

September 1, 1955

Radio Liberty's Effectiveness Appraised

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Summary:

Stanford University communications expert Wilbur Schramm reviews the effectiveness of Radio Liberty after two and a half years of broadcasting.

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AN ESTIMATE OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF
RADIO LIBERATION

Wilbur Schramm

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CONTENTS

Summary

Bases of this report

Previous evaluation of Radio Liberation

Is Radio Liberation delivering a signal?

What do the defectors and escapees say?

What does the mail say?

What have been the regime reactions?

The import of this evidence

What can Radio Liberation hope to accomplish?

Conclusions

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SUMMARY

The writer of this report has consulted with the chief officers of the American Committee for Liberation from Bolshevism and of Radio Liberation, Munich; discussed Radio Liberation with a representative of the American Embassy, Moscow; discussed it with representatives of the Peripheral Reporting Service of the U.S. Department of State, with interviewing officers at Frankfurt and elsewhere, and with one recent high-level refugee from the Soviet Union. He has read the 1954 OCB evaluation and all pertinent Radio Liberation documents since that time; examined all available defector reports bearing on Radio Liberation; examined all records of regime reaction as to Radio Liberation; examined a sampling of emigre press reaction to Radio Liberation; looked at all reports on Radio Liberation's mail and seen some of the mail; read the Committee's studies, "Notes on the Policy, Content and Form of the Ideological and Psychological Struggle Against Bolshevism," (April 1953) and "Improving the Effectiveness of Radio Liberation," (October 1953); read a transcript of the Cambridge Seminar of Committee executives and scholars in the Soviet field (May 1955); and read a week of Radio Liberation scripts.

On the basis of this experience, he concludes:

1. The nature and amount of evidence available do not permit us to say with any scientific confidence that Radio Liberation is or is not being effective in the Soviet Union.
2. However, the majority of trends in the evidence are favorable. The number of defectors who have heard Radio Liberation has increased markedly over last year, and a very large proportion of all refugees from the Soviet Union seem to be aware of, and in most cases to have heard, Radio Liberation. Furthermore, the Soviet press and radio broke their 20 months of silence regarding Radio Liberation in December, 1954, and since that time there have been three full dress attacks on the station and its backers, indicating that the Soviet government feels knowledge of the station is now widespread enough that silence is no longer warranted.
3. Monitoring reports, however, have taken a sharp drop in the last six months, indicating that several new and powerful skywave jammers have caught up with the already viciously jammed Radio Liberation. Radio Liberation is operating with comparatively low power and with its transmitters much too close to the Soviet border to take advantage of favorable wave propagation angles by which to bounce its short wave signal to its chief targets.

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4. The writer feels that Radio Liberation is reaching a small but important group of the Soviet vlast, notably members of the hierarchy and of the military forces, particularly those stationed outside the Soviet Union. The writer is impressed with the enormous difficulty Radio Liberation has undertaken in trying to be effective with this audience. There are no ready-made conditions for acceptance, as in the case of Radio Free Europe's audience. Rather, these listeners approach Radio Liberation with suspicion, listen to it through jamming so vicious that Radio Liberation's programs are arbitrarily limited to four minutes each, and think of its messages not as their spokesman attacking an imposed government, but rather as an outside voice attacking their government -- indeed, a government in which many of the listeners have a personal stake. "Liberation" may therefore be an unfortunate word for what Radio Liberation can realistically hope to accomplish. Rather, it can hope to plant some doubts in the minds of members of the Soviet vlast who are accustomed to hear only one side of all political questions. In a small way it can help to keep these isolated Soviet citizens in touch with the West. Its realistic mission is therefore smaller than the grandiose name may indicate, but important as long as the Iron Curtain stays down, for it is one of the few ways we now have of talking seriously with members of the Soviet power structure.

5. Granted the importance of the mission, it is clear that Radio Liberation's facilities for getting a signal into the Soviet Union should be strengthened. Specifically it is recommended that the plan for establishing transmitters in Spain be pushed vigorously; and that, failing this, another site be secured on the Western edge of Europe.

6. Without a usable signal, the finest radio staff in the world would be voiceless. Nevertheless it is recommended that everything possible be done to strengthen the desk personnel of Radio Liberation, and that consideration be given to establishing Moscow and Washington correspondents for the station.

