

SPECIAL ATTENTION: Political Advisor
Audience Analysis

PRIORITY
BS
June 27
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BULGARIA

MORALE AND GENERAL MOOD /2000/
Political Situation /2004/

PROPAGANDA /2600/
Radio /2605/

ROLE OF WESTERN BROADCASTