

SPECIAL ATTENTION: Political Advisor
Mr. Graveson - 2 copies
Audience Analysis

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POLAND

Audience Analysis	(2910/1)
Leaflets	(2910/3)
Jamming	(2605/2)
<u>MORALE AND GENERAL MOOD</u>	(2000)
Political Opinions	(2003)
Political Resistance	(2903)
Ethnic Minorities	(1106)

AUDIENCE ANALYSIS

SOURCE ATHENS: A 37-year-old Greek repatriate doctor.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: Until September 1956.

EVALUATION COMMENT: Although the report might be outdated in some respects, it is intelligently presented and may still be useful.

SZCZECIN has several jamming stations, and we have in our records information on four stations in the SZCZECIN suburbs: GORNY GOLECIN, POGODNO, POLICE and WARSZEWO.

The Greek settlement /mainly for children and youth/ was established in 1947. The price of the "Stolica" radio set /official/ is 1.950 zł. The prices of other radio sets are within known limits.

There are two bills on abortions: of April 27 1956 and May 11 1956, both specifying conditions under which abortions are allowed, viz the state of health of the woman and her difficult material conditions. In the second case, if the motives are inadequate, the doctor has to check on them in the home of the woman.

The bill on alcoholism of April 27 1956 lays down restriction on sales of alcoholic drinks.

Radio Listening.

The Western radio stations source remembered himself were BBC, VOA, RFE, PARIS, MADRID, ATHENS and SALONICA. He said that the sponsors of these stations were the governments of the corresponding countries with the exception of RFE, which he thought was sponsored by an American organization whose purpose was anti-Communist propaganda. Source did not know where in Europe the RFE broadcasting station was located. The stations source preferred, in order of preference, were BBC, ATHENS, and SALONICA, RFE and VOA to which he only listened occasionally. He liked BBC best because it transmitted more news, which he considered objective and reliable. However, the Poles like RFE very much for its fighting spirit, which satisfies their feelings.

The only programs source recalled were the BBC news broadcast in Greek to which he listened every morning at 0600 hours. He also listened to the BBC news broadcast in Polish at 1830 hours. Source returned to his home late in the evening, tired after a day's hard work at the STETTIN State hospital and did not listen regularly to the radio. He occasionally listened to RFE and VOA. He said it was a good thing that RFE broadcast in many wave bands, for thus people could listen to the wave band least jammed.

The best listening hours for source were from 0600 to 0700 hours and again in the evening around 2000 hours. He seldom listened after 2200 hours. In his opinion, the best listening hour for the general population was around 2000 hours, but for intellectuals and scientists the time between 0600 and 0700 hours was also a good listening time. In WARSAW, however, even later in the morning may be a good listening hour, for many offices do not open until 1000 hours to avoid congested transportation.

Source said that thanks mainly to the BBC news broadcasts he had a general picture of what was going on in the world. He thinks that the Western broadcasts have an effect on the Polish people, although they already have formed opinions about the regime and the West. No doubt Western broadcasts lift the people's morale, if for no other reason than for proving that the West is mindful of the Poles. It is a consolation to them that the West has not forgotten them, source said. They listen with avidity to the Western broadcasts, which are practically the only topic of conversation between friends. A piece of news heard over the radio is immediately disseminated. In the hospital in which source worked he often heard from the other doctors news he did not know. Source believes that the authorities are influenced by Western broadcasts because they know that to a great extent public opinion is influenced by them.

Source never saw a leaflet and was in no position to give any information on leaflets, except that a Greek had told him
/over/

in July 1956 that some leaflets, written in the Russian language, had been dropped somewhere in STETTIN.

Jamming:

As far as source recalls, there was no regime action against Western broadcasts except jamming. He does not remember having read in any newspaper any attacks against broadcasts or leaflets. Only once or twice he remembers reading about balloons coming from the West and about the government's protests on the matter. The WARSAW radio station, however, often attacked Western broadcasts. Often while source listened to music broadcast by that station, the broadcast would be interrupted, and a voice would say: "This is Fala /wave/ 49 speaking to you," and for two or three minutes the speaker would attack the Western press and radio stations.

Referring to jamming, source said that BBC Polish news broadcast at 0630 hours was jammed at times. RFE broadcasts were almost always jammed. When music or indifferent topics were broadcast, there was no jamming, but the moment news or comments on events were broadcast the jamming began. It sounded like a continuous "grgrgrgrgr." However, in the wave bands under 25 meters no jamming occurred. This source said was due to the fact that all Polish radios have no wave bands under 30 meters. Even the 12-tube Russian "Minsk" radio sets have no wave bands under 24 meters. Despite the jamming, however, one could at times listen to the broadcast, depending on the radio. Many times the jamming did not prevent source from listening on his six-tube East German "Stern" radio set.

