to be reassured that the Communists will be defeated and that they will be able to witness this defeat soon. When we listened to foreign broadcasts we were particularly interested in news about military preparations in the West and in the Communist countries, in the rearmaments and generally in international political events. At times, I believed that the situation was very strained and . . . expected that war would break out at once . . . . (07/0/8, 2)

I always found the VOA programs very reliable, and accurately and many-sidedly informed about true events. It always reviewed the developments of international affairs in a way which showed me the advance on the road leading to liberation from Communism. This was encouraging to me, particularly because I knew that the successful settling of accounts with Bolshevism depended primarily on the great power of the US. (03/8/7)

Only a handful of respondents listened to the foreign broadcasts to hear "objective" news in terms of really many-sided, calm, dispassionate presentation of the facts and issues of world politics.

A few other individuals listened to hear messages from refugees and news about escapes to the West. In many such cases of listening personal interest was involved, because the listeners knew the escapes and wanted to hear about or from them; and in all cases the escapes to the West were a reaffirmation that the regime was not successful in Hungary and was being defied.
Finally, a number of respondents mentioned reasons for listening which have been classified as "Other." These reasons, too, derive from the main anti-regime listening motivation. They include the desire to hear information about American life, which, as we have seen, serves to discredit the regime and to encourage hope of liberation; the desire to hear satirical features ridiculing the regime; the desire to hear national ("good old Hungarian") music -- music which is banned by the regime and which when heard reaffirms the pre-Communist national values and allows the expression of anti-regime sentiment; and the desire to listen to certain "star" broadcasters, chiefly RFE's Balint Boda, who broadcasts vitriolic attacks on local Communists and conditions.

It is evident that the Hungarians listen to the foreign radio primarily because of their hatred of the regime and their desire for liberation. As long as this hatred is maintained, as long as there is faith in the West as a liberating force, and as long as there are radios in Hungary and opportunities for listening, the Western broadcasting stations can be assured of a devoted audience.
Summary

There is no legal ban in Hungary on listening to Western broadcasts. A number of other measures, including a legal ban on oral dissemination of information from such broadcasts, an intensive propaganda campaign against listening and the fact that known listeners are subject to many kinds of indirect punishment, lead people to listen in secrecy and with caution; they do not prevent them from listening, however. Jamming interferes with the reception of specific programs and stations to a greater extent on some sets than others, but it does not, apparently, lead to permanent discouragement of the habit of tuning in.

Among all the foreign stations listened to by the respondents of our sample, the VOA clearly holds the first place on the basis of the number of VOA listeners among the respondents and of the frequency of listening. RFE and BBC are a close second and third in most respects. "Paris" appears as a station of considerable if much lesser, importance. All the remaining stations seem to have a decidedly minor importance in the listening pattern of the respondents.

Many respondents (49 per cent) knew personally of Communists who listened to Western broadcasts. According to the respondents, the Communists listen in some cases to be able to answer the arguments of the foreign broadcasts, in some cases because they themselves distrust Communist propaganda and want to hear what the West has to say, and in some cases out of curiosity or fear that a change of regime may soon occur.
Among the non-Communist listeners the motivations for listening are all related to their desire and hope for liberation. What they want most to hear is domestic news which discredits or indicates the weakness of the Communist regime in Hungary and world news of opposition to and failures of Communism which supports their hope of an early liberation.
CHAPTER III

RECTIONS TO THE FOREIGN STATIONS AND THEIR BROADCASTS

Foreign Station Preference

Among the 80 respondents who listened to foreign broadcasts,* 2 out of 5 named the Voice of America as their favorite station. Radio Free Europe ranked second with 26 per cent naming it as best liked, while 12 per cent preferred BBC over other foreign stations. Paris and Madrid were named as favorites by fewer than 5 per cent each.

Table 16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Station</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VOA</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFE</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBC</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madrid</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No preference</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Cases (100%) = (80)

A large number of the respondents could not settle on any one preferred foreign station. One out of four said they liked all equally or that they "all complement each other" or that they did not know which was their favorite. An additional 1 out of 7 of those who had a preference specifically named two or more stations for which they had equal appreciation.

In later sections the special appeals of each of the foreign stations mentioned will be examined; the present section will be devoted to the characteristics of the audience which prefers each.

* Twenty respondents reported that they never listened to foreign broad-
casts. These respondents are excluded from the tables which appear in this section of the report.

** The discussion on pp. 79-81 raises the question of the representa-
iveness of this distribution for the population as a whole.
Education

BBC and VOA have their greatest appeal for well-educated persons in the sample whereas RFE is more popular among those with less education. The VOA seems less differentiated in this respect than the BBC or the RFE. The BBC is hardly ever favored by Hungarians with little schooling; it is clearly an elite medium. Similarly, the RFE is limited in its appeal; relatively few of the respondents who have enjoyed high school or higher training name the RFE as a favorite station. The VOA, while somewhat better liked among the well-educated group, seems to attract many in the less well-educated group as well.

Table 16
PREFERRED STATION BY EDUCATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Elementary school</th>
<th>High school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or no schooling</td>
<td>or college</td>
<td>or college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOA</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFE</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBC</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madrid</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No preference</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cases (100%) = (80)</td>
<td>(49)</td>
<td>(31)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many of the reasons for this stratification emerge in the comments of the listeners. A former professional soldier, employed for the last five years as a porter in a shipping firm pointed to the "tid-bit" nature of the information broadcast by the RFE as a reason for the appeal of this station to the less well-educated.

IPOR, Inc.
According to my observations, the former middle class and the intelligentsia of the previous regime used to listen to the most to the VOA and the BBC. My fellow-workers, in general, used to refer to RFE when telling me about some kind of news. . . . This is because there are many brief news items broadcast by the RFE which concern individuals. . . . The simple man is more interested in this, and he tells this news to others, because spreading such news is easy and does not require any special intelligence.

(027/16)

In addition to this quality of communicating information easily passed along, RFE seems to appeal to the less well-educated because of the understandability of the language used:

We realized that we liked and were more interested in the RFE program. It made more understandable what it had to say. It gave more examples to make one understand. The expressions were better also compared with VOA expressions. . . . That is the reason it was more encouraging even for one who did not understand the political language well. Of course, on who was more advanced in politics did not really need only RFE. The other stations were just as good. . . . For instance he understood the VOA just as well as the plainer person did RFE. That the plainer person likes RFE the best, I know because, whenever I talked with about the radio, they all mentioned RFE. (075/4)

Place of Residence

In addition to education, place of residence is an important determinant of foreign station preference. Preference for the BBC is almost wholly an urban phenomenon: only 4 per cent of the respondents from small towns and none of the respondents from rural areas named the BBC as their favorite foreign station.

* A further discussion of the differential appeal of the BBC and the VOA to higher-educated listeners will be found on pp. 112, 116-118.

IFOR, Inc.
The evidence is somewhat unclear as regards the VOA and the RFE. The VOA is equally popular among those members of the sample who come from large cities and those members of the sample who come from rural areas. It is less popular among the respondents from small towns. Again in the case of RFE, the ratings of respondents from large cities conform with the ratings of respondents from rural areas. If one judged from the expressed preferences of the respondents in the sample alone, one would believe that the RFE achieves its peak of popularity in small towns.

Table 17
PREFERRED STATION BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Large cities</th>
<th>Small towns</th>
<th>Rural areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VOA</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFE</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBC</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madrid</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No preference</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Cases (100%) = (80) (31) (27) (22)

This is somewhat in contradiction to what the respondents tell us. Is the case in the population of Hungary as a whole. They seem quite explicit about the fact that the RFE is most popular in small towns and villages.
RFE is better inasmuch as it broadcasts more about Hungarian affairs and is closer to the country. I mean, that I recognised the situation in Hungarian villages and towns better on the RFE broadcasts than on VOA. . . . Balint Boda, on RFE, named every Communist personality in various plants in Hungary, and told precisely what they were doing. . . . We enjoyed (these broadcasts) very much, particularly when they named Communists from our neighborhood. (026/5)

Balint Boda often spoke on the programs of RFE about his visits to Hungarian rural districts. (021/16)

This contradiction between the preferences the respondents from villages describe as their own and the preferences which they attribute to rural dwellers in general can perhaps be explained by the relative sophistication of the rural respondents in the sample. Of the 17 respondents who come from villages and have not gone beyond elementary schooling, 5 were characterized by the interviewers as intelligent and informed beyond what might be suggested by their formal schooling.

This leads one to expect that in the population as a whole, the distribution of station preferences among villagers is similar to the preferences of the residents of small towns (rather than to the preferences of large city residents, as suggested in Table 17).

Age

Foreign station preferences do not appear to be differentiated by age: young respondents ranked foreign stations very much as older ones did.
Reported Station Preferences of the Population

To what extent does the distribution of preferences among refugees shown in Table 15 reflect an accurate picture of the preferences of the population as a whole? Respondents were asked which are the preferred stations of "others" around them. It was hoped that from these reports one could piece together a picture of the preferred stations of the population as a whole.

There are several major problems with respect to validity of the reports of informants. First, there is the problem that people tend to project onto other people their own tastes. That is, one might suspect that the VOA fans will think everyone else is also a VOA fan; that the BBC fans will think everyone else is also a BBC fan; and so on.