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I. Bases of this report

During the last few months, the writer of this report has:

consulted with the chief officers of the American Committee for Liberation from Bolshevism, and the chief engineer of Radio Liberation, New York;

consulted with the chief officers of Radio Liberation, Munich, including the radio adviser, the chief engineer, most of the desk heads and desk advisers;

read the 1954 OCB report on Radio Liberation and all pertinent Committee on Liberation materials since that time;

examined all available defector reports bearing on Radio Liberation;

examined all records of regime reaction to Radio Liberation;

examined a sampling of the emigre press reaction to Radio Liberation;

looked at all reports on Radio Liberation mail, and examined some of the mail;

read the Committee's studies, "Notes on the Policy, Content and Form of the Ideological and Psychological Struggle against Bolshevism," (April 1953) and "Improving the effectiveness of Radio Liberation" (October 1953);

read the transcript of the Cambridge Seminar of Committee executives and scholars in the Soviet field (May 1955);
read a week of Radio Liberation scripts;

discussed Radio Liberation with a representative of the American Embassy, Moscow;

discussed Radio Liberation with representatives of the Peripheral Reporting Service of the Department of State, and with interviewing officers at Frankfurt and elsewhere;

discussed Radio Liberation with one recent refugee from the Soviet Union.

On the basis of this experience, the following report is submitted.

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II. Previous evaluation of Radio Liberation

It will be remembered that the OCB report of 1 August 1955 included an annex on Radio Liberation, discussing at some length the history, organization, and objectives of the station, and reviewing the evidence on its coverage and effectiveness, as such evidence existed at that time. It will be further recalled that the evidence at that time was extremely scanty, consisting principally of a limited series of monitoring reports and approximately half a dozen refugee reports. The conclusion of the report was that the evidence was hopeful, but that it was too early to make a reasoned estimate of the effectiveness of the station.

Because of the existence of this earlier report, it is not felt necessary to go into details of history, organization, or objectives of Radio Liberation at the present time. Rather, the following report can begin where the earlier report ended: by reviewing the evidence which has accumulated since approximately mid-June of 1954.

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III. Is Radio Liberation delivering a signal?

Even a casual visitor to Radio Liberation, Munich, can hardly help but observe that the station has relatively meagre physical facilities for the task assigned it.

In June, 1955 Radio Liberation had 86 kilowatts total power for its entire European program, which is intended to cover most of the Soviet Union in nine languages. Its transmitters are clustered near Lampertheim, Germany. By contrast, at the same time Radio Free Europe was broadcasting on more than 800 kw., from a bank of transmitters near Munich and another large bank in Portugal, and attempting to cover only a fourth as much territory as Radio Liberation. VOA was broadcasting on well over 1000 kw., from Munich, England, Tangier, the Courier near Cyprus, and other favorable locations. Thus, Radio Free Europe is equipped to "saturate" a target with many simultaneous transmissions on different frequencies, and is favorably situated to bounce a short wave signal into its desired target. VOA is equipped to overpower opposition with its megawatt, and favorably situated to bounce signals into many targets. But Radio Liberation is weak in power, unequipped to saturate a target, and unable to draw back to the edge of Europe and take advantage of the most favorable bounces to be expected from short wave propagation.

Furthermore, observers agree that Radio Liberation is jammed viciously -- more viciously, perhaps, than any other foreign station transmitting across the Iron Curtain. The best estimate it was possible to make in June of 1955 suggested that the kilowatts of jamming power used against Radio Liberation were at least ten times the power of Radio Liberation itself.

Under these circumstances, then, it is not surprising that reception reports would be less than optimum.

Radio Liberation is monitored in Berlin, Vienna, Helsinki, and Turkey. It is reported that during the summer months, an "intelligible" signal is delivered there about 80 per cent of the time, and about 60 per cent of the time in the winter. However, during the spring months of 1955, several new Russian skywave jammers caught up with Radio Liberation, and there was a sharp decrease in the percentage of intelligible signals.

These reports, of course, are all for peripheral monitoring, and reflect skywave rather than ground wave jamming. The reports from inside the Soviet Union are less encouraging.

An official of the American Embassy, Moscow, reports that between the middle of February and the middle of May, 1955, monitors at the Embassy and elsewhere in the Soviet Union (while travelling)

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have attempted to receive more than 200 separate Radio Liberation broadcasts, without positively identifying a single broadcast.

There are two other reports from inside the Soviet Union. At Kiev, on 17 November, 1954, at 1945 GMT, Radio Liberation was heard on 7.2 megacycles. About 80 per cent of the content was intelligible. And at Minsk, on 20 November, 1954, Radio Liberation was heard briefly on 9.7 megacycles. A station break was identified, despite interference, but the following Byelorussian news was jammed out in the first item.

