

SPECIAL ATTENTION: Political Advisor
Audience Analysis

PRIORITY
EH
April 14
I/15745/B

BULGARIA

PROPAGANDA (2600)
Radio (2605)

REDEFECTION (2100)

A BULGARIAN PHYSICIAN ANSWERS THE AUDIENCE ANALYSIS SCHEDULE.

SOURCE MUNICH: A 40-year-old Bulgarian physician (skin specialist) from SOFIA who fled to the West in January 1956.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: Until January 15 1956.

EVALUATION COMMENT: A good and useful Audience Analysis report, well-prepared and coming from an intelligent source. It is true that quite a few people think that RFE is government-sponsored, since it is also described as such by Communist propaganda. Correct is also the fact that some people do not know the difference between RFE and VOA, which they consider to be the same, probably since both broadcast from MUNICH. Interesting are source's elaborations on redefectors, and especially on the creation of an escape program. His preference for less music is not generally shared, and especially jazz-minded youth would certainly clash with source's opinion.

Source has made two mistakes: there is no Minister of Public Health by the name of Racho ANGELOV, there is not even a deputy-minister in this service by this name. Secondly, source states that only the intellectual Bulgarian is interested in politics, which is a gross understatement, since Bulgarian peasantry has always been interested in and quite well informed on current political events.

Source is the first one to list Tsola DRAGOICHEVA as one of the popular Communists.

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Source's Attitude Toward Western Radio Broadcasts.

The only Western radio transmitters I remember are:

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The Voice of America, Radio Free Europe, The British Broadcasting Company, and Radio PARIS. As far as I know, the British Broadcasting Corporation and the Voice of America are government-sponsored and controlled organizations. I am not very sure about the status of Radio Free Europe and Radio PARIS but cannot imagine that they broadcast material which has not been approved by the respective governments. In general, I make little difference between The Voice of America and Radio Free Europe and cannot say that there is even the slightest difference between the broadcasts of these two organizations. According to my opinion, the intention of all these Western Broadcasting organizations is to counteract Communist propaganda in our country and, by informing the people of events throughout the world, to assist the struggle against Communism. I seem to remember learning in Bulgaria, I do not know from which source, that both the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe are located in MUNICH, West Germany. My favorite transmitters are Radio Free Europe and The Voice of America, followed by the British Broadcasting Corporation and Radio PARIS. I have not analyzed the reason for my preference, I simply find the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe more interesting than the others.

The only specific programs that stand out in my memory are the ones that described the escape of refugees from countries behind the Iron Curtain and their subsequent integration in everyday life in the West. This fact may be connected with my long-cherished hope to be able to escape sometime in the future. I do not seem to remember any particular names connected with the broadcasts. I think that there should be many more transmissions destined for Bulgaria, particularly in the evening. Bulgarian listeners find any type of program interesting and worth listening to and I do not remember having found any program too long. More attention should be paid to the following subjects in Western broadcasts: More information should be given about the fate of refugees who succeeded in reaching the West. It would be advisable to institute a "refugee program" advising those who hope to escape how to proceed etc. I find that too little emphasis is being given to comparisons between the way and standard of life in the West and Bulgaria. Broadcasts should repeat as much as possible facts and figures showing how much a worker or an employee receives in the West, and what he can afford to buy with his pay, and compare his standard of life and financial status with that of Bulgarian workers and employees. I heard only one such program from the British Broadcasting Corporation and found it very interesting.

I also think that Western broadcasts should select specific facts and instances from Bulgarian political and every-

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day life which can be pointed out as evidence of the rottenness and inefficiency of the present Regime. These facts will open the eyes of many, particularly among the less educated masses, who at present tend to believe Communist propaganda which claims that Communism is an infallible system and the only road to prosperity and happiness for the people. They will also nurture the struggle against Communism by giving food for thought and helping convince those who are still wavering and undecided.

Greater stress should be laid on sport news. The West does not seem to realize what important part sport plays in the life of the peoples behind the Iron Curtain. They would appreciate more news of international sport life. I do not think that music is an important aspect of Western Radio propaganda. Perhaps, if one had more broadcasting time at one's disposal, one could devote some time to music programs. As it is, however, particularly in regard to Bulgarian broadcasts which are not as frequent as I would like them to be, I consider music programs of merely secondary importance. Moreover, one must realize that folk music is the type of music most liked in Bulgaria. In this respect the Western transmitters will come out only a poor second compared to the local Bulgarian radio stations which possess much greater facilities for broadcasting folk music (records, performers, contact with composers and song-writers etc.) Not being a jazz fan and knowing that the overwhelming majority of the Bulgarian people do not have a taste for jazz, I can hardly recommend the inclusion of jazz music in Bulgarian broadcasts.