Secondly, there is the problem that respondents will interpret the "others", whose preferences they are being asked about, in various ways. Some respondents may report the tastes of their own circles of friends and acquaintances. Sometimes respondents may think "others" refer to people unlike themselves: for example, the well-educated in the population may think the question referred to less well-educated persons than themselves. Or they may be thinking in straight statistical terms: what is the station preferred by more than 50 per cent of the population?

A third set of difficulties arises out of the meaning of the word "preferred". When a respondent is asked about his own station preference, he can sift the various factors which play a role, weigh this one against that, and finally give a considered opinion about which is his favorite foreign station. When the respondent is asked about the
"preferred" station of "others", the judgmental process is apt to be more hasty; he may be thinking in terms of the station most often listened to, or a station he knows is well liked. He will be less likely to weigh likes against other likes to determine which is best liked.

Table 16 should be viewed in the light of these limitations.

Table 16
MENTIONED AS STATIONS PREFERRED BY OTHERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Station</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RFE</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOA</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBC</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Cases (100%) = (80)

The large proportion of "Don't know" responses in Table 16 attests to the difficulty many respondents experienced in trying to gauge the preferences of "others" in the population. Judging by the statements of those respondents who answered the question, however, RFE and VOA share approximately equal honors among Hungarian listeners to foreign broadcasts.*

Now, then, can one account for the discrepancy between Table 16 and Table 15. In Table 15 the VOA seems to enjoy a clear lead over other foreign stations; in Table 16 the VOA and the RFE tie for first place.

* The distribution in Table 16 is not the distribution of station preferences in the population as a whole. Nor should it be. To take the pure case, let us suppose that the BBC was the station favored by 60 per cent of the population and that this popularity was universally recognized. In that case, 100 per cent (not 60 per cent) of the respondents would report that the BBC is the station "preferred by others".

TRE, Inc.
Without definite evidence on this point, it appears that Table 18 more nearly reflects the true picture. Especially does the unusual sophistication of peasants in the sample, noted earlier in this section, seem relevant here. Although Table 17 shows that VOA is preferred to RFE among the rural respondents in the sample, this seems to be due to the sophistication of these respondents. Reports by all classes of respondents about the preferences of peasants suggest that RFE is actually the more popular station in this group. This means that the distribution of Table 15 should be revised so that the VOA figure is somewhat lower and the RFE figure somewhat higher. Such a revision would bring the distribution closer to that of Table 18 and indicate that VOA and RFE are about equally liked by listeners to foreign broadcasts in the Hungarian population as a whole.

In talking about "equal popularity" of the VOA and RFE, one is struck by how much hinges upon the significance of the word "popularity." As will emerge clearly in the following sections, the gratifications derived from the two stations are quite different. The VOA is considered the official voice of the only country from which the desired liberation can come. From this point of view, it becomes important to listen to the station. Listening to RFE affords a quite different satisfaction. RFE broadcasts virulent attacks on local domestic conditions and gives the names of Communist informers, often people directly known to the listener. This is an especially strong appeal to the lower educated in the population. For different reasons, then, the reluctance attached to the hypothetical possibility of giving up listening to the VOA is approximately equal to the reluctance attached to the hypothetical possibility of giving up listening to RFE.

It should be noted that at the time this study began, RFE's program of full-schedule broadcasting to Hungary was also in its beginning phases. (October 6, 1951 marked the commencement of almost 'round-the-clock broadcasting to Hungary.) Since audience-building is necessarily time-consuming, it may be that RFE's popularity has grown since the interviewing was done.
Reasons for Station Preference: General

We have already analyzed the reasons which respondents give for listening to foreign broadcasts, and we have seen which stations the respondents prefer. We shall now undertake to analyze their reasons for preferring some foreign stations to others. Respondents were asked which stations they preferred among all those available and for what reasons. All respondents who designated one or more stations as preferred above others are called preferents of that station or stations. Respondents also, however, gave reasons for tuning in stations other than their generally preferred ones; these reasons are called preference statements.

The number of respondents who preferred each station and the reasons they gave for their preferences were as follows:
### Table 29
STATION PREFERENCES AND REASONS

#### A. Preference Reasons Given by Those for Whom VOA is Preferred Station.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Number of Individuals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Official connection with US; gives hope by coming from country which has power</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good news coverage</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment of Hungarian domestic issues</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives information about American life</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News about Korea</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up-to-dateness of news; speed in giving news</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program contents bring hope</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectivity of broadcasts</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News about Western rearmaments</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good reception</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives &quot;truthful&quot; news</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good program composition</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concise, to the point, simple</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lively, interesting</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outspoken, frank, doesn't hide views</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate tone</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humor, satire</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good refutation of Communist propaganda</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Cases (100%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>(33)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preference Statement</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Number of Individuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good news coverage</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program contents bring hope</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official connection with US, gives hope by coming from country which has power</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment of Hungarian domestic issues</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News about Western rearmaments</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belligerent anti-Communist stand</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives information about American life</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good reception</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lively, interesting</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News about Korea</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program contents suggesting imminence of war</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up-to-dateness of news, speed in giving news</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives “truthful” news</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good program composition</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectivity of broadcasts</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outspoken, frank, doesn’t hide views</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simplicity of presentation</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made no preference statements</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cases (100%) =</td>
<td></td>
<td>(all VOA listeners but non-preferents)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

159
II. RFE: Preference Reasons for RFE Given by Those for Whom RFE Is Preferred Station.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Number of Individuals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good treatment of Hungarian domestic issues and affairs</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Star&quot; broadcasters</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good news coverage</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program contents bring hope</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belligerent anti-Communist stand</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humor and satire</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concise, to the point, simple</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives information about American life</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious contents</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outspoken, frank</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lively, interesting</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Cases</strong></td>
<td><strong>22</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(22 RFE preferents, of whom 21 listened to VOA)
### III. BBC: Preference Reasons for BBC Given by Those for Whom BBC Is Preferred Station.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Number of Individuals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good news coverage</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectivity of broadcasts</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Star&quot; broadcasters</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives official British position</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderateness of broadcasts</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives information about life in the West</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good program composition</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophistication of presentation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simplicity of presentation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News about Korea</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News about Western rearmament</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives &quot;truthful&quot; news</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment of Hungarian domestic issues</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Cases: 10, all of whom listened to VOA


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Number of Individuals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good news coverage</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good treatment of Hungarian domestic issues</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good program composition</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simplicity of presentation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humor, satire</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Cases: 3, all of whom listened to VOA

IRCS, Inc.
Radio Madrid was preferred by one VOA listener because of its program contents which brought hope.

It has been found convenient to organize the discussion which follows around the reasons for station preference rather than around the stations themselves because each reason implies a comparison between several stations. Furthermore, the discussion of a reason for a preference, say a liking for the international news broadcasts of a station, inevitably involves a discussion of reactions to news broadcasts in general and of what the respondents want to hear in news broadcasts — matters which are not immediately relevant to single stations. In other words, the respondents evaluate such programs as news broadcasts — they express likes, dislikes, and desires — as well as saying that they prefer a station for these programs. The discussion which follows will analyze preference reasons and broadcast evaluations in their relationship to the various stations. Emphasis will be placed upon their relationship to the VOA, since this was the major concern of the study and since the other stations were not asked about directly, except with reference to certain specific topics.
Broadcasting Preference and Evaluation: Station Sponsorship

The sponsorship of the foreign stations appears as an important stated preference reason only with respect to the VOA. With the exception of two respondents who listened to the BBC in order to hear the official British position on world developments, no respondents said that they listened to any station other than VOA because the sponsoring agency itself was worth listening to. The VOA, on the other hand, derives its chief appeal from the fact that it is the official American station.

The sponsorship of the other official governmental stations, however, does enter into the picture by virtue of the fact that the countries they represent are inevitably compared with the United States in terms of power and wealth. In this respect, the sponsorship of these stations hurts their popularity as long as the VOA is on the air. The general idea of the listeners is: "What do secondary sources have to offer us when we can get the word from the horse's mouth, from the leading power of the West, from the country which can or will liberate us?"

The other governmental stations must develop other appeals to overcome this tremendous disadvantage, and their other appeals to date have not approached doing so. RFE, a non-governmental station, is the only foreign station which rivals VOA in popularity. This is probably due partly to the fact that it is an American-sponsored station but not an official American spokesman, so that it is not judged in comparison with the VOA.

Although RFE and VOA are both American-sponsored stations, the respondents do not confuse the positions of the two. When Hungarians tell one another, as they often do, that "America is on the air," or "America said last night," they mean the VOA, and there is no question about their meaning. RFE broadcasts to Hungary as the "Voice of Free Hungary," and no respondent referred to it as officially representing the attitudes or position of the US government.
in either of these respects, whereas official stations must inevitably be so judged; but it seems mainly to be due to the fact that RFE has developed an appeal which offsets sponsorship; extensive treatment of domestic issues and affairs and vitriolic attacks on the regime and on local Communists.