The general picture, then, so far as signal goes, is of a station which is weak in power, poorly situated to beam short wave to its chief target, severely jammed, and with jamming increasing in severity. Some signals are undoubtedly getting through, but it must not be easy to hear Radio Liberation in many parts of Russia.

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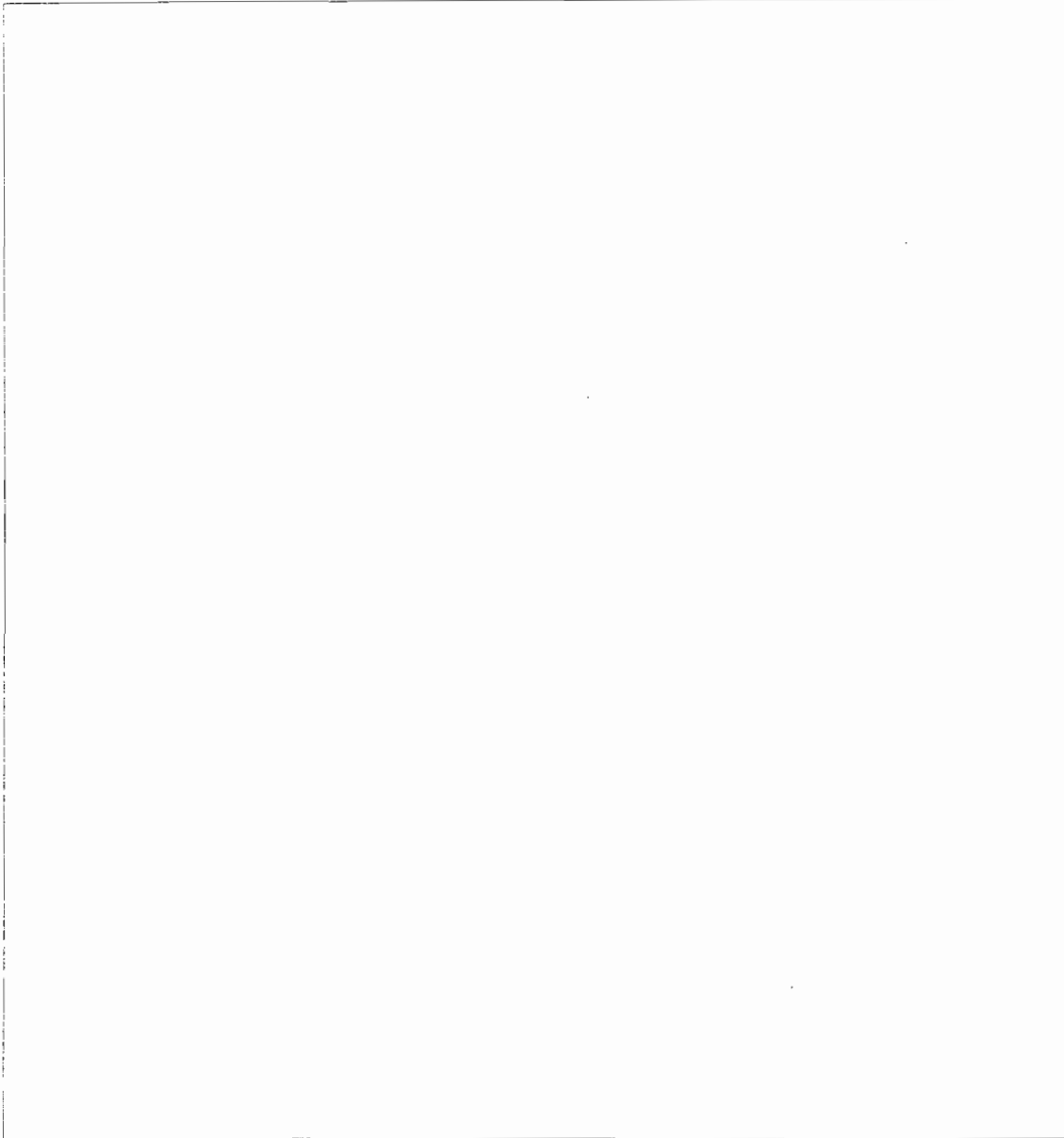
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IV. What do the defectors and escapees say?