My listening habits in Bulgaria were the following:

Normally I returned home from work between eight and nine o'clock in the evening. Depending on whether my landlord's family was home or not, I listened to Western broadcasts from nine to about midnight. On days when my landlord's family stayed at home I did not tune in to Western transmitters. News broadcasts were my main interest, followed by commentaries. I and many of my friends who also listened to Western broadcasts had the firm conviction that Western news is absolutely truthful and reliable, that all aspects of the news are being presented, including those which did not seem favorable to the West, and that no news was being suppressed or adulterated.

The evening hours, as mentioned above, are the best for listening to Western broadcasts, not only for people of my profession but also for workers and peasants. As I said before, I was not free to listen to Western broadcasts on all days of the week. However, I think that I listened to these

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broadcasts at an average of about 12 hours per week. I usually listened to such broadcasts alone and must say that there are very few cases of group listening among my friends.

Western broadcasts helped me obtain information about facts previously unknown to me, particularly in the field of foreign policy, Western way and standard of life, achievements of Western science and technology etc. However, I cannot say that these broadcasts have essentially assisted me in forming or changing my opinion about the Communist Regime in my country or about the West. My opinions concerning Communism and the West were formed a long time ago and so far I have not found any reason to change them. Listening to these broadcasts may only have contributed toward proving to me that my previously formed opinions were right. I admit, however, that in the case of less educated people or where so-called "waverers" are concerned, Western broadcasts may prove essential in influencing their opinion. As far as I am concerned, however, Western broadcasts have not influenced my morale, nor have they contributed toward creating an esprit de corps with other anti-Communists, since listening to Western broadcasts is done secretly and there are very few people with whom one can freely discuss the broadcasts heard.

The influence of such broadcasts on Party members is hard to judge. Those who have a higher position may listen to them only as a matter of interest but I do not think that their opinion can be influenced much. Those, like me, who were mere members of the Party, could of course be influenced. In most cases, however, they are either fanatics or are disillusioned, in both of which cases their opinion is firmly formed.

I consider the practice of mentioning names of minor officials and listing some misdeeds of theirs as particularly harmful. This will only tend to tie them closer of the Regime and make them more adamant and even push them to extremes. I know of no instances where the Regime has been forced to concessions as a result of Western broadcasts. I know of several cases where information gained through listening to Western programs has been passed by word of mouth. Such cases, however, are very limited. The main service rendered by Western broadcasts consists in informing the people of facts hitherto unknown to them and I think that this aspect becomes more and more important.

I do not know of and have never seen leaflets having been sent to Bulgaria from Western sources.

I have no recollection of Regime propaganda having been

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directed against Western Radio Propaganda.

To my knowledge there have been no instances of punishment, threats, or moral pressure directed at people with a view to preventing them from listening to Western transmitters. There is only one case where a listener to foreign broadcasts may experience some hardship. This is the case of such a person trying to obtain a so-called certificate of "trustworthy behavior." Such certificates are needed in many cases: upon applying for a job, for admission to a college, for admission to Party or Fatherland Front membership etc. Such certificates are issued by local authorities and are based on the opinion of neighbors and local officials regarding the person concerned. If the person is known to have listened to Western broadcasts, the issuance of such certificate may be denied.

All Western transmitters to which I have listened are being jammed. The interference consists of a steady, strong humming noise. I cannot remember the wave frequency which I have found most suited to listening to Radio Free Europe broadcasts. This jamming does not prevent me from listening to the broadcasts although on certain days it makes listening and intelligibility almost impossible. There was nothing I could do to reduce the jamming noise except trying another frequency which sometimes helped. I have no knowledge of the type of jammer installation used but remember having heard from someone that the jammers were located around SOFIA.

Source's Opinion About the Government and its Strength in His Country.

The present Regime in Bulgaria is firmly established and very stable although this stability is guaranteed by force and not by support from the people. There is one group of people with whom Communists are strongest -- this group consists of army officers and officers of the forces of the Ministry of the Interior -- the Police and the Border Guards. The reason for this is the fact that these officers enjoy great privileges and a very satisfactory economic situation.