The largest single group of VOA preferents (52 per cent) and the third largest group of other VOA listeners (20 per cent) said that they listened to the VOA because of its sponsorship. A few respondents referred only to the fact that the VOA's sponsoring country was powerful:

One thing is certain: the VOA has far more listeners than BBC. One of the reasons is that Great Britain has lost a great deal of its prestige in international politics and that England herself is supported by America. People like to listen to the stronger. (023/6)

but apart from these few exceptional cases the listeners who preferred VOA because of its sponsorship explicitly stated that the power of the United States produced the appeal of the broadcasts because this power held the promise of Hungarian liberation.

The VOA was the expression of the great power of the US. We had great confidence in the US and we believed that only the US can bring relief to Hungary which suffers under the Communist regime. Our confidence was supported by the broadcasts of the VOA which told us about American rearmament and about the American policy of strong opposition to the Soviet Union, as well as about the right to preserve freedom. This showed us that the US is the master of the world. (073/6)

People listened to the Hungarian transmissions of the VOA because it was the general conviction in Hungary that Communism in Hungary can be defeated only with the assistance of America, and not by sabotage from within. (032/2)
With respect to the VOA I have to mention that people know that America will hold the leading position in the next war, and since they have confidence in both her economic and technical superiority, their opinion is that America will win the war. This is why the majority of the people listen to New York (the VOA) and not to London (BBC). They know that England suffered such great losses during the last war that she is still suffering from them. They also know that American assistance made victory possible. America was the real victor. I think that England is even now in debt to America. And so, if somebody wants help he tries to turn to the top man and not to his brother or to his subordinates. The Hungarians expect that if America beats Russia, then the problem of Hungary's liberation will also be solved. This is why they want to listen to what the VOA has to say. (027/8)

Some respondents specifically said, while comparing the VOA and the BBC, that the broadcast contents of the two stations were similar or identical, but that the liberating power of the United States which stood behind the VOA made the latter much the more preferred station. It is perhaps in statements like these that the importance of sponsorship is revealed most clearly.

I liked the VOA most, because we expected liberation to come from the US, the greatest country in the world, and because we hoped that life back home would then be as good and free as it is in the US . . . . We liked the VOA better than the BBC only because the US is a much stronger country than England, and so listening to the VOA raised our hopes more. But we found no difference in the gist of the broadcasts. It raised my hope and that of my friends when we heard how many planes the US was producing, and that the planes were able to carry the atom bomb, while the Russians, who had the atom bomb, were not able to deliver it to (potential) target areas. (029/4, 5)
New York was the most important station we listened to for most of the time. You listen first of all to those from whom you can expect something. It's everybody's opinion back home that liberation cannot be expected from Belgrade or Paris but from New York, that is, from the US. Only they can help us; American policy fights most against the Russians. Also others wanted to listen primarily to New York, because the people expect help from America. I didn't know anyone who would have preferred any other radio station. In my opinion, what London said was identical with the New York announcements, (except that lately it spoke mostly about the Persian situation and about Suez.) (061/4,5)

For several years, when the transmissions of VOA were not yet so frequent, people listened more to BBC. Now the latter is no longer listened to as often. I cannot remember anybody saying that he listened to BBC as much as to the VOA. The general opinion is that the Western powers have one common will and therefore people think that it is enough to listen to the VOA. Unconsciously they consider the US to be the power which can fight Communism better than England. They have accepted the US as the leading power. Aside from this, people did not notice much difference between the broadcasts of the BBC and the VOA. They consider England and America to be allies in the fight against Communism. (007/12-13)

BBC was always very careful not to appear as just a copy of the VOA. There was a difference between BBC and the VOA in the presentation, the wording, and the order of the news items it broadcast, but the gist of the news was the same. The VOA was always a source of hope for me because it told me about the determination

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The phraseology of this sentence is an interesting commentary on the attitude of mind which goes with a high evaluation of the VOA in terms of its sponsorship. It is to be noted that this respondent says that it is the older station which is careful not to copy the newer star in the European broadcasting constellation, whereas one would normally expect that the reverse would be the case. This sentence clearly conveys the secondary position of the BBC vis-à-vis the VOA.

IFOR Inc.
and firmness, as expressed also in military preparations, of the world power which alone, after the disappearance of the military might of Germany and Japan, can be counted upon to be strong enough to liberate Hungary from Bolshevism. All the other countries ... gather around the U.S. (01/9/10,11)

The broadcast content to which most of the above quotations refer is international news, the excellent VOA coverage of which constitutes the second most important preference reason for the VOA. The question naturally arises as to whether it is VOA's coverage of news per se which produces the large number of favorable comments about the VOA news service or whether these comments are due to the fact that these news broadcasts come from the country which is considered to be the focus of the most important world developments and which is believed to be able to create the great news for which the listeners wait--the news of liberation. In other words, is it the news broadcasts or the sponsorship of the news broadcasts which is most highly esteemed? This is a question which cannot be answered definitively. There is no doubt that the "official" nature of the news which comes directly from the United States government gives this news particular importance. On the other hand, as the next section of this report will show, all the evidence seems to indicate that the VOA news service of and by itself is of highly satisfactory quality. Unquestionably the two factors of sponsorship and good news coverage merge to make the VOA the outstanding foreign source of news for the Hungarians.

The treatment of domestic issues and the denunciation of Communist oppression in Hungary also take on an increased importance and become a source of hope when dealt with by the VOA as contrasted with other stations:

IFOR, Inc.
In recent years, the VOA has always been foremost in exposing Communist violence in Hungary. As I already mentioned, for example, the VOA expressed its shocked indignation... at the time of Cardinal Mindszenty's arrest. The VOA expressed the same attitude at the time of the Vogeler-Sanders trial and last year at the time of the deportations and of the Gross trial. On all these occasions, the very firm voice of the VOA encouraged us to think that the Bolshevik impudence cannot be unlimited. It was especially reassuring to the Hungarians that this firm voice had originated with the world power which alone is regarded by the Hungarians as stronger than Bolshevism. (09/3/16)

In a few cases, even the reliability of the broadcasts was evaluated in the context of sponsorship. For example, a VOA preferent said:

The VOA was my favorite station... We want to hear the news from America because we consider it reliable. This is so because America is the strongest power and is destined to save humanity from Communism. (05/2/5)

It is significant to examine the relative importance of the VOA's sponsorship to VOA preferents and to the other VOA listeners who were sufficiently motivated to listen to have preference reasons for the VOA. This can be done by comparing the frequency of the major preference reasons given by the two groups.

* This excludes the VOA non-preferents who listened infrequently, by chance, because they were visiting someone else who listened to the VOA, etc. In other words, the comparison is to be made between VOA preferents and those VOA listeners who, although non-preferents, had real interest in listening to the VOA.

IFOR, Inc.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for Preferring VOA</th>
<th>Reasons for Listening to VOA among Non-Preferencees Who Had Preference Reasons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Official connection with US: gives hope by coming from country which has power</td>
<td>52% 26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good news coverage</td>
<td>42% 55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment of Hungarian domestic issues</td>
<td>36% 28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program content brings hope</td>
<td>18% 31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Cases (100%)</strong></td>
<td><strong>33</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The major difference which stands out here is that half of prefersenats listened to VOA because of its official position, whereas only one-quarter of the non-preferents did so. The differences with respect to the other preference reasons are considerably smaller, but the 13 per cent difference with respect to good news coverage and the hope-giving contents of the broadcasts are instructive. Good news coverage is by far the most important preference reason among the non-preferents; although both preferents and non-preferents give it a high position. It appears that when the news is listened to with the attitude of mind that it is news coming from the liberating country, then the listener is likely to prefer the VOA. Furthermore, some preferents, although liking the news service, do not mention it when asked why they prefer the VOA, simply because the fact that the VOA is the official voice of the US is so much more important in their minds. Thus the apparent fact that the non-preferents think more highly of the VOA news service than the preferents is not a real fact but simply a reflection of the importance of VOA sponsorship to the preferents.

IPCR, Inc.
The apparent paradox that the non-preferents derive more hope from the contents of the VOA broadcasts than do the preferents is to be understood with the same considerations in mind. Both groups derive hope from the broadcasts, but when this hope comes principally from the fact that the listener is hearing the powerful voice of the liberator, the listener is likely to be a VOA preferent, and the fact that the content of what he hears also supports his hope is to him a supporting or subordinate factor which he often feels goes without saying. The non-preferent, on the other hand, who is not so likely to derive hope simply from the conscious feeling that the United States is speaking, attaches his hope to what he hears rather than whom he hears.

