

ITEM No. 2252/56

AH
6 March
AA Ref.No. C-116

CZECHOSLOVAKIAREGIME RESPONSE TO WESTERN BROADCASTS

PROPAGANDA 2600
Anti-Western 2601 a

EXILE 1200
"Veto" 1207

EVIDENCE CONVICTING THE AIR SPIES

SOURCE AUDIENCE ANALYSIS SECTION: PRACE, February 18, 1956, p.5

AUDIENCE ANALYSIS SECTION COMMENT: None

EVALUATION COMMENT: None

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In spite of all official protests of our government, the U.S. circles have not ceased violating our air space. Besides balloons carrying stupid leaflets dispatched to our territory under U.S. patronage by FREE EUROPE, the U.S. military organs began launching further huge balloons the purpose of which is a cunning and thoroughly prepared espionage over the territory of our Republic. We have already reported on the mechanism of these balloons, which is so convincing that it absolutely refutes American assertions that it is the matter of "meteorological research within the framework of the International Geophysical Year", as well as silly excuses of FREE EUROPE according to which "the balloons are just establishing meteorological data and they only take photographic pictures of clouds". How it happened that instead of clouds the pictures taken by these balloons are showing nothing else but the Czechoslovak territory is something FREE EUROPE is perhaps unable to explain. It would be also very hard for it to explain why is it that the U.S. military circles take such an interest in meteorological conditions over the People's Democratic states and in the Soviet Union which are the main target of their 'research'. Though being constructed in such a way as to land on territory where there are U.S. military bases, it sometimes happens that not all of the balloons fulfill their tasks. Some of them drop earlier than those launching them wished and it is their mechanism which then clearly proves that the actual purpose of these 'meteorological' researches is nothing else but espionage.

The air space of the Czechoslovak Republic - as confirmed by a number of witnesses -- was in January and February literally infested with the espionage balloons as well as with the balloons

(more)

of FREE EUROPE. Both endanger our air traffic so that in recently 50 schedules flights of the state lines and all flights of mail planes had to be cancelled. What danger the balloons mean as regards the health and lives of our citizens, has been generally known. It was only a matter of luck that these tragic cases have not reoccurred.

Thus, it was on January 25th around 14.00 hours that an US espionage balloon which measured 15 meters in diameter, dropped near the community of KTIS, district PRACHATICE. While still in the air that the balloon released red and white parachutes carrying photographic equipment. The balloons dropped in a short distance from a place where small children were playing and it was only a matter of luck that they escaped injuries. On the same day the remnants of a US espionage balloon dropped in a close neighborhood of a dwelling in the community of Borova, district Cesky Krumlov and the remnants of another balloons were located on February 5th near the Rozmbersky Lake. In many places in the Republic, mainly in the district of Plzen, Southern Bohemia and in Slovakia, our citizens have for a number of days in January and February observed the flights of a great number of balloons of huge dimensions. Some of them dropped and were located by our citizens. Balloons found in the neighborhood of the communities of ZRUC in the Pilzen region, Mlady Smolinec in the region of Blatna, in the district of Sturov and Poprad in Slovakia, have convincingly proved that the only purpose they follow is espionage.

Simultaneously with these espionage balloons there appeared group flights of large balloons carrying the FREE EUROPE leaflets. These balloons had mostly moved in the altitude of 1,000 to 2,000 meters. Some of them were later found in the districts of Plesy, Prestice, Klatovy, Tachov and Podborany. The fact how dangerous it is to come in a contact with these balloons was proved by the testimony of Anna Vrbova of Mukodel in the Podborany region. On January 17th at a distance of about 100 meters from the Community, Anna Vrbova found a balloon beside which there was a small bag with several lumps about 1 cm in diameter. A manipulation with the balloon released the lumps which dropped and immediately took fire.

Launching of both kinds of the balloons can in no way contribute to better international cooperation. In spite of all strategy it is a proof of rude violation of the most basic principles of international law. And it has to be judged accordingly.

End.