Communist propaganda and indoctrination have attained some success among Bulgarian youth, particularly in the larger towns. Peasant youth, however, seems to be the least affected and influenced by Communist propaganda. It is difficult for a village youth who is constantly aware of his parent's difficult situation to believe Communist blandishments and empty promises. I consider lack of freedom to be the worst aspect of Communism and the root of all evil, the second worst being the deplorable economic situation which constantly accompanies

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Communism. I must admit that in certain fields there has been marked improvement as compared to the past: we have now a vastly improved health service, more attention is being paid to electrification of villages and small settlements. These features should be retained even after a change in system. People in Bulgaria do not consider stepped up industrialization as an improvement because it has not improved life. The man in the street asks himself what good comes from increased industrialization if his situation remains as bad as ever, and has little enthusiasm for the explanation that he is helping to build up a better life for his children.

Vulko CHERVENKOV, Bulgaria's Premier, is the most hated man in Bulgaria. He is being held responsible for all the evils in my country. Racho ANGELOFF, Minister of Public Health, is the most popular among Communists, followed by Tsola DRAGOICHEVA, Minister of Communications.

I have had absolutely no knowledge of any evidence of resistance in Bulgaria. To my knowledge, the strictness and ruthlessness of the Regime very effectively prevents all attempts at active resistance. I have occasionally heard of small strike movements in some plants and the large coal mines in DIMITROVO but am sure that, if such strikes have really taken place, they were directed against some local injustices rather than because of political reasons. It is my impression that although about 95 per cent of the people are against the Regime, there is no organized resistance in the country and there is no practical possibility for the existence of such a movement.

The only way of bringing about a change in the present Regime in Bulgaria is by action from without. If the present status quo is kept, there is absolutely no chance of ever changing the present Regime by working from within. There is also no hope or possibility for a gradual change by evolution, at least not in the foreseeable future. The Communists have the situation so well in hand that nobody in his right mind would dare to set out on a road of resistance or revolution -- a hopeless project doomed from the beginning.

The only help from the West that could change the present Regime in Bulgaria is armed intervention or perhaps an effective threat of such intervention, which would force the Communists to release their grip on the country. It is futile to think that the question of Bulgaria's liberation could be solved positively as long as the Soviet Union remains what it is today.

I think that in Bulgaria today three out of four

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Communists are disillusioned and dissatisfied with the Regime. (Interviewer's note: I had the definite impression here that source was not entirely sincere.) I have spoken with many Communists who openly admitted that what we have in Bulgaria today is very different from what they thought true Communism should be. The main reason for this point of view is the ruthless restriction of freedom and the untenable economic situation. This, however, is the prevalent mood among low-echelon Party members only. Regime officials do not seem to share this opinion, or if they do, manage very successfully to dissimulate their true attitude.

Source's Knowledge and Opinion of Bulgarian Exiles in the West.

There is very little known about exiles in Bulgaria. My only source of information in this respect was the Bulgarian press and occasional Western broadcasts, although they do not give much information on this subject. I do not know anything about the exiles' relations with Western governments, their activities if any, their political organization, etc. As far as I know, the most prominent exile leader in the West is Dr. G.M. DIMITROV. This is the only exile name that I know. It is my belief that in the event of Bulgaria's liberation, the exile's role will be a very insignificant one. The reason for this is the fact that very little is known of the emigres and their activities in Bulgaria. They do not enjoy any popularity and in case of Bulgaria's liberation it is evident that those who have stayed in the country and suffered with the people will have greater influence with the voters.

Each case of redefectors returning to the country is being given greatest publicity; they appear in the newsreels, make statements in the press and over the radio, and are even sent on a lecture tour throughout the country. It is clear to me that the foremost reason for a redefector's return to Bulgaria is his poor economic situation in the West. This and the fact that they have received no assistance from Western governments or agencies is always heavily stressed in the press and radio and I am sure that the local population is influenced by this propaganda. There are people who would like to flee from Bulgaria but are being held back because of fear that they will be left without assistance once they succeed in reaching the West. All this is also indirect corroboration of Communist claims that there is misery and economic stagnation in the West.

As far as I know, all redefectors are being given help and even enjoy special treatment once they return to Bulgaria. If young, they receive special scholarships and can go to

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college free of charge. Older people immediately receive comparatively good jobs of their own choice. I have not heard of a case where a redefector has been punished or imprisoned.