Clearly there are exceptions to the above statements, but the striking difference between the two groups of listeners is instructive evidence concerning the importance of the VOA sponsorship in attracting the prime VOA audience. It is likewise instructive to note that half of the eight respondents who said that they listened to the VOA because of its sponsorship but still did not prefer the VOA were relatively unusual individuals in terms of their choice of preferred station. One was an intellectual who preferred the BBC because of the objectivity of its news service and commentaries, and the other three preferred Paris for its humor and news service. The remaining four were like the majority of the VOA non-preferents: they chose RFE because of its treatment of domestic issues.
In sum, the fact that the VOA is sponsored officially by the United States, the potential liberating power, appears to be the major reason for the high proportion of respondents who preferred the VOA. The other governmental stations suffer in popularity with respect to the VOA because the countries for whom they speak do not have the strength, and hence the liberating potential, of America. The majority of the respondents who preferred the VOA for the excellence of its news service, the second most important reason for VOA preference, established a connection between the news and its source, the US government. It does not seem unlikely that if this important sponsorship factor were lacking, the VOA would still be listened to, like the other major foreign stations, by a large proportion of the Hungarian people, and it would still be preferred by some because of its news service; but without its status as the spokesman of the leading Western power it would not occupy as important a position as it now does with respect to the other foreign stations, particularly RFE.
Broadcasting Preference and Evaluation: Coverage of International News

Forty-two per cent of the VOA preferers and 39 per cent of the VOA non-preferers said that they listened to the VOA for its international news coverage. This was the second largest single reason for preferring VOA. Only a small number of the reasons for preferring other stations, with the exception of the BBC, involved international news. We have seen in the preceding section that the pre-eminence of the VOA in news reporting is frequently related to the pre-eminence of the United States in the world. Although it is extremely difficult to separate out how much of the appreciation of the VOA news is due to its sponsorship and how much is due to the worth of the news service itself, every indication is that the quality of the news service is highly satisfactory to the majority of the listeners: the VOA is generally regarded as the best station in this respect. Statements about the news service in which sponsorship does not play an evident part range from the following:

I liked the VOA most. Whenever I could, I stayed up and waited for it. The earlier RFE broadcast reported mostly about individuals. It spoke about how somebody crossed the border, or what a Communist, mentioned by name, was doing in Hungary. On the other hand, the VOA informed us about the general foreign political situation and about the standing of the Korean front. If, for instance, I wanted to know what had happened at the San Francisco Conference, I listened to the VOA and not to RFE. The VOA's broadcast on this subject was better and in greater detail, putting the emphasis on this part of the broadcast. The same can be said concerning its Korean war reports. RFE reported on this, too, except that this news got lost among other, less important material, such as local (Hungarian) news.

(027/6)

to the following, made by RFE preferers:

[Signature]

IPOR, Inc.
What we liked best about the VOA was that it had serious news. I mean that it explained the news very well and reported events from all parts of the world. Therefore we were informed to a great extent by listening to (this station on) the radio. It was frank and reliable in its news broadcasts. We always felt that it reported truthful information. We did not find these things on other broadcasts in the same degree. (030/10)

As far as foreign news was concerned, the VOA was my main news source. It broadcast quite well the news on events from all over the world. The other Western programs were also useful in this respect. (092/12)

The VOA was good in that it gave more time to world politics than RFE; for example, the Indochina situation. But the difference is only in the length of the program and the precision of it. I believe that the important news is being coordinated by the Western radios. I don't know how they go about this, but much of the news is alike on every program. (075/6)

Almost one out of 4 of the respondents mentioned particularly the promptness of the VOA news. Although speed in presenting news forms part of good news service in general, many respondents single out VOA's speed as a separate aspect of its service. An intellectual who preferred BBC said:

The VOA's international news service was extremely many-sided. At the time of United Nations' meetings in America, in particular, I received the latest news about them through the VOA. True, of all radio stations, the VOA was closest to the scene of the meeting. However, the VOA's news service was also the fastest among the Western radios with regard to world events which happened further away (from America). At the same time, I never experienced that speed was detrimental to accuracy or that it hindered the VOA's always being many-sided. (093/15)

Statements indicating the combination of VOA's speed and broad news coverage are typically like the following:

YPOR, Inc.
It is characteristic of the promptness of the VOA’s news service that when we still knew nothing about deportations in Hungary, my theological student companions came with the news that VOA had reported on the deportations. The Communists were still blowing victory fanfares over Korea when VOA brought accounts of the great counter-attack launched against the Korean Communists and its success. We liked VOA’s descriptions of the life of the American people, reports on American public opinion, and American letters broadcast over VOA. VOA’s news bulletins from all over the world are extremely well informed.

(021/17)

The respondents were not asked to compare the news services of the various stations. Hence the failure to listen to stations other than VOA specifically for news does not necessarily indicate that these other stations had poor news broadcasts. A number of respondents said that all the major stations broadcast about the same news, but they frequently went on to say that the VOA news was more important because of the weight attached to the news sent by the most important country. In the minds of many listeners, each station seems to have specialized in different things, and it is this quality of specialization which seems to have determined, at least to some extent, the statements that the respondents made about why they listened to or preferred the different stations.

The two major kinds of broadcasts that the listeners preferred were international news and broadcasts about domestic affairs. VOA is the specialist in international news, both by virtue of the fact that it has good news broadcasts and that these broadcasts are backed up by the power of the United States; therefore listeners who particularly wanted to hear this news listened to the VOA. RFE is the major specialist in domestic affairs; particularly, it broadcasts one immensely popular kind of domestic
information which the VOA does not transmit: denunciations of Communist informers. That portion of the audience which preferred to hear about domestic affairs tuned in RFE. Although these listeners may have been satisfied as well with RFE's handling of international news, it was not the reason for their preference. The general climate of opinion about the foreign stations -- the opinion that you listen to the VOA for international news and to RFE for domestic affairs -- probably helped determine the choice of primary station to which to listen: people considered the stations in terms of what was commonly thought and said about them and then chose to listen to one or both according to their interest in hearing one or the other kind of program.

I liked the VOA and RFE alike. The latter dealt more with Hungarian matters, and so, in this field, it was worth more to me. The VOA did not have much time left for this; however, it had plenty of foreign news material, such as detailed reports about Korea. I liked this very much on the VOA. I could see the truthfulness of the RFE broadcasts from my own experiences back home, and the accuracy of the VOA reports was proven by comparing them with what I heard later. For instance, RFE reported the deportation of certain priests and other persons in Hungary, and much later we heard about this back home, too. (025/5)

I liked VOA and RFE equally. RFE broadcast more about home affairs. I heard some home news on VOA, too; however VOA broadcast more about foreign news. (026/4)

The only station other than the VOA which is commonly thought of in terms of its international news broadcasts is the BBC. All the BBC preferents mentioned the BBC news service in one way or another. Five of them said simply that good news coverage (i.e., prompt presentation of much news) was one of the reasons for their preference. The others spoke particularly of their liking for BBC's specific news contents,

*The VOA began transmitting information of this kind in October 1952, the above statement is true as of the time of the interviewing of Hungarian refugees.*
its news commentator, Andrew Martin, or said that they preferred the
BBC news because of its objectivity. The meaning of the term "objectivity"
when applied by Hungarians to foreign broadcasts is complicated, and dis-
cussions of it and of Martin will be undertaken in separate sections of
this report.

What Constitutes Important News?

In a previous section it has been pointed out that what the
listeners want to hear is news from which they derive hope that the day
of liberation is approaching. This unanimous attitude toward the news
is not infrequently expressed in terms which, although disarmingly in-
genious, afford a rather good illustration of the state of mind of un-
doubtedly many Hungarians. The following is an apt example:

"The Hungarians should be informed when liberation
can be expected, that is to say, when the Americans
will invade Hungary. This should be broadcast for
10 minutes every day. . . . The Western stations
should broadcast that the Americans will undertake
everything in their power to liberate Hungary and
the other satellite countries, and that they will
force the issue through the UN. (039/6)"

Although few respondents went so far as to state that other kinds of
news bore people or cause them to turn off their radios, few on the other
hand indicated any interest at all in any kind of news that could not be
interpreted in some way as dealing with the fight against Communism.

Very often the people would not understand the
foreign political reports. For this reason, they
should be carried only if they really concern
Hungary, but even then they should be explained
thoroughly. The rest should be given up. (024/7)

What the respondents had in mind when they expressed a desire to hear
international news is briefly summed up in these statements:

IPOR, Inc.
The most important thing is political news which is likely to cause a change (in regime), that is, news which is favorable for the Hungarians. (051/6)

According to my opinion, emphasis should be put on the fact that the people should get information, first of all, about the situation in world politics: American-Russian relations, the war operations in the Far East and the defense of Europe. (052/9)

In tabular form the "important" news, the kinds of things the respondents said they liked to listen to when they tuned in news broadcasts, is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>News about rearmament, military preparation for war</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News about Korea</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News about the activities of refugees and emigrés</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political and diplomatic anti-Communist activities in the West</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background information about issues between East and West,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communist methods, history, ideology</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News about satellite countries other than Hungary</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Cases (100%) = 80

The great interest on the part of the listeners in news about military preparations is related to the fact that all of the respondents saw liberation coming only as the result of another world war and that they were willing to undergo this war as the price of their freedom.

Typical statements about military preparation news were like the following:
Everyone back home is anxiously awaiting liberation, and so they would like to hear in detail how the armed forces of the United Nations are being organized. We always felt that the only thing that could save us was if there were no delay in this. From this standpoint, too, we considered it important that a peace treaty be signed with West Germany. We felt great relief when the VOA reported on the progress of armament in West Germany, and the plan for introducing compulsory military service there. We felt that Hungary and other parts of Europe, too, would fall into the same type of danger as Korea if the West is not quickly armed. (017/7)

I think it is necessary to speak about the units of armament and organization of the armies for the defense of Europe and for the liberation of the oppressed countries. (031/8)

It is not uncommon to find desires expressed in the interviews for more news about the Western military build-up than is now given, but only one respondent evidenced any concern about the wisdom of broadcasting too much such information:

Once there was a VOA broadcast about the test flights of American atomic (jet) planes. In this connection, I thought that the US surely had many weapons which the Russians did not have, and so... I thought that it was not good for the Western powers to keep shouting about what they had, because they were thus helping the Russians in further strengthening themselves. (018/5)

As far as all the respondents are concerned, the West need have no worries about allegations of warmongering resulting from such broadcasts.

Apart from scattered references to the fighting in Indo-China, the only military action (as distinct from preparation) of which the respondents speak is the war in Korea. The Korean campaign arouses great interest in Hungary, and news about it is listened to avidly. Korea offers concrete evidence that the West will actually take up arms against the

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IPOR, Inc.
Communists, and although the course of the fighting does not always give hope, the Western intentions do. Even reports of UN set-backs in Korea, when broadcast by Western stations, have one good effect; they add to the faith of the listeners in the veracity of the Western news services. A fuller discussion of the opinions of the respondents about Korea and of their reactions to news of Western setbacks there will be given in later sections of this report.

Another kind of news of non-domestic events which interested an appreciable number of respondents was news of the activities and fate of Hungarian refugees and emigres. Slightly more than one out of three respondents expressed such an interest. News about refugees and emigres is naturally interesting to people who have themselves been thinking of fleeing, but it is more than that. Successful flight from Hungary and subsequent finding of good jobs in, say, America is taken to indicate a check to the progress of the regime and to demonstrate that the Western economic system is a better one than the Communism of Hungary, where good jobs do not exist. Furthermore, and probably more important, the emigres are supposed to be a powerful factor working for the liberation of Hungary and therefore news about their activities is welcome:

It would be important to inform the people in Hungary that the Hungarian statesmen in exile are recognized and supported by the West and that they are getting organized with a view to liberating Hungary. People want to hear about positive achievements and not empty words. (Olk55/5)
Specific instructions given by Hungarian political leaders living abroad could well influence the conditions (situation) back home. Many of them would be listened to because of their having personal prestige, even though this is not true about all of them. It is a pity that they cannot be heard over Western radios. (092/11)

(The WOA should broadcast) about the coming war and about the Hungarians who are already emigrés and how they want to free the Hungarians at home from the Soviet yoke. (098/5)

News bulletins other than those which appear in Table 21 are for the most part listened to with tolerance, provided there are not too many of them, but they must occupy a very minor part of the broadcast if they are not to cause adverse reactions on the part of the audience. Unless international news broadcasts to Hungary consist very largely of items which can be interpreted as dealing directly with the fight against Communism, the programs will not be popular.

**How Detailed Should the News Be: News-Commentary Ratio**

It is difficult to obtain information from Hungarian respondents about how detailed news reports should be and how much time should be devoted to straight news bulletins as opposed to commentaries. It is usually felt by the listeners that more important news or news particularly relevant to Hungary should be treated in more detail, but the detailed treatment tends, in their minds, to involve what we would ordinarily call commentary. Many respondents do not understand a distinction between news and commentary. The more educated respondents, who form only a small minority of the sample, are better able than those of less education to make this distinction, but most respondents do not, even terminologically, divide the broadcasts sharply into news and commentary sections. Those who express a desire to
have important news items treated in detail tend to talk of the details as explanations so that a detailed news item consists of both fact and commentary:

It is more important to broadcast the news in detail than to broadcast many news items. Generally, people are not informed enough about the contents of the news, and they do not have time and opportunity, either, to look more closely into the questions with which the news deals. The important task of the radio is not to be satisfied with only broadcasting news, but to explain it, too. (03/19/9)

They should rather have less news, but well explained. The VOA has a pretty good proportion in this field. It happened sometimes, however, that the ideological background of certain news items was not explained well enough. Once they had a broadcast about a church consecration in America. The VOA reported this only as news, but did not add anything to the report. Even though the Hungarian people are religious, they would have liked to hear a few more words about a thing like this. My neighbor is a somewhat slow thinker. Whenever we listened to the news together he always used to ask me for explanation afterwards, saying 'What did they say; just how did they mean this?' The simple people often just listened to the news, and regarded it only as dry facts and were unable to make out the meaning. They lack the explanation. I felt that the VOA explained only about 50 per cent of foreign political news, while the rest was simply announced over the radio (without explanation). (05/1/9)

Because the respondents' mode of thinking did not differentiate sharply between news and commentary (or between "detailed" news, "explanation" of the news, and commentary) most of them were not asked what proportion of time should be devoted to news and what proportion to commentary. Instead, they were asked to compose an ideal 30-minute program. It was hoped that proportions of news and commentary could be deduced from these programs. However, news, details, and commentary are so inextricably
intermixed in the programs that in most cases nothing like a proportion can be analyzed out. Essentially, what the respondents say is that time should be devoted only to the most "important" news and that this news should be explained "sufficiently" so that the listener cannot be misled by Communist reports of the same events, so that he can understand what is being talked about, and so that the implications for Hungary are clear. For example, one respondent began with an outline of a 30-minute program as follows:

Foreign political events (UN, Korea, diplomatic events, etc.): 6 minutes.

News about Hungarian internal affairs (deportations, class struggle, lectures about the people's misery, taxes, the war preparations of the Hungarian Communist government, Soviet exploitation of Hungary, etc.): 10 minutes

Lectures about the American way of life (interviews, visits to American homes, Russian-American statistical comparisons): 6 minutes

News about the peace policy of America and the Western countries, about their military preparedness, and about their efforts to restore the freedom of the Eastern European peoples: 6 minutes (033/8)

This outline alone combines what are commonly termed news, commentary, and features, and it is rather difficult to separate one from the other. However, the first two sections of the outline seem definitely to concern news (although "lectures about the people's misery" can hardly be called straight news). But when this respondent proceeded to elaborate on the way this news should be presented it was evident that he was thinking more of commentary than of news:

In the first 18 minutes of this program, it was not my idea to have a news bulletin consisting of a varied mass of brief news items. On the contrary, I would like to have these selected very carefully,
only the really important events, and the remaining time (of the 18 minutes) should be used to explain these events thoroughly. If a Western radio news item is not explained sufficiently, then the Communists are immediately ready to explain it to suit their own ideas. They (the Communists) are very experienced in this field, and this would leave the non-Communist radio listener without any idea of what was right. Such an, for instance, the Anglo-Egyptian conflict. I just heard London announce that troops were moved there (to Egypt). It did not add, however, why this was necessary or unavoidable. Of course, the Communists immediately grab the chance and they 'explain' it. They say it was necessary because the British want to enslave the Arabs. And most of the listeners back home would not know what to say to this. I don't know how the VOA is handling these matters now, whether it gives enough explanations. But I remember that before it started the broadcasts with many brief news items, and I don't know whether this was correct. (033/9)

There is some evidence that the respondents' lack of a sharp distinction between news and commentary is due to the fact that commentary, in order to be considered as distinct from news, must be delivered by a commentator who is known by name and who is thought of specifically as a summarizer and interpreter of the news.

A fault of the VOA is that it comments on political news practically 'incognito.' It would be good if its commentaries could be associated with a particular person. The broadcasts of such a commentator would create interest in what he would say the next time. (092/15)

BBC has such a commentator in the person of Andrew Martin. He is spoken of often in the interviews and almost invariably in highly favorable terms. If it is desired, because of lack of broadcast time or other reasons, to restrict commentary to isolated programs, the best method of doing so is probably to have a regular commentator. Those listeners who want to hear commentary will then feel satisfied that they are
getting it because the fact of listening to a man who is identified as a commentator will call their attention to the fact that commentary is being presented. The remarks of the following respondent, who is one of the minority who did distinguish sharply between news and commentary, indicate the different effect on the listener of the BBC practice contrasted with that of the VOA:

The most important thing is to have commentaries at all times about current events, the gist of which should be supported by ideological, historical, geographical and cultural or economic backgrounds. It should not omit the Communist arguments, but should deny them point by point. In that respect the BBC was better than the VOA. The commentaries of the latter (VOA) sometimes sounded only like an expanded (news) report. This opinion is supported by the fact that news and commentaries are less separated on the VOA than on the BBC, as I said before. The two (news and commentary) alternate often within the framework of the VOA program. (093/19)

Because of the confusion between news and commentary (and in many cases the lack of understanding of the term "commentary") which exists in the minds of the respondents, it is difficult to evaluate the specific reactions of the latter to the actual news-commentary ratio of the VOA programs. Although the respondents did rate the VOA in this respect, the subsequent table, which summarizes the results, should be examined with the above considerations in mind.
### Table 22
**REACTIONS TO VOA NEWS-COMMENTARY RATIO**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>VOA Preferences</th>
<th>Other VOA Listeners</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present ratio satisfactory</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should have more commentary</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should have more news</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not ascertainable</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Cases (100%)</strong></td>
<td><strong>(33)</strong></td>
<td><strong>(41)</strong></td>
<td><strong>(74)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What this table essentially means is that a majority of the respondents felt that the news items of the VOA were not sufficiently explained for the audience to grasp the full meaning and implications of what was broadcast. The explanation which was lacking can be called commentary or it can be called more detailed news. At first glance it appears that the VOA preferents were more favorably disposed toward the VOA ratio than were the non-preferents, but it is likely that this is due not to a difference of opinion between the two groups but rather to the large percentage of "not ascertainables" in the non-preferent group -- respondents whose opinions were not ascertainable for the most part because the respondents did not listen to the VOA enough to be able to give well-formed opinions.

The respondents who said that the news broadcasts should be accompanied by more commentary or details were divided into two approximately equal groups. Those in the first group simply said that they wanted more explanation or said that they wanted more explanation of all items. Those in the second group called for more selection of items. They said that only "important" items should be broadcast and that these should be covered.

IPOR, Inc.
in great detail. In a few cases they said that some items which are now
commented upon are too unimportant or uninteresting to deserve comment;
comment on these items should be eliminated in order to devote more time
to explanations of events which directly concern the future of Hungary.
Representative quotations from each of these groups follow. The first
quotation is noteworthy in that it suggests that an improperly explained
news item not only is not understood but becomes uninteresting, even if
it is intrinsically worthy of interest. The second quotation suggests
one way of adding explanation to a news bulletin:

In my opinion, everything they broadcast is im-
portant. Still, you would say occasionally (about
a certain broadcast) that 'I was not interested
in this.' It used to be like this with the in-
sufficiently explained foreign news. Since it
is not explained well enough, many Hungarians do
not understand what it had to do with us. In other
words, this kind of material is not superfluous,
but it should be presented in another way. (051/10)

It is better to give fewer items of news, but
important ones, with more thorough explanations.
I am thinking of foreign news when I say this.
Back home we do not know of many things which
in the West are taken as a matter of course.
When we hear the news items in rapid fire, one
after the other, often we don't know at the moment
even where the place mentioned is located. We do
not even know what precipitated the news. I don't
say that this is true only of the VOA. But it would
not hurt to say more about important news, present-
ing it well and rounding it out. This should be
cleverly done, for people don't like it to seem as
though they were sitting in school. The Communists
teach them lessons enough. But if an item begins
like this: 'In the great North German seaport,
Hamburg ...' then this tells the Hungarian listen-
er much more than if they just start speaking about
Hamburg, and by the time a person realizes what it
is about, the news is over. 'The Danish capital,
Copenhagen, today celebrated ...' is a better
way to begin a news item than simply to say 'Copen-
hagen.' (019/9)
The fact that so many respondents feel that the meaning of the VOA news items is obscured because the items are not sufficiently explained is undoubtedly a reflection of the low educational level of the sample. This conclusion is pointed up by the very simple nature of the "explanations" called for in the last quotation, and the request for explanations of this kind is not unique. It is to be remembered also in this respect that it is among the rural population and among the least educated group that RFE enjoys its highest popularity relative to VOA. The present news broadcasts of the VOA seem tailored particularly for the urban and better-educated population of Hungary. It does not necessarily follow that if the VOA news were presented in a more "explained" fashion, the VOA would obtain a higher popularity rating vis-a-vis RFE than it now has among lower-educated and rural people, because the appeal of RFE is based upon broadcasts about domestic affairs and upon a particularly belligerent anti-Communist tone, not upon a comparatively detailed handling of international news; but it is quite possible that if the VOA news were more detailed, these people would like VOA better than they do now.

The presenting of more detailed news items poses a problem to the VOA, for it is possible that VOA does not have enough time on the air to be able to increase the length of its news items or its commentary, given the amount of news it has to get across. It should therefore be remembered that the respondent criticism of the present news-commentary ratio is, if frequent, rather mild and far from being a crucial issue. This conclusion is borne out by the previous discussion of the VOA news service, a service which, as we have seen, is generally considered to be
good. However, if the present amount of commentary could be delivered by a named commentator who could become a "star" like Martin, the listeners would probably feel that they were getting more commentary, and listener interest would be increased.
Broadcasting Preference and Evaluation: Objectivity of Broadcasts

The objectivity of its broadcasts is one of the principal reasons why BBC preferents favored the BBC over other stations. Four out of 10 gave objectivity as a preference reason; they were ordinarily referring to the news broadcasts. Among other stations objectivity as a preference reason appears only with reference to the VOA, 15 per cent of the VOA preferents mentioning it. It may be thought natural that the two principal government stations should be considered more objective than a private station like RFE, which is less responsible for its words, and that the traditional British reserve should make the BBC appear more objective than the VOA. However, although the respondents did consider the VOA and the BBC to be more objective than RFE, the preponderance of opinion did not place the BBC ahead of the VOA on this count. Approximately one-third of the respondents said that the BBC was more objective, but half said that both stations were the same, and a few respondents considered the VOA to be the more objective station.

A report on how respondents compared the VOA and BBC on objectivity is possible because they were asked the following question:

Now, quite a number of refugees have told us that they listen to the BBC for the most 'reliable' or 'objective' news but that they listen to the VOA for 'inspiration' or 'hope'. We are not quite sure what this means, and we are asking everybody about it. What do these people mean by this, exactly? And is it true?*

The results of the comparison on objectivity alone follow.

* This question was asked because previous interviews of refugees by the VOA had come up with the differentiation between BBC objectivity and VOA hope.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Both stations are equally objective</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBC is more objective</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOA is more objective</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Cases (100%) = (58)

There was no difference of opinion between VOA preferents and other listeners, except that of the 9 BBC preferents who also listened to the VOA, 5 said that the BBC was the more objective station, 3 said that both stations were the same, and 1 described the VOA as more objective.

This table tells us little, of course, unless we understand what the respondents mean by "objectivity", and in fact their definition of the term has a considerable variation. In addition, the respondents differed to some extent in their interpretation of the intent of the question, a circumstance which affected the results. A thorough grasp of the implications of the interweaving of these two factors complicates the simple quantitative picture presented in the above table but facilitates the understanding of what seems to be a fundamental difference between the VOA and the BBC.

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1. "The two stations can't be compared," and "BBC is more objective from one viewpoint and VOA from another." The letter quotation will be given in full in the discussion in the text.
2. Includes only those who listened to both VOA and BBC.

TPCE, Inc.
We may begin by considering two fairly clear-cut definitions of objectivity which differ considerably and which affect the evaluation of the comparative objectivity of the VOA and the BBC. The first definition equates "objectivity" with "reliability" — an objective radio station is considered to be one the program contents of which are true. Most respondents felt that the VOA was as reliable as the BBC, and hence in general those respondents who defined "objectivity" as "reliability" said that the two stations were equally objective. The converse of this is likewise true: most of those who said that the two stations did not differ in objectivity were thinking of "objectivity" as "reliability".

I liked very much the detailed news service of every foreign station and, after comparing the different programs, I found them all reliable . . . . I never heard or noticed that BBC was more objective than the VOA. As I said, all acquaintances and I found all the Western radio programs generally reliable. (C66/7)

As far as objectivity is concerned, that is to say that news items and reports are strictly based on facts, I did not notice any difference between the VOA and BBC. (C71/7)

The second definition of objectivity refers to the many-sidedness of news broadcasts. According to this definition the objective station is the one which carefully gives the opinions of factions of different political viewpoints — the respondents often say "gives all angles of the problem" — rather than having to one predetermined line. Those respondents who defined objectivity in this manner almost invariably said that the BBC was more objective than the VOA.
In intellectual circles BBC is often preferred to VOA, for these circles like information dealing with all angles of the subject, where one can feel that the editors of the BBC weighed every word before they wrote it down and transmitted it. At least in the circle of my acquaintances I experienced this on more than one occasion. BBC was less appreciated by workers and peasants. The latter liked VOA’s fresh language and phrasing better. They could not appreciate BBC’s reserve; they misunderstood it, regarding it as a lack of determination and a lack of a definite stand in the face of the Communist danger. And it is my experience that in wide circles of the intelligentsia in Hungary, too, the openness of political life in America is better liked than the complicated diplomatic phraseology often heard over BBC. Sometimes we could not even ascertain what BBC was trying to say, because of its too cautious phrasing.*

Only half of the respondents who said that the BBC was the more objective station, however, were referring to the many-sidedness of the news broadcasts. The others were thinking of a different, although related, aspect of the programs — the tone in which they were delivered, a tone which is sometimes characterized as "dispassionate", sometimes (by those who liked it less) as "cold", "dry", or even "merciless":

BBC broadcast in a dispassionate manner, letting the traditional British reserve be felt, and there was not even the slightest change in the announcer’s voice, no matter whether he reported about victory and success, or about defeat, losses and ordeals. The VOA speaks with more enthusiasm and more feeling. When listening to BBC, I thought about it as personified by a man who smokes his cigarette or cigar without any unnecessary movement, and who cannot be shaken out of his calmness, whereas when listening to the VOA, I thought about a temperamental man making animated movements with his hands.

* This quotation and the ones which follow implement the discussion in a previous section (pp. 75, 76) of the appeal of the BBC to higher-than lower-educated listeners.

TPR, Inc.
I can only say that I felt that the VOA spoke the people's language more. London sounded quite foreign. It spoke mercilessly. It said everything in a cold, unsparing and dry manner. The VOA's broadcasts sounded like a speaker who was able to carry his audience away and to encourage the people... London never stirred up any special feelings in me. The Hungarians are an enthusiastic people, they don't like dry things. They want things to be told them in a colorful manner. (033/6)

That this tone is related to the "many-sided" content of the BBC broadcasts as well as to their delivery is evidenced by the previous quotation from the interview of respondent No. 021, who said that workers and peasants "misunderstood" BBC's reserve, regarding it as a lack of determination, and who spoke of the "openness" of the VOA in contrast to the "complicated diplomatic phraseology" of the BBC which, while perhaps inevitable in discussing a complicated diplomatic situation from all sides, produced the result that "sometimes we could not even ascertain what BBC was trying to say, because of its too cautious phrasing". However, in most interviews content and tone are clearly distinguished - most frequently either one or the other are discussed but not both, and hence the characterization of the BBC as more objective than the VOA has a different meaning when made by different respondents.

It is in the statements that the BBC is more objective than the VOA in tone rather than in content that the problem of the interviewees' interpretation of the questions they were asked arises. Some respondents seem to have thought in terms approximately like the following: "Is the BBC more objective than the VOA in my opinion, regardless of what others have said?" Such respondents either denied that the BBC is more objective, thus saying that they did not understand the meaning of the statements of other people to the contrary, or they said that the BBC was more objective...
primarily because of its program content. Other respondents seem to have based their replies mainly upon a search for the meaning of the statement to the effect that the BBC is more objective. These respondents are principally the ones who said that the BBC was more objective from the point of view of tone. Their reasoning seems to have been "How is the BBC more objective than the VOA? Well, it does have this difference in tone. This is what the people who said it was more objective must have meant, and from this point of view they were correct."

Reasoning of this kind is evident in interviews like the following:

It is correct that the VOA generally used a more enthusiastic voice in talking against the Communist system at home and about the events of the Western world. I mean this in comparison with the BBC, which obviously tried to remain calm and cold, but this is a difference which was much more noticeable before than it is now. Since RFE started, this former difference is not at all obvious, and since then the VOA also appears to be calmer, relatively speaking. At the moment RFE is the most violent one against the Communists. They are the best at encouraging the Hungarians to hold out. It is correct that I did also hear over the VOA something like: 

"This cannot last very long." I cannot remember BBC's ever having said such a thing. I guess this is the difference which people thought of when they made the comparison which you just mentioned to me; this must be what they had in mind. But in any case I must state that I never heard anyone at home make such a comparison. But now as I think about it, I think this is why fewer people listen to the BBC, and this explains the greater popularity of RFE and secondly the VOA. (04/14)

The additional complication of the RFE tone which this respondent introduces should be noted. Many respondents speak of RFE as the most violent anti-Communist station, and although few say specifically that RFE's entrance upon the scene has lessened the difference between VOA and BBC by contrast with RFE, the effect of RFE may be greater than the overt content of the interviews indicates. In other words, many interviewees who, at the time of the interviews, said that there was no difference between VOA and BBC, might have been sensitive to a difference if they had been interviewed earlier, before RFE made VOA and BBC seem more alike.
This respondent was quite evidently seeking only to explain how it came about that some people said that the BBC was more objective than the VOA. He unquestionably would not spontaneously have said that there was a difference in objectivity, although he probably would spontaneously have characterized the two stations as different in tone. He met the question half-way, as it were. If he had gone a bit further — if he had talked about the difference of tone but had further attempted to judge the objectivity of the two stations from his own point of view, regardless of what others had stated, he might well have said something like the following:

The voice of the announcer on VOA was more encouraging than the one on the BBC. VOA related the news in such a manner that a simple villager could better understand what was encouraging about it. BBC's level was high for the villagers and was more laconic in its interpretation. Maybe this was the reason why we felt it to be less encouraging. From the point of view of objectivity, I did not realize any difference. I mean by this that both broadcast the news according to the facts. (031/5)

Thus the opinions about the relative objectivity of the VOA and the BBC range along a sort of continuum. At one end are statements to the effect that the BBC is definitely the more objective station because it regards world events from many points of view rather than concentrating on one standard interpretation or way of presentation. At the other end are statements which say that both stations are equally objective because both are reliable. (For the moment we are eliminating from consideration the opinions that the VOA is more objective than the BBC.) In between are the discussions which focus on the comparative tone of the two stations. As we have seen, some of these merely try to define how the BBC can be
considered more objective than the VOA; others define this difference
but go on to indicate that they are doing so under effort and that although
they are willing to concede that the BBC is the more objective station if
they try hard to find some basis for such a judgment, they would not by
themselves have reached such a conclusion; others note the difference
in tone and say that this must have been the basis for statements to the
effect that the BBC was the more objective station, but they continue by
saying that they themselves do not consider the two stations to be dif-
ferent in objectivity. Finally there are unquestionably still others who

Most of the respondents who classify the BBC as more objective but base
their opinion only on the tone of the broadcasts are in this category,
but they are usually not so explicit as the respondent quoted above
(No. 214) in stating that they are simply trying to figure out what peo-
ple could mean by saying that the BBC is the more objective station.
Nevertheless, as the following examples indicate, respondents who could
be classified as saying that the BBC was more objective in tone often
seem to be talking chiefly about the possible opinion of other people,
even sometimes people whom they do not know, and to be implying that
they themselves do not feel this way:

The BBC seemed (italics ours) to be more objective
than the VOA because it presented and explained the
news in a completely dry manner, not with emotional
illustrations, like the daily newspapers used to do.
It did not mention Soviet opinions or explanations
thereof. On the other hand, the VOA did broadcast
such things and argued with them (the Communists) in
its commentaries. Its broadcasts also had an emotional
element. In other words, what made the BBC seem more
objective was that it presented the news more briefly,
more colorlessly, and in a drier manner than the VOA,
(092/11-25)

... The comment of the VOA on other foreign events
were similarly encouraging. It was good to hear such
encouragement: that we must be patient for a few years,
and can be certain that the peace over of Bolshevism
will fall'. It's possible that the BBC is considered
more objective than the VOA by some people because it
refrains from such encouragements and gives the exact
data of the events without emotional emphasis. I, how-
ever, and my acquaintances too, as I learned, like the
VOA's system of editing, which doesn't avoid encour-
agement and emotional emphasis. (062/5)
would grant a difference in tone if questioned about it directly but do not consider it enough related to objectivity (they usually think only of objectivity as reliability) to be worth mentioning; these people simply say that the two stations are equally objective.

The existence of this continuum, which appears to be a continuum more of phraseology and of different interpretations of the intent of the original question rather than a continuum of basic opinions, raises a considerable problem of how the statements on it are to be classified. The essential question is: Do some of these people who speak only of tone really consider the BBC to be more objective or do all of them, or almost all, think that there is little or no difference in the objectivity of the two stations and differ only in their manner of approach to the answering of the original interview question? In this respect it is worthwhile noting that the interview question juxtaposed the two concepts of hope and objectivity, and that the tone of the broadcasts is relevant to both of these concepts. A "dry" or "cold" tone is less encouraging to hopes than an "enthusiastic" one and is at the same time, in the minds of some people, more "objective". If the idea of hope had not been brought up along with objectivity, the chances are that less of the answers would include the aspect of tone when objectivity was talked about.

It appears, therefore — both from the way the question was originally asked and from the way the respondents seem to have reacted to the intent of the question — that a good many of the respondents who apparently said that the BBC was more objective should really be classified as holding the opinion that the two stations were characterised by little or no difference in objectivity. We cannot tell with precision
exactly how many respondents should be classified in this manner, but if all those who based BBC's objectivity purely upon tone are classified as thinking that the two stations are equally objective, the results should more accurately reflect the actual thinking of the respondents than do results based, as in Table 23 purely upon overt verbal response. Such a reclassification will undoubtedly contain some inaccuracies (will classify as thinking that the two stations are equally objective a few people who may feel that there is a genuine difference between the two) but will correctly deal with the larger group who said that there was a difference in objectivity only in order to explain what other people had said and did while influenced by being forced to think about "hopefulness" at the same time.

When the respondents are reclassified in the manner described above, the results are as follows:

Table 24
RECLASSIFIED COMPARISON OF VOA AND BBC OBJECTIVITY

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Both stations are equally objective</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBC is more objective</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOA is more objective</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Cases (100%)</strong></td>
<td><strong>58</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Again there are no differences of opinion between VOA preferences and others, except for BBC preferences, of whom 4 said that both stations were the same, 4 said that the BBC was more objective, and 1 said that the VOA was more objective.
The above table, although probably correct in broad outline, does not begin to express the extreme complexity of the sum total of opinions about the relative objectivity of the VOA and the BBC. The respondents' statements on this topic range from simple assertions to the effect that they never noticed any difference between the two stations or that the BBC was more objective but for very vague reasons to lengthy discussions of the problem which include various kinds of qualifications. For example, the following respondent, an intellectual, stated that the BBC seemed to be more objective in its approach but that this reflected not a real difference between the stations but rather a difference in importance in international affairs of their respective sponsoring countries.

The reason for the BBC's being more objective than any other radio station was that it was very specific. It must be mentioned here that in discussing various problems it (the BBC) never forgot any of the different British viewpoints, and otherwise, too, it used to approach the problems from all angles. It never seemed to favor (the opinion of) a single political party. In recent years England almost always was striving towards compromise settlements in international politics and the BBC registered that attitude exactly. Anyway, the (British) coldbloodedness, often mentioned in Hungary, means that the Englishman can hardly be made to lose his temper. In this respect, the BBC was characteristically British.

On the basis of all those things, it was a general impression in Hungary that the BBC was more objective than any other Hungarian-language Western broadcaster. However, after more thorough consideration of the problem, I thought, along with many friends, that there was no far-reaching difference in this field between the VOA, the BBC and Radio Paris. Among the four most popular Western radio stations, we regarded only RFE as being decided less objective. We could understand that, however, because we regarded it as a necessity of its job to be sharply propagandistic as against the typically informative task of the other three stations. The difference between the distribution
of political power between America and Britain was at most what indicated an apparent difference between broadcasts of the VOA and the BBC from the viewpoint of objectivity. As a result of England's lesser importance in international affairs than the US, the BBC had a more reserved voice than the VOA, thus, apparently, also more objective. But even in this respect, it became clear that both the US and England weighed the actual power relations well, and the VOA did not remain behind the BBC in expressing them. The fact that Bolshevik policy regarded the US as its greatest enemy might have supported the semblance (of superior BBC objectivity). The VOA, being the mouthpiece of the US, had to argue more with the Bolsheviks than the BBC, representing the less provoked England. (093/17)

The ultimate in qualification was reached by one respondent who used a double yardstick to measure objectivity and arrived at two diametrically opposed conclusions:

VOA kept quiet about many things that the VOA reported. Accordingly, from this viewpoint the VOA was more objective than the BBC, because it (the VOA) was more complete.

On the other hand, while the VOA used to attack the Soviet Union and the Communists, the BBC was satisfied with reporting their (the Communists') statements or the happenings in the Soviet Union. This created the impression that the BBC was more objective, because it was not emotional. (098/6)

The first paragraph of the above quotation illustrates the point of view of the few respondents who said that the VOA was the more objective station. To these people the dispassionate BBC mode of presentation is not objectivity but timidity or lack of willingness to take a firm stand on world issues. (Most respondents, although they did not characterize the BBC presentation as lack of objectivity, nevertheless had a somewhat similar attitude in that BBC's lack of a strong, emotional stand against Communism contributed strongly to their preference for other.,

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The lack of a firm stand is not liked and by some respondents is assimilated to lack of objectivity simply because it is too wishy-washy. Since many listeners take it as self-evident that the proper and true stand in world affairs is firm and uncompromising anti-Communism, any failure to live up to this ideal is a failure to react properly to the "objective" facts. Objectivity rests in making firm statements about your own position (which must be anti-Communist) and not being deterred by fear or other secondary considerations to such a point that some news is suppressed or treated delicately.

The VOA is anyhow appreciated because of its objectivity. A great many times during the past years the situation in world politics had been so delicate that the English and French radios dared to take only a very undetermined standpoint. Such a problem was, for instance, the question of Red and Nationalist China. In such cases, the VOA is the best in taking an objective stand which one cannot misunderstand, for instance, when it reports on UN negotiations. It is the VOA which emphasizes them which is the way the free world has to follow. (07/6/10)

We want to hear news from America because we consider it to be reliable. This is so because America is the strongest power and is destined to save humanity from Communism. What I said about the VOA is not quite as true in connection with London, because people expect England to play only second fiddle in our liberation. Radio London used too gentle language against the Communist propaganda. It did not emphasize the news. It wanted to be too just (impartial). It did not make any counter-propaganda. Therefore its weapon was blunt. It was because of this that we had the impression that in England they hadn't fully realized the Communist danger. Of if they did realize it, they wanted to remain too calm. This characterized their broadcasts, too. (05/2/5-6)

IPOE, Inc.
One of the respondents who thought of "objectivity" in terms of "reliability" classified the VOA as more objective than BBC on the grounds that the former had better and more authentic information about the internal situation of Hungary.

I never heard or found myself that BBC was more objective than VOA. We found both stations very reliable, in that they kept to the truth and to the facts as they happened. But in one sense the VOA seemed to us to be even more reliable (than BBC). We thought that with the help of Hungarians of whom great numbers live in the US, the VOA was able to give a more authentic picture of the circumstances in Hungary. We found the VOA well informed in this respect.

(030/13)

In summary it may be said that although there is no single clear and simple picture of the difference between the VOA and the BBC, relatively few respondents listened to the BBC for its objective news -- objective, that is, in the sense of dispassionate presentation of all sides of an issue. Those who did listen to the BBC for this reason tended to be from the more highly educated group and to be BBC preferents. A number of others agreed that the BBC could be called the more objective station if by this was meant that the BBC programs were presented in a "dry" or "cold" manner, but these respondents did not listen to the BBC for this reason and with one exception were not BBC preferents. Most respondents thought that the two stations were equally objective. Some evidence presented in this section and more evidence which will be presented in the two following sections indicates that both the VOA and the BBC are considered to be objective in contrast with RFE, which is usually thought of as the most belligerent anti-Communist station.
Objectivity and Hope

The meaning of the "hope" which listeners receive from the VOA is clear from the discussion in this and preceding sections. The hope is for liberation, and the listeners derive hope from the faith that one day America will liberate them and from all broadcast contents which seem to justify this faith. Just as it is impossible, in considering the merits of the VOA news broadcasts, to separate out clearly how much of the attraction of the broadcast is due to its sponsorship and how much is due to intrinsically good presentation, so it is impossible to determine how much of the hope derived from the VOA comes from the sponsorship and how much comes from the contents and manner of presentation of the broadcasts.

As far as content and manner of presentation are concerned, the contrast of objectivity and hope which some respondents speak of is a good one. Objectivity (here used in the sense of dispassionateness) is not conducive to hope, whereas bias or fiery presentation gives a lift to the hearers. The respondent quoted above on p. 118 (No. 033) gives a very clear illustration of this dichotomy.

No respondents said that the BBC gives more hope than the VOA. Two-thirds said that the VOA gives more hope than the BBC and only about one out of five said that the two stations give equal measures of hope. The VOA preferents were no different from the other listeners in this respect, except that the BBC preferents gave an even stronger vote for VOA hope; 8 out of 9 of them said that VOA gave more hope to its listeners than BBC.
Table 25
HOPE GIVEN BY VOA AND BBC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VOA gives more hope</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both stations give equal hope</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cases (100%)</td>
<td>(58)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Such hope as the BBC gives is considered to be the general hope aroused by news broadcasts which indicate that the West is doing something or preparing to do something about Communism. Usually BBC is not said, by those who think VOA and BBC give equal hope, to give any special hope; rather it is denied that VOA gives any more hope than BBC, or it is said that all Western stations have the same news and hence the same amount of hope. In some cases respondents who evidently believed that there was little difference in the hope received from the VOA and the BBC apparently tried to give some explanation of how other respondents could have said that VOA gave more hope than BBC; this attempt at explanation was of the same order as the similar attempt to explain how the BBC could be more objective when the respondent did not really think that it was:

BBC broadcast the news daily. On the other hand, the VOA illustrated it more, so that even laymen were able to understand what they wanted to say better. Hope might be included in this opinion in that, if somebody understood the meaning of Western (radio) news better, then, on the basis of some of it, he might better believe that sooner or later some changes would take place in Hungary. (051/7)

* Includes only those who listened to both VOA and BBC.
A qualification should be noted here with regard to the hope received from all Western stations but particularly from the VOA because the VOA represents the country that is considered to be the only powerful to implement the hope that its radio station broadcasts. A not inconsiderable number of listeners said that the VOA gives hope (or rather attempts to give hope) by broadcasting remarks that are intended to be encouraging, but that by now there has been too much broadcasting about the coming liberation, too many promises, but no action, so that it becomes impossible any longer to attach credence to this kind of broadcast. In fact, too much talk with too little action creates positive disaffection with the foreign broadcasts. As many as 12 per cent of the VOA listeners — usually better educated and more intelligent individuals — expressed disillusionment and frustration with these "empty" attempts at bolstering hope. One of the college-trained respondents said:

The following anecdote shows how the Hungarians think about the VOA and how they expect the news of a successful intervention (of the US in Hungary); at an interrogation a gypsy was asked to state his opinion about the VOA. He answered: "They lie!". The Communist officer was pleased with this answer and asked the gypsy how he meant it. Then the gypsy said only: "Well, are they coming?" — This anecdote shows that people in Hungary are losing confidence. This concerns notably broadcasts which promise: "The hour of liberation is coming", because they believe that the US policy of procrastination would tolerate even the greatest injustice. It may be that there are reasons which make this policy necessary, but people behind the Iron Curtain don't understand them. Many Hungarians believe that it is not the program of the VOA which ought to be changed, but American policy. ... It may be assumed that a great many Hungarians think this way. So far they have trusted the VOA absolutely, but lately ... they either have stopped listening or, if they still listen, they become strongly critical. (G01/3-4)

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