There are now approximately 20 refugee reports, direct and indirect, on Radio Liberation. These are few compared to the huge numbers available on RIAS and Radio Free Europe, but encouraging when compared to the bare half dozen available one year ago.

Because they are so few, they can be enumerated individually:

Soviet defectors



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Non-Soviet and indirect testimony

A Lithuanian [] who escaped from the Soviet Union in [] said that "Radio Liberation is widely listened to in Lithuania, although it is the most heavily jammed of all Western stations."

An escapee from East Germany, of questionable reliability, claimed to have listened to Radio Liberation in 1953 with a Russian officer who "had confidence in the broadcasts because of their objectivity and accuracy."

A [] from Hungary, reported in February, 1954, that he listened regularly in Hungary, despite heavy jamming, and considered Radio Liberation programs "the most effective of all Russian-language broadcasts."

A [] escapee, said in May, 1954, that the young generation in Czechoslovakia, compelled to study Russian, is making use of its knowledge of that language to listen to Russian broadcasts, "particularly those of Radio Liberation." He declared that Radio Liberation is "extremely popular for its sharp anti-Soviet programs."

A man who left Western Ukraine in the latter part of 1953, said (in August, 1954) that he had daily reports on Radio Liberation and other western broadcasts in the [] labor camp.

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A [] near Leningrad said that he listened to Radio Liberation in November, 1953, and September, 1954.

The following information came to an employee of Radio Liberation in October, 1954, from commercial travelers near the Iranian border of USSR: "Travelers across the border from the Soviet Union bring evidence that many people are listening to our radio in Georgia, including important Communists."

A Danish student delegation traveling in the USSR were told by three Russian students at the University of Kharkov that these students "knew of Radio Liberation." At this point the conversation was stopped by one of the officials present. (CM 9939).

A report from the American Embassy, Vienna, dated January 20, 1955, says that a Soviet official remarked in conversation on 7 January, 1955, that "I was repeating exactly the arguments of the 'VOA' and of 'that other radio, so-called Liberation.'"

These reports must be interpreted with great caution and reserve. On the one hand, they represent a pitifully small handful of evidence; on the other, they represent a large proportion of all the defectors from the Soviet Union. Most of them come from members of the Soviet services stationed outside the Soviet Union, or from other reporters on the edges of the Soviet territory; but this is not necessarily to be equated with a description of Radio Liberation's Soviet audience, because only the individuals stationed outside the Soviet Union or on its borders have much chance to defect or see much of other civilizations. The tone of the reports is quite favorable to Radio Liberation; but on the other hand, it must be remembered that defectors, as a class, feel the need to justify their defection in their own minds, to please their new friends, and to get a job -- perhaps with Radio Liberation.

The most that should be said of this evidence, then, is that it is hopeful. Radio Liberation is being heard in a number of different places, and by groups, such as the army, which it should be very glad to reach. It is apparently being used as a rallying point for anti-Soviet sentiment. Whereas on this evidence one can neither prove a huge audience nor a tremendous impact for Radio Liberation, still one cannot reject those either. In the absence of more conclusive facts, the evidence is good.

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V. What does the mail say?

In September, 1954, Radio Liberation established mail drops in certain West European cities. A dribble of letters has come in. A tabulation of the letters received in Berlin and Copenhagen, between September of 1954 and spring of 1955, will illustrate their nature:

(date on postmark undecipherable) from Ukrainian collective farmers and workers.

September 28, 1954, in Russian from Poland, requesting gall-bladder medicine.

October 3, 1954, in Russian from West Germany.

October 7, 1954, in German from West Germany.

October 4, 1954, in Russian from "old emigre" in France.

September 24, 1954, in Russian from West Germany.

October 9, 1954, in Russian from West Germany, suggesting improvements.

October 15, 1954, in Russian from Austria.

October 15, 1954, in French from France - abusive.

October 9, 1954, in Russian from Kharkov, friendly, written as though to "dear Auntie Maria."

October 24, 1954, in Russian from Netherlands.

September 9, 1954, in Russian from West Germany.

October 10, 1954, in Russian from Tambov -- angry.

November 14, 1954, in Russian from Mogilev -- indignant "in name of all the pupils in my class."

October 6, 1954, in Russian from Belgium.

October 10 and November 14, 1954, two letters in Russian, from "young Soviet patriots." These may not be genuine.

January, 1955, in Russian from Paris.