I have heard or read of very few Communist attacks against Bulgarian exiles. Such attacks usually appear when an exile has returned to the country and makes statements in which he expresses his willingness to help building Socialism etc. On such occasions one may hear or read some attacks against the exiles who are being accused of being paid agents of the Western capitalists or warmongers. Generally, however, I must say that such attacks are very rare. It is my private opinion that the Communist Regime refrains from such attacks so that people should not gain the impression that there are many exiles abroad who are engaged in political activities.

Source's Opinion About Current International Developments.

It is my opinion that in Bulgaria only educated people take an interest in international developments.

I think that the present Western policy "from a position of strength" is the only correct one. I must say, however, that on some occasions, Western policy appears to be not sufficiently firm. Bulgarian people think that in the past, particularly in the first years after the end of the war, the West was guilty of great errors. It is felt that at that time the West was too soft toward the Soviet Union. If at that time the West had pursued a firmer policy, the present plight of the Eastern European nations might perhaps have been forestalled.

On the other hand, Soviet policy, although in many cases morally wrong, is considered to be more flexible and hence more efficient. Soviet policy is considered particularly effective after STALIN's death, and present Soviet leaders are believed to be more clever and shrewd than in the past. The Korean war is considered to have been a great defeat for Soviet foreign policy.

The GENEVA "summit" conference was welcomed with great hopes in Bulgaria. It must be said that nobody expected that the GENEVA conference would result in an outright liberation of the countries enslaved by the Communists. It was believed, however, that it would bring about a marked relaxation in international tension and that it would be followed by an unrestricted inter-exchange of newspapers, books, films, delegations and even tourists. After it was seen that no such results were

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obtained, morale in Bulgaria fell considerably. People in Bulgaria realize very clearly that the so-called "Spirit of GENEVA" and the call for co-existence are nothing but clever Soviet maneuvers. No well informed and educated person believes that the Soviet Union sincerely desires co-existence.

TITO's defection from the Communist camp was greatly hailed in the past. It was considered a hopeful step in the right direction. In recent months, however, people begin to be suspicious of TITO's news policy of friendship with his former enemies, and he is not trusted any more. Of course, it is felt that it would be a great improvement if Bulgaria should follow TITO's example. This, however, is considered extremely unlikely and hard within the realm of present possibilities.

I have heard quite a lot about NATO and know that it is a military organization of the West aimed at insuring the military defense of Western countries against a possible Soviet attack. I think that it is a very effective move in Western policy. Judging from the hatred and attacks displayed against it by the Communist Regime, I can say that it must be considered to be very important by the Communists.

I am familiar with EISENHOWER's "open skies" plan and also with the Soviet disarmament proposals. I consider the Soviet plan puerile and pure maneuver. There can be no effective disarmament without effective control.

I have no doubt about the horrible effects of nuclear weapons and realize that in a possible atomic war there will be no victor, there will be only defeated countries. I know the Soviet contention that an atomic war will mean the end of capitalism but not the end of the world or of the Communist countries also. This is a very dangerous lie that is being used by Soviet propaganda to alleviate the worries of its people. There are people in Bulgaria who hope that a war will break out soon, thus spelling the end of slavery. I personally am undecided on this subject. I know that a war is the only possibility of making the Communists leave the country. On the other hand, however, I am horrified by the possible effects of a nuclear war. I do not know whether a war is to be desired or not.

Before escaping from Bulgaria I was more or less convinced that economic conditions in the US were not the best. I knew that those who work have a very high standard of living but thought that there is a great deal of unemployment in the States. Now that I have seen conditions in Germany, which is being presented by Communist propaganda as even poorer and hampered by unprecedented unemployment, I must say that I am somewhat

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astonished at the well-being and prosperity of the West.

Much is said and written in Bulgaria about German re-unification. I think that this re-unification could come about only as a result of free elections of which there is only a very remote chance, at least under present international conditions. ADENAUER is described as a lacky and paid agent of the West. At the same time, it is maintained that he is preparing to launch an aggressive war. People often wonder about this apparent inconsistency in Communist propaganda which fails to explain how a lacky and paid agent can have the power to launch wars on his own.

People in Bulgaria believe that the Soviet Union represents an immense military force backed by a very stable Regime which maintains its stability through force and terror. However, in case of war, the long oppressed people may rise against the Regime, as it happened during the last war. The present leadership in the Soviet Union, a leadership which is usually identified with KHRUSHCHEV's person, is considered vastly superior to that during STALIN's time. KHRUSHCHEV has the reputation of being a very clever and flexible diplomat and, in general a very capable man. He is considered by far the number one man in the Soviet Union, and the so-called "collective leadership" is thought to be mere fiction. It is true that there has been some genuine relaxation of the internal Regime in Bulgaria. One hears less of concentration camps and open terrorist measures.

