

TRANSLATION

(Oct 3 1955)

ITEM NO. 7851/55SPECIAL ATTENTION: Political Advisor  
Audience AnalysisPRIORITY

EH

Sept 15

I/14939

HUNGARYEXILE (1200)  
Refugees (1204 a)HUNGARIAN BAKER SPEAKS ON POLITICAL QUESTIONS.

SOURCE MUNICH: A 27-year-old baker from ASOTTHALOM who fled Hungary on May 27 1955 and reached West Germany via Yugoslavia and Austria on September 4 1955.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: Until May 27 1955

EVALUATION COMMENT: None.

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A. Radio, Press and LeafletsI. Radio Set Statistics

Source's home is in ASOTTHALOM, which belongs to the world of isolated farms around SZEGED. This location was transformed into a village a few years ago. Its boundaries are extensive, reaching below SZABADKA. The village consists of a few rows of houses only; the bulk of its population (8,000 people) lives in scattered settlements, far from the center. The residents of ASOTTHALOM live isolated from the world and have little opportunity of gathering information.

In 1950, electricity was installed in the village. In spite of this fact, only eight or ten houses have all-electric receivers. Poverty in ASOTTHALOM is great, and people can hardly afford to buy a "People's Radio." The monotony was slightly broken when the wired radio was installed five years ago. The local population showed great interest in it, and already at the beginning, 240 or 250 people subscribed to it. Since then, the number of subscribers doubled. The receivers fitted on the telephone cable alternately transmit the programs of Radio KOSSUTH and PETOFI, directed from the  
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post office. For the time being, wired radios can be installed in farms at a distance of two kilometers from the center of the village. The farms further away have no telephone cables.

There are about 40 old-type battery operated radio sets on the various farms. They are suitable for the reception of foreign stations. The majority is kept hidden without registration, as these sets -- the so called "kulak radios" -- are banned by the local authorities. Between 1949 and 1952, the police conducted constant house searches and confiscated the majority of "kulak radios." Those who managed to hide theirs, do not talk about them and listen to them in secret.

Source did not possess a radio. At the village bakery, where he worked, the "People's Radio" was blaring all day, and thus he was obliged to listen to the local program from daybreak until midnight.

Radios can be purchased in the ASOTTHALOM People's Shop. The selection is rather poor and consists of a few "People's Radios." Spare parts can be obtained in SZEGERED only. The "People's Radio" can be converted to receive foreign stations. Source is not aware of the conversion cost.

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Since 1952, radios were confiscated any longer at source's village. The confiscations up to 1952 were explained by the local authorities will claiming that the kulaks spread the "scarenews" broadcast by the West, thereby inciting the peasants.

(Part I. 1-9.)

## II. Relationship to Regime Radio and Press

Source listened to the domestic programs on the wired radio installed at the bakery. Reception was not very good. Therefore, he did not pay any attention to the broadcasts. The constant crackling and the Communist propaganda irritated him. He and some of his colleagues asked the shop-manager to turn the radio off, as its blaring disturbed them in their work. The manager did not consent, however, and they still had to listen to the radio.

Source considered the programs of the home stations to be terrible. A large part of it is propaganda, and light programs are rare. He did not experience any improvement in the home programs lately. He is unable to compare these to foreign programs, as he never heard any.

Source did not read any newspapers. Local propagandists tried to persuade him repeatedly to subscribe to

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"Free Land." He managed to refuse by saying that he had no time left for reading newspapers.

Source's only means of obtaining information was from other people's conversations. He did not bother to listen to the news service of the home stations, as he did not believe it to be true. The news spread from mouth to mouth originated with farmers who regularly listen to the Hungarian broadcasts of the West on their hidden battery-operated radios. Naturally, they do not admit this listening but they pass on the news as if heard in the town or from neighbors.

Source was informed of the existence of leaflets from other people's conversations. Western leaflets never reached ASOTTHALOM. Source had no chance to speak to anyone who saw a leaflet.

(Part II. 1-9.)