Source heard that the jammer installation was located within STETTIN. In the country the Western broadcasts could be heard much more clearly. When source stayed for some time at a Greek children's station at POLICE, located some 15 kilometers from STETTIN, there was very little jamming disturbance.

Communism Has Good and Bad Features:

Source said that he was not aware of any group with which Communists were strong. Everyone source met complained about the situation and longed for the old regime. In his opinion, the Communists in STETTIN cannot possibly exceed 10 per cent of the population, and they are mainly those connected in some way with the regime. As he heard, school-age youths were overwhelmingly anti-Communist and desired the Western way of life.

Among the worst features of the present Polish government are the low standard of living and terrorism. Although terrorism has been reduced since de-stalinization, the people still fear to express their opinions and especially to criticize the Government. Another feature of the present government that greatly irritates the people is the false propaganda about the rising /over/

standard of living and the general progress achieved. Source said that if the Government honestly declared that the Polish people would have to undergo a period of sacrifices in order to achieve reconstruction, they would eventually accept their lot, but the false propaganda infuriates them.

A relatively good feature of the present regime is free medical care. Source said that it is only relatively good because there is a lack of doctors, and the existing doctors are overworked and not well paid, and this fact induces them to negligence. Long queues are formed in the medical stations, but many of the waiting people are not really sick but wish to be provided with a doctor's certificate stating they are ill in order to absent themselves from their heavy work and have some rest.

Another feature for which the regime is praised is its interest in the education of the youth. They make certain facilities available for the young people who wish for and have the qualifications for a higher education. The students receive an allowance of 250 zloty, and they live free in the so-called "academic houses." However, source said, the hatred of the Poles for the regime is so great that when it will be overthrown, as they hope it will, nothing will be kept from it.

The least unpopular Communist leaders are those who have been persecuted for opposing MOSCOW, as for instance GOMULKA. Even BIERUT after his death, which was attributed to Russian interference, became popular, and for this reason a great crowd followed his funeral. At the time of BIERUT's death the people said that MOSCOW should be called CZESTOCHOWA, the name of a Polish town which means "often buries."

The most unpopular leaders are those who appear to have the closest relations with the Russians, as for instance ROKOSSOVSKI, whose name the people pronounce in the Russian way, i.e., RAKOSSOVSKY.

Only Passive Resistance Against the Regime.

Source said that he was not aware of any form of active resistance and that the POZNAN riots were a surprise. However, he later heard that a resistance movement was being organized in the factories at STETTIN to follow the example of the POZNAN workers, but it did not materialize owing to the suppression of the POZNAN uprising. The desire of the people for resistance is increasing, source said, and a proof of this was the outburst in POZNAN which would be followed by further uprisings if foreign help could be expected.

A form of passive resistance is the flocking together of people in the churches. Source heard, that attendance at church
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is now much greater than in the pre-Communist days. An anecdote was circulating according to which a man went to church but did not kneel down as the other people did in the church. Someone near the man asked him why he did not kneel down too, and the man replied that he did not believe in God. "Why do you come to church then?" the other asked. "Because of my dislike of Communism," the man replied.

Another form of passive resistance is lack of interest in the work performed. Most of those who do not work on the basis of a norm are rather negligent in their work, and source heard several Poles say that although they could work more and do better work, they did not do so because they consider that for the pay they get, they work sufficiently as it is.

The Poles believe that a decisive change can be accomplished only by war. They hope, however, that in the meantime a gradual change may occur. This hope, according to source, accounts for GOMULKA's temporary popularity. Source does not believe that GOMULKA will succeed in gaining the people's support permanently even if he achieves a Titoist-type independence. The people may calm down for a while, but they will soon seek to overthrow completely the Communist regime.

Source could not determine the proportion of Party members who are convinced Communist, but said that there must be a large proportion who are not convinced Communists. He knew several doctors who were Party members and who he was certain were not convinced Communists. Many Party members had been Communists in theory, but practice made them change their minds.

The behavior of regime officials has softened remarkably in the last six months, source said, although in his personal dealings he had found all the Polish Communist officials, with whom he had come into contact, always polite. He attributes that to the fact that he was a foreigner. The Polish authorities were always much softer with the Greeks than with the Poles. Source heard that the Greek Communist organization in Poland had asked the authorities for permission to establish a concentration camp for about 1,000 non-Communist Greeks, but it was refused.

Source did not hear any comments on exile activities and effectiveness and concluded that the people are not much interested in the exiles. The only exile he heard mentioned with esteem was General ANDERS.

Source often heard about redefectors and that they were given aid and good jobs and that they were used for propaganda, but they had no influence on the local population. The general opinion was that after some time, when the amenities of the authorities stopped, most of the redefectors repented

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having returned. During their first months, however, they were no doubt coddled. As source remembers, in a theatrical review some actor asked the master of ceremonies what is the easiest way to obtain an apartment, and the master of ceremonies replied: "Escape abroad and then return."

One of the main topics of conversation among the Poles was the Russian control over their country. They said that "the Russians take our coal and in exchange they buy our sugar." A doctor told source once that at a dinner for doctors one doctor got up and proposed a toast to the railway personnel. "But why the railway personnel?" he was asked. "Because without them we would spend our lives carrying coal to Russia," he replied. The people hoped that they would be freed from Russian control but had no prospects for a quick change. The people did not foretell GOMULKA's return to power although they expected that he would soon become a member of the Party's Central Committee.

According to source, many Poles he knew said that if the policy of co-existence would bring foreign travelers to Poland, then the government would be obliged to make some improvements, and life in Poland might eventually be better. But if no improvement would result, then war would be preferable. In source's opinion the end of the cold war would depress the Polish people, for they would feel the Western peoples are no longer interested in them.

The reaction of the people to STALIN's repudiation was surprise. The people said: "The Communists are opening the windows, not to let the air in, but to see who leans outside the windows."

Communists Explain 20th Party Congress.

Source never had a full knowledge of KHRUSHCHEV's speech at the 20th Party Congress. He only heard bits and ends, summing up to the fact that STALIN had committed many errors and crimes. He was better informed by two speakers from the district of STETTIN Communist organization who went to the boardinghouse of Greek children, attending the Polish high schools in STETTIN, to explain to them the work of the 20th Party Congress and the repudiation of STALIN. They said that STALIN had committed many crimes and that the terrorism prevailing under his rule prevented the other members of the Russian Party's Central Committee to do or say anything against him. They preferred to wait until they had the opportunity of bringing about a decisive change, else they would sacrifice themselves to no purpose and would have been of no service to their country.

Meetings were also organized at the conference hall of the district Party organization where the people were free to ask any question they wanted on the change brought about by the
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20th Congress. Source heard that someone had asked the speakers if STALIN was to blame for the KATIN massacre, but they said that they did not know yet.

Censorship Lessons After the "Thaw"

Source said that the "thaw" that followed the repudiation of STALIN did not affect the people's life materially. Only the minimum wages were raised to 500 zloty and there was a raise in the salaries of teachers. Morally, however, there was a general feeling of some relief and more freedom of expression. Previously, a citizen could be arrested for the slightest criticism of the regime. After the "thaw" no one was arrested unless there was proof of anti-Communist activity. There was greater freedom of the press and in the theaters. The press published the debates in the Sejm, whereas previously they published only the decrees. They also commented upon and criticized many aspects of government but on a local angle; they did not openly criticize the government on matters of higher policy. Source heard that the most liberal of the newspapers was the "ekspres Wieczorny" /the Evening Express/ whose circulation had greatly increased, and many people could not find a copy to buy. To limit its circulation, the government reduced the quantity of newsprint allotted to it.

Some papers also attacked government officials for using State motor-cars for their recreation and that of their families and friends. These cars bore a plate with the letter "A", and the newspapers wrote that in all summer resorts one could see nothing but cars with the letter "A". As a result of the campaign the "A" plates were replaced by common ones. At the time a magazine published a cartoon presenting a car with an "A" plate with an official at the wheel and a citizen close by. The legend wrote: "Don't interfere with my car or you may become an invalid."

In the theater, too, there was relaxation of censorship. A play entitled "Ostry Dyżur" /Doctor on Duty/ which had previously been withheld by the censors was presented in STETTIN. The play was about a provincial young doctor who because of anti-Communist activity in the past is not allowed by the local Party officials to operate on a Party representative from WARSAW who has an acute case of appendicitis, because the doctor does not inspire confidence. In a review one actor asks another if CYRANKIEWICZ, who had then left for France, would ever return. The other replied that he would rather return because in France they change Premiers more often. In another number four actors made fun of the P.K.P.G. /the State committee for the Economic Plan, Państwowa Komisja Planowania Gospodarczego./ At the end the four actors lined up in a row, and each one uttered one of the initial letters of the committee. When the turn of the last came, he stopped for a moment and then stressed the letter "G", making a face. The spectators roared with laughter because they understood that instead of "Gospodarczego" he meant "G...," that means excrement.

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Source had knowledge of the Sejm bill on abortions. He said that as far as he remembers the novelty of the bill was that a woman who wanted an abortion because she could not support the child had to have a certificate from the "Komitet Blokowy," a supervising committee in each block of houses, that she was indeed a pauper. Source did not remember about the bill on alcoholism.

Source had heard that the debates in the Sejm had been liberalized in a way. He heard that a member had put a question to the Minister of Commerce about Polish-Soviet commercial relations, saying that it was rumored that they were unfavorable to Poland. The Minister had evaded the answer, saying only that they were quite favorable. This debate was not published in the newspapers.

Poles Want a Democracy

Referring to TITO, source said that the Poles preferred Titoism to Soviet control as the least of two evils, but that they did not think it likely to happen. When GOMULKA was set free, the people thought that in all probability he would participate in the government, but not that he would become the leader. The press had said that he no doubt had committed mistakes, but not such as to justify his imprisonment.

Referring to NATO, source said that the Poles considered it to be a defensive organization against Russian expansion, but did not have many hopes on its effectiveness in the liberation of Poland.

According to source, the desire for a war is periodic with the general population. When they despair, they pray for war, but if some improvement occurs, the desire subsides. Source said that the Poles have been through such horrors in the last war that they wish for it only as a last resort.

The Poles fear and hate the Germans but hate the Russians much more, so they consider German rearmament to be a necessary evil. They do not believe that German reunification will take place soon.

The political system the great majority of Poles prefer is a democracy as in the pre-war period. As they say, in the pre-war period even the unemployed were better paid than a worker today. The economic system preferred is free enterprise under capitalism. Even the landless peasants, source said, are against collectivization of agriculture.

Source never had the opportunity of discussing the

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prospect of European Federation with any of his Polish friends, but he thinks that the educated Poles at least would welcome the idea.

Referring to the Oder-Neisse boundary, source said that they do not consider it permanent. They wish to retain this boundary as long as the Soviet Union retains the area it has annexed, but they have not taken seriously that SZCZECIN and WROCLAW, for instance, will remain Polish.

Local Radio and Press

Source did not follow the local radio stations except for a few minutes in the morning, while dressing, when after listening to BBC he tuned in on the SZCZECIN radio station and listened to the local news. He heard from his friends that the regime radio was not popular, and people in general listened only to music. Source could give no information on wired radio except that, as he heard, many people who could not afford a wireless set had wired radios, which were ironically called "Kolkhoznik," for they are in general use in the kolkhozes.

Two four-page newspapers were published in SZCZECIN the "Glos Szczecinski" and the "Kurier Szczecinski." The former was sponsored by the Party committee of the district. Source and the people in general preferred the "Kurier" which everyday sold out all its copies. Source said that the "Kurier" was lighter and less fanatic. It had more humor and contained more photographs. Both newspapers cost 20 grosze per copy.

Source also read a medical weekly, the "Polski Tygodnik Lekarski" which contained much information from medical activity in the West. It had about forty pages, and the yearly subscription was 240 zloty.

Western non-Communist publications were not available. An individual could not order Western magazines, not even scientific ones. But in the library of the Medical Academy magazines of this kind, including the "Journal of the American Medical Association" could be found. In a bookstore, called the "International" Western Communist or leftist newspapers and magazines were available. Source remembers seeing the French "l'Humanité" and the magazine "Regard." There were also some English and German publications, but source does not remember the titles. He believes, however, that they must have been of leftist tendencies.

Radio Sets on the Local Market

Source owned a "Stern" East-German radio set with

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six tubes, which he bought in the spring of 1955 for 3,200 zloty. The set which had a short wave band beginning at 16 meters was registered with the government, and source paid 15 zloty a month at the post office.

The shops have usually only Polish radio sets, and only from time to time do they have East German ones which are preferred by those who can afford them. The Polish radio sets are not considered good; they have a short wave band from 31 meters and up. The Polish brands, which are available without a coupon, are the "Pionier," "Mazur" and the newest "Stolica," which are considered the best. The "Pionier" with four tubes cost under 1,000 zloty; the "Mazur" also with four tubes cost 1,200. The "Stolica" is more expensive; source believes it must cost about 1,800 to 2,000 zloty. The "Stolica" appeared on the market in 1956. Russian radio sets are also available at the "Komis" shops, through which Russian Army personnel sell them.

Source heard before his departure that Belgian radio sets would be imported.

End