I have only very vague recollections about EISENHOWER's Christmas message and do not know its exact text. I know in a very general way that he said that the foreign policy of the United States is aimed at bringing about the liberation of the enslaved nations behind the Iron Curtain. I know that this statement was strongly repudiated by the Soviet leaders. The whole matter did not receive too great a publicity in my country.

Source's Feelings About the Future Organization of his Country.

This is a matter which is very rarely discussed in my country. People seem to think that the main problem is to obtain freedom and that anything would be better than the present Regime.

I personally think that immediately after the liberation, the country should be organized as in the past, i.e. constitutional monarchy should be restored and after a certain time people should be asked to determine in a referendum what

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type of political Regime they prefer. In such a case I believe that the country will decide for some sort of democratic republican regime. The pre-war regime, although it suffered from great shortcomings, was still vastly better than the present one.

I prefer a free economic system, that is a capitalist system of free enterprise with some State controls. I am against the nationalization of small industry but think that large public services should be nationalized. Such a system will be nothing new to the Bulgarian people since in pre-war times railways and the coal mines were State-owned and operated. I am against the collectivization of agriculture. The land should, of course, belong to the individual peasants. The old system should be restored. There were never large landowners in Bulgaria. Therefore there will be no actual need for a land reform.

I am aware of the idea of a European Federation and think that those people in Bulgaria who know of it also approve it. I think, however, that this is a long-range project in the minds of Bulgarians who are mainly preoccupied with obtaining freedom.

Source's Opinion About Radio and Press in Bulgaria.

The main characteristic of Bulgarian radio and press is their dullness. I usually listen to one of the two SOFIA transmitters, mainly in the evening between 9 and 12 o'clock on days when I do not listen to Western stations. Most liked programs are the sport broadcasts and folk music programs. The reason for this is the fact that people can be sure that there is no propaganda involved in such programs. The dullest and most disliked programs are the home news and some broadcasts consisting of ideological and indoctrination features. I have never heard of forced listening in Bulgaria.

It is difficult to compare Bulgarian and Western broadcasts, mainly because the one goes on almost 24 hours a day while the other can be heard only in the evening and sporadically. There is no doubt that Western broadcasts are more interesting. This applies, however, only to educated people. The great mass of the workers and peasants listen almost exclusively to the home broadcasts and I must admit that the uninterrupted reiteration of certain propaganda slogans may very well influence the great mass of people in the direction desired by the Communists.

Wired radio is in use mainly in villages and small

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provincial towns or in large plants everywhere. Of course people prefer a wireless set to wired radio. It is very easy to obtain a wired radio, i.e. a loudspeaker, and it is also much cheaper than purchasing a wireless set. Ownership of both wired radio and wireless is, of course, permitted, although I cannot see why a person owning a wireless set should want to have wired radio.

I have seen TV only once. There is no regular TV program in Bulgaria. TV is still in the experimental stage.

Bulgarian-printed publications, magazines and newspapers, are usually very uninteresting, with the exception of scientific publications. I usually read the Party paper "Rabotnichesko Delo" and "Vecherni Novini" which is a little more interesting. I do not enjoy reading newspapers because they are full of propaganda and I have the impression that I am given to read only news which further the Communist purpose.

Western publications are not available in Bulgaria. In order to subscribe to a Western publication one must have the explicit written permission of the Minister or deputy Minister in charge of such matters. State organizations, such as the Academy of Science, Universities etc, have at their disposal Western publications. These publications are mainly scientific ones. I have read such publications dealing with medical science in the Academy of Science.

Radio Facilities.

I own a Bulgarian-made wireless set which is registered with the postal authorities, as any other privately-owned set in the country. It is nothing unusual for a family to own a wireless set, and almost every family owns one. Radio sets can be purchased without ration coupons. There are no shortages or priorities required for the purchase of a wireless set.

Most of the radio sets available are Bulgarian manufactured although one can also buy foreign made ones which, of course, are more expensive. Radio set prices range from 800 to 3,000 leva. My set is of Bulgarian make. It has four tubes and receives normal as well as short-wave transmissions. Sets are available for all kinds of power supply, house current as well as a battery. There is no shortage of spare parts.

The technical quality of the sets is quite satisfactory. Their selectivity is normal. There are not many wired radio sets in my vicinity. I have not heard of FM broadcasting having been introduced in Bulgaria.