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As with the defector reports, this mail must be interpreted with great caution and reserve. Obviously, only 6 of the 18 letters are from within Russia; but it must be remembered that it is not easy to write letters from within the Soviet Union to the West. Only one of the letters from within the Soviet Union is friendly, and it is written under a "dear Auntie Maria" cover; but on the other hand, the fact that schools are permitted or inspired to write protesting letters against Radio Liberation would seem to indicate that the station is known. None of the letters is very helpful in regard to specifics, but some of them may well be conveying information under a cover: e.g., "of course some people here believe your broadcasts, but we know them for the lies they are"....."My wife and I listen to your broadcasts every night" (followed by protests against the broadcasts). On the whole, the mail results are simply another bit of evidence that the station has some audience and is capable of arousing some strong feelings, pro or con. It is not merely throwing an anonymous signal into an unpopulated night.

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VI. What have been the regime reactions?

Up until December, 1954, when Radio Liberation had been on the air 18 months, the official Soviet press and radio maintained a complete and heavy silence in regard to Radio Liberation. In the early summer of 1954, Radio Liberation taunted the Soviet spokesmen to answer its arguments and recognize its presence; it is not altogether surprising that the Russians did not fall for that one. But since December of 1954 there have been three strong reactions from the Soviet regime.

The first of these was a letter by a defector which attacked the Committee, the Institute for the Study of the U.S.S.R. and the Radio -- naming Radio Liberation twice and mentioning its Georgian desk. This was published in Zarya Vostoka, an Armenian paper, and broadcast on the Armenian regional radio. Pravda reprinted the letter, but -- significantly -- omitted the name of the radio station. At that time it was apparently still not policy to mention Radio Liberation.

Later in the month, Alexei Surkov, First Secretary of the Union of Soviet Writers, spoke out angrily at the second Soviet Writers Congress. His words were apparently motivated by the series of broadcasts which Radio Liberation had been directing to Soviet writers and about Soviet literature in general and the freedom of Soviet writers in particular. Among other things he said: "The enemies of our country and our literature are not silent. On the occasion of our Congress, the White emigre Boris Zaitsev was dragged out of the literary trash basket to babble poisonous words of impotent malice over a White Guard microphone." The reference is clearly to Radio Liberation, which was the only station to beam the voice of the distinguished writer Zaitsev to Russia, and it left little doubt either that Soviet writers knew very well what station he was referring to, or that he was deeply stung by what Radio Liberation had been saying.

On April 17, 1955, Izvestia published a long account of a press conference organized by the "Committee for Return to the Homeland." This was mostly a statement by Professor V. P. Vasylaki, who had defected to West Germany, and had been active in emigre circles and had some connection with the activities of the American Committee. Most of the statement is devoted to showing that "the American Committee is an organ of the United States State Department and...implements the policies of American imperialists," and to painting a grim picture of the situation among Soviet emigres in West Germany. In the middle of this, however, he spoke his mind on Radio Liberation:

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Radio Liberation, he said, "is an organ for spreading dirty falsification and black slanders fabricated by American intelligence about the creative toil of the democratic peoples. After all, how can someone like Nikolai Kovalsky, head of the Ukrainian Desk know the truth about the Soviet Union in general or the Soviet Ukraine when he was on Ukrainian territory only as a hireling of the armies of occupation and never saw Soviet life; or Zenon Pelenskyj, who only saw the Ukraine during the fascist rule as an active collaborator."

That was his only reference to Western radio operations.

This, like other evidence on Radio Liberation, must be interpreted with caution. The Communist countries have many different reasons for mentioning Western broadcasts, and many different ways of doing so. The more disciplined and sophisticated the propaganda organization of the country, the more likely Western radio is to be mentioned only when by so doing the Communist country can take initiative in the propaganda battle -- for example, when the Western radio has made an obvious error, or when the radio can be used to illustrate some Communist charge against the Western countries.

For example, the first and third of the regime reactions mentioned above were obviously part of the redefection campaign. Radio Liberation was used to bolster the themes that the life of a defector is an unpleasant business, and that the only emigres who remain are those who are selling out the motherland to the American imperialists. But even so, these make a pattern. For the first 28 months of Radio Liberation, Moscow was silent on the subject. Then a regional paper and station mention the station quite openly, but Pravda, the central paper, omits the station's name. Four months later, Izvestia, another central paper, quite openly attacks the station. In other words, it took about two years before Moscow felt that nothing more could be gained by giving Radio Liberation the silent treatment.