### III. Relationship to Regime Wired Radio

Source listened to the wired radio at his place of work, the village bakery. The radio alternately transmitted the programs of Radio KOSSUTH and Radio PETOFI, as they were switched on at the local post office. No local program was transmitted through the ASOTTHALOM wired radio. There was no loudspeaker in the village.

Registration for a wired radio could be effected at the local post office in writing or verbally. As soon as there were ten or 15 applicants, the radio mechanic of the SZEGED post office arrived, fitted the wires and installed the radio. 60 forint incash had to be paid in ASOTTHALOM for the installation of the wired radio. The monthly listening fee was six forint.

The only advantage of the wired radio is its low cost. Its great disadvantage is that only listening to the home stations is possible, and to that particular program which the post office turns on. At the beginning, the wired radio was a great success among farmers, yet they soon got tired of it, as it merely spreads propaganda instead of providing entertainment and enlightenment. In many homes, the radio is often not in use for days because people are fed up with it. At the beginning, every subscriber had the radio switched on day and night. This is the reason why the interest for the wired radio dropped during the past two or three years. Today, the number of subscribers hardly changes.

The home programs transmitted through the wired radio have no effect on the peasants. No matter what the

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regime announces, they do not believe in it.

(Part III. 1-6.)

B. Opinions of Source

Source was entirely dissatisfied with the present regime. The only appropriate measure taken was Imre NAGY's resolution which allowed the liquidation of the farmer's Cooperatives and provided the return of the land to the farmers. Even this regulation was evaded, and now the farmers are again compelled to join the farmer's Cooperatives. Not even one of the present institutions should be kept after the liberation.

None of the government's arguments are effective any more. The farmers are persuaded with great difficulty to attend a meeting, and in half an hour's time, the lecturer notices that he merely talks to a few local Communists, as the rest of the audience has slipped off in the meantime.

Source is unable to mention a popular public figure. RAKOSI, GERO and Istvan BATA are the most hated personalities.

Source was not of the best opinion of TITO while in Hungary. After having spent three months in Yugoslavia following his escape, his belief that the situation in Yugoslavia were somewhat better than in Hungary, faded away. Poverty there is greater, people are more ragged and hungry than they are in Hungary. There is no trace of freedom, and Yugoslav prisons are full of political and economic criminals. Since TITO's friendship with the Soviets, his popularity has greatly diminished. The ASOTTHALOM residents consider him a doublecrosser and turncoat.

15 or 20 per cent of the civil servants are devoted Communists at the most. And even these are not convinced Communists but they feel indebted to the regime for holding a job and they are aware that they are no longer able to keep their posts after the overthrow of Communism.

Source was never engaged in politics, and he has no political opinion of his own. He is in favor of a regime which insures prosperity and freedom to every citizen.

The only organization which source joined in 1948, was the "Union of Working Youth." Since 1950, he did not pay any membership dues, and he burned his membership book. In June 1955, the Communists started to pester him again to settle his arrears and to attend meetings. He put an end to the molestations by escaping from Hungary.

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The direct reason of source's escape was that he lost faith in Hungary's liberation in the near future. Renewed terror, forced collectivization, continuous raising of norms, and the declining living standard were unbearably heavy burdens for him. He hoped that he would be able to build himself an existence which insures him a free and decent livelihood when escaping to a free country.

The resistance of the village population increased noticeably during the past few months. The renewed collectivization campaign and the raising of norms caused a great embitterment. The peasants do not have sufficient flour to bake bread for themselves. They walk eight or ten kilometers to the village and start to queue at dawn in front of the ASOTTHALOM bakery in order to buy a loaf of bread for their family.

Resistance manifests itself chiefly in farmers neglecting their work, in sabotaging deliveries and in not taking care of State property. The strength of the government is unchanged, as it crushes the slightest resistance with terror. Source is confident that the country will be liberated in ten years' time. A liberation can only be achieved through armed intervention from abroad, however.

(Part VII. 1-11.)