In many ways, the most interesting and significant of the three attacks is the speech at the Writers Congress. The words of the speech appear, so far as we can interpret them at a distance, to reflect real heat, rather than synthetic propaganda. Was the Party really stung and angered by what Radio Liberation said about the lack of freedom Soviet writers enjoy, and by the American and Russian writers whose messages were beamed to Russia (John Dos Passos, James T. Farrell, Thornton Wilder, Boris Zaitsev, etc.)? And why did the First Secretary choose to

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talk about Radio Liberation and Zaitsev at a meeting of one of the most influential elite groups in Russia, the Writers Congress? The implication is clearly that the writers already knew something about what Radio Liberation was saying.

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Let us be clear about the evidence we have been examining.

This is not the kind or amount of evidence which would satisfy a research man or scholar. It is not the kind which, in quality or quantity, permits us to say conclusively that Radio Liberation is or is not being effective in the Soviet Union.

On the other hand, this is as much evidence as we have any right to expect from the USSR so long as the Iron Curtain stays down, and passage through it is so greatly restricted.

Therefore, we are reduced to examining trends and plotting projections. And at this level, we can say that two of the three curves we see in the foregoing evidence are favorable.

One year ago, we had only six refugee reports of any kind. Now we have in the neighborhood of 20, some direct, some indirect. It is highly encouraging that most of the few refugees we get from the Soviet Union continue to know about Radio Liberation.

One year ago, we had only a dead silence on the subject of Radio Liberation from the Soviet press and radio. A fair assumption is that, at that time, the Soviet government felt that any gain they might derive by attacking Radio Liberation would be overbalanced by their loss in further advertising the station. Now we have three vigorous regime reactions, between December 1954 and May 1955. Two of these were in connection with the redefection campaign, but the third was before an influential elite group, the Soviet Writers Congress, and was a direct reference to Radio Liberation's programs on the Congress. It is never safe to wear a Soviet regime attack as a stripe on the arm. There are too many reasons why the Soviet strategists may decide to attack, and not all of them, by any means, are complimentary to the radio which is being attacked. But this at least is clear: that the Soviets no longer think they have anything to gain by hiding the name of the station, or by avoiding reference to it in some of their elite groups. And this is truly encouraging.

The trend in monitoring reports, however, is not encouraging. The fact that American Embassy monitors in Moscow have been completely unable to receive Radio Liberation between February and May, 1955, is less discouraging than the falling off of intelligible reception as measured by peripheral monitoring. Whereas the Embassy reports indicate probably that ground wave jamming is severe, especially in the vicinity of Moscow, the peripheral reports suggest that new and powerful skywave jammers have caught up with Radio Liberation and are blanketing it over large areas. The curve has fallen off so sharply in the spring

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of 1955 as to cause real concern.

On the basis of the evidence before us we can make some good guesses as to Radio Liberation's audience in the Soviet Union. It will be far from a mass audience: after all, perhaps only one out of 100 persons in the Soviet Union have sets with short wave components, and many of those will find Radio Liberation thoroughly jammed. It will be a heavily official audience: these are the classes who own the short wave sets and have the opportunity to avoid the jamming -- as, for example, in official listening or listening while on assignment in the satellites. The audience must contain:

representatives of the official hierarchy -- because it is the duty of some of them to listen, and because we have reports like those of the Soviet official in Vienna, and reactions like those at the Writers Congress.

representatives of the military officer class, especially on duty outside the USSR -- as we can tell from the number of defectors from the Soviet forces in Germany and elsewhere who have heard Radio Liberation.

a smattering of the general population, many of whom have probably heard it by chance while tuning around the dial.

If we can assume a small but potentially important audience like this one, then it becomes important to ask: what can Radio Liberation hope to accomplish with such an audience? This we must take up next.

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VIII. What can Radio Liberation hope to accomplish?

The more one studies Radio Liberation's potential accomplishment, the more one is impressed by the enormous difficulty of the task it has attempted.

Contrast for a moment the differences in the situations in which Radio Liberation and Radio Free Europe find themselves.

Radio Free Europe has a potential mass audience in Czechoslovakia, very large potential audiences in Poland and Hungary. Furthermore, the orientation of these countries has been such that a mass audience and widespread public opinion are capable of being politically influential. In the Soviet Union, on the other hand, the audience is potentially small, and there is little to be accomplished by talking to members of the "faceless mass," because they are politically impotent.

Radio Liberation is therefore limited, both by sets and by political realism, to talking to members of the "vlast" -- the power structure. Whereas Radio Free Europe can broadcast to people who overwhelmingly hate their communist government, who feel that it is a government imposed on them by an outside power, who wholeheartedly want to "throw the rascals out" and get back to some of the old patterns of life, Radio Liberation, on the other hand, is broadcasting to people who feel no such division between themselves and their government. The Soviet government, for all we may think of it, is not a government imposed from the outside on Russians. The audience of Radio Liberation think of it as their government. Many of the Radio Liberation audience must be members of the government or the upper party hierarchy; many more of them feel a personal stake in the success of the government and the party. They may grouse; they may not be satisfied with everything the government does; but in general they believe sincerely that they have the best of governments. Radio Free Europe is dealing with a built-in motivation to listen, and directing its shafts against an essentially unstable government. Radio Liberation is dealing with an extremely latent motivation to listen, and with an essentially stable government.

Radio Free Europe is in position to know a great deal about its audiences and about the politics of its target countries. There is a large flow of refugees and other intelligence. Radio Liberation, on the other hand, is barred from intelligence by every device within the power of the Soviet government to use. Refugees are few and far between, written materials seldom pass except official print, the radio that comes out of Russia is formal and official radio. Thus Radio Liberation, which has a more extensive and complex structure to cover, and needs intelligence more, has access to much less intelligence than has Radio Free Europe.

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Then there is the problem of attribution. The emigres who speak over Radio Free Europe find it much easier to convince the people back home that they have left out of patriotic and freedom-loving motives, to carry on the fight from abroad. If they have a connection with the sponsoring American Committee, that is all to the good, because America is still regarded as the best hope of liberation. But the Radio Liberation people have no such easy time explaining who they are and by what right they speak to their homeland. They have fled no foreign-imposed government. They have taken up with agencies of a foreign country. Emigres are not in such good odor in the Soviet Union as in the satellites; and the longer they are out of Russia, the less likely they are to be remembered and admired. And what exactly is their relation to the U.S. government? The Soviet bluntly calls them spies and agents of American intelligence. Thus, the picture of "emigres speaking across the Iron Curtain as a free voice of the silenced peoples" is altogether a less convincing and attractive picture in the Soviet Union than in the satellites.

This is not to imply that Radio Liberation cannot accomplish a worthwhile result. It is merely to point out the difficulties in its way. And when to these political and social difficulties one adds the physical difficulties -- an enormous territory to cover with inadequate power, with insufficient and poorly located transmitters, and with programs which, because of the jamming, are never more than four minutes in length -- then it is easy to see that Radio Liberation is trying to reach and influence people under conditions of enormous difficulty.

Some of the disappointments and misinterpretations of Radio Liberation have undoubtedly arisen from failure to consider the conditions just enumerated. For example, at the Berlin meeting 6-10 July, 1955, a representative of the U.S. Embassy, Moscow, expressed serious doubts over the mission of Radio Liberation. He suggested that if its mission were really liberation, that was an unreal view of the situation in Russia and of what it could accomplish; and that perhaps its objectives and purpose should be reviewed "at higher levels." I do not have the proceedings of the conference at hand, but believe I have expressed the spirit of this representative's friendly and concerned remarks.

I should like to suggest that the Moscow representative was misinterpreting Radio Liberation as much as some of the American publicity has misinterpreted it. The plain truth is, that Radio Liberation is not a precise parallel to Radio Free Europe

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and cannot be within the foreseeable future. Radio Free Europe is in the business of maintaining the memory of freedom and the essentially revolutionary attitudes which will someday, it is hoped, help in the freeing of the satellite peoples and their return to the community of free nations. In a sense, Radio Free Europe might more properly than Radio Liberation be called "Radio Liberation." For Radio Liberation, as we have said, is not talking to a people who hate a government imposed from the outside, but rather to members of the Soviet vIast who are part of the power structure, who tend to respect their government as much as we respect ours, and feel themselves a part of it rather than victims of it. The objective of Radio Liberation as it clearly emerges from the circumstances we have cited, and as it appears from the recent documents of the Committee, is much more modest than that of Radio Free Europe. It is essentially to plant the seeds of doubt in the minds of Russians who have previously never heard more than one side of political questions, to make a beginning toward restoring the art of political thought to a culture where people have been invited to agree rather than to evaluate, and, in a very small way, to keep the isolated and walled-in Soviet peoples in touch with the world outside the Curtain.

This is a modest purpose, and one to which emigres might be expected to make their greatest contribution. It is one which the Moscow Embassy representative would undoubtedly accept. And although it may be less than the highest goals of some of the emigres on Radio Liberation desks, I think it fairly represents the goal of Radio Liberation as seen by its chief American officers and by the chief officers of the American Committee.

If this is a realistic goal, then we can fill in some of the size dimensions which we only suggested when talking about Radio Liberation's probable audience and likely impact.

Radio Liberation is a small voice -- not a loud and aggressive voice like Radio Free Europe in the satellites, but a small, fairly quiet voice amidst all the thunder of Soviet jamming and Soviet broadcasts. It is not talking to a ready-made audience, or dealing with a revolutionary situation. Rather, it is trying to interest those listeners who can get around the jamming and who turn to Radio Liberation wave lengths either out of curiosity or because of official assignment. These are not listeners who will hang on Radio Liberation's every word, and struggle with the jamming to hear it. Rather, they will come to it with suspicion and hostility. And to these listeners, Radio Liberation is trying to speak as a friend who knows Russia, in a way that will not further antagonize Russian listeners, and with news and commentary that may plant a few

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seeds of doubt and cause some second thoughts about what the listeners have already heard from Soviet sources.

The ultimate goal is to make some change in the form and goals of Soviet power. But this is a very long-range goal, and in trying to accomplish it, Radio Liberation is only one force among many. Indeed, as compared to Free World diplomacy, it is a very small force.

The point we are trying to make is that the very name of "Liberation" and the connotations of the name tend to lead Radio Liberation to the wrong court of judgment. It should be judged by a much lesser test. Much less should be expected of it. It is merely one of the ways we have of finding and using the very tiny holes in the Curtain. If the Curtain should open, if something like normal exchange of printed materials and persons should become possible between the Soviet Union and the West -- then we should doubtless want to reconsider the function and even perhaps the need of Radio Liberation. But in the meantime it must be valued for what it is -- one of the few ways we have to talk seriously with a few Russians in the power structure -- and more "impact" than this must not be expected of it.

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~~SECRET~~**IX. Conclusions**

1. As we have said before, the nature and amount of evidence available are not sufficient to let us say with any scientific confidence that Radio Liberation is or is not being effective in the Soviet Union.

2. However, we can say with confidence that two of the three trends in the evidence are favorable. Notably the number of defectors who have heard Radio Liberation has increased more than 200 per cent over last year, and a very large proportion of all the refugees from the Soviet Union appear to know about, and in many cases to have heard, Radio Liberation. Furthermore, whereas the Soviet newspapers and radio maintained a stony silence on Radio Liberation for the first 20 months of its existence, since December 1954 there have been three attacks in the official press and radio, indicating probably that the Soviet government feels that knowledge of the station is now widespread enough that silence is no longer warranted.

3. In the case of the third trend -- monitoring reports -- there has been a discouraging development and a sharp decline during the last six months. There is no doubt that several new and powerful skywave jammers have caught up with the already viciously jammed Radio Liberation.

4. It is the judgment of this writer that Radio Liberation is reaching a small but important group of the Soviet vIast, notably members of the hierarchy and of the military forces, especially those stationed outside the Soviet borders. With these listeners it is undertaking a task of enormous difficulty. There are no ready-made conditions for acceptance, as with Radio Free Europe. Rather, these listeners approach Radio Liberation with suspicion, listen to it through jamming, and think of it not as their voice attacking an imposed government, but as an outside voice attacking their government. "Liberation" may therefore be an unfortunate name for what Radio Liberation can realistically hope to accomplish. Rather, it can hope to plant some doubts in the minds of members of the Soviet vIast who are accustomed to hear only one side of all political questions, and in a small way it can help to keep these isolated Soviet citizens in touch with the West. Its realistic mission is therefore smaller than the name may indicate, but important, for it is one of the ways we have of talking seriously with members of the Soviet power structure as long as the Iron Curtain stays down.

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5. Granted the importance of the mission, it is clear that Radio Liberation's facilities for getting a signal into the Soviet Union should be strengthened. This does not mean that the human, as distinguished from the physical resources should not also be strengthened; but the finest radio staff is no good if its signal isn't reaching its target. Specifically it is suggested:

a. That the plan for establishing transmitting facilities in Spain be pushed vigorously; failing this, that another site be secured on the western periphery of Europe.

b. That everything possible be done to strengthen the desk personnel of Radio Liberation.

c. That consideration be given to establishing Moscow and Washington correspondents for Radio Liberation. This should considerably increase the flow of pertinent program material, and criticism of programs, available to the station.

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