#### VIII. Opinions about the West

Source knows the name of ADENAUER from Communist abuses only. He is described as the new HITLER who restored Naziism in West Germany. Villagers believed this to some extent. Due to the strong anti-German propaganda, they came to the conclusion that Germany was prospering again, that she had rearmed and was strong enough to wait for the opportunity to pay off old scores with the Soviets. Elderly people say: "You will see, the Germans will liberate us finally from the Soviets." Source believes that East Germany is also under Soviet occupation, yet the Communists do not dare terrorize the population to such an extent as in the Satellite countries, as they are afraid of ADENAUER and his followers.

Source believes that both the US and the USSR are aiming at world domination. This is the reason for so many conflicts between them. He does not know which of the two nations will start the war, however, he has no doubt that the US will win because she is much better equipped.

Source realized that the ROSENBERG couple stole and disclosed the atom secrets to the Soviet Union. Their

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execution was just. He is completely ignorant about the circumstances of the outbreak of the Korean war or about the idea of a United Europe and the plan for the control of atomic weapons. He believes that there prevails a great prosperity in the US, that everybody has his own car and that unemployment does not exist there.

(Part VIII. 1-4.)

#### IX. Attitudes Toward Exiles

Source is not familiar with the names of Hungarian public personalities in exile. The only one known to him is Ferenc NAGY, former Minister President, who is occasionally mentioned by SZEGED farmers. They do not have much good to say about him; he misled the people and left them in the lurch. He does not know about the existence of emigre organizations and is, therefore, unable to comment on their work. After the liberation, exiles should return home. He is unable to name a person or group whose return would be unfavorable.

Source did not hear about any redefectors, or about the Amnesty Decree issued in spring 1955.

(Part IX. 1-7.)

#### X. Attitudes Toward Local Problems

After the liberation, Hungary's form of government should be similar to that existing in Western countries, which insures prosperity and freedom. It makes no difference whether this is a monarchy or a republic.

Nationalization and collectivization have to be abolished. The village population does not benefit from literature, music and art as people did in the past. Communism has not corrupted the morale of the inhabitants of ASOTTHALOM so far, since they live, think and behave as always. A damaging effect is noticeable on those young people whom the regime tore away from the village and who are educated in towns, in students' hostels and in the Communist spirit. A number of these youngsters disown and betray their own parents.

The present Hungarian borders should be changed. Hungarians who live now in disannexed territories, should again live in Hungary. These territories should be reannexed in consequence. During his three months' stay in Yugoslavia, source could observe to what extent Hungarians are

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oppressed in Yugoslavia. More than one Hungarian in BACSKA told him how much he would like to be liberated from Yugoslav oppression. He is not familiar with the situation in Transylvania. Hungarians living there should be given an opportunity to choose freely where they wish to belong.

People of ASOTTHALOM expected the GENEVA Conference to bring about the long desired liberation. They believed that Western statesmen felt sufficiently strong to convince the Soviets in a peaceful way. This is the reason why they entered in negotiations with the USSR. Unfortunately, the Conference did not fulfill these hopes, and source does not think that it is possible to persuade the Soviet in a peaceful way to give up the Satellite nations.

Source did not attribute any special significance to the BELGRADE visit of the Soviet delegation. There were never any fundamental differences between TITO and the MOSCOW Communists, only personal clashes between TITO and STALIN. Therefore, it is not surprising that TITO again clasped his old Soviet comrades to his heart. TITO will keep up the appearance of being independent for a short period to extort further financial assistance from the West.

The conclusion of the Austrian State Treaty caused great joy in source's native village. A number of people remarked that the Soviets will have to leave Hungary after their withdrawal from Austria. This did not take place. On the contrary, it is believed that Soviet troops withdrawing from Austria are being stationed in Hungary.

Source is not satisfied with the present state of world affairs. He fears that the Soviets enticed leading Western statesmen to facilitate the world's bolshevization in a peaceful way, which they were unable to attain by force.

(Part X. 1-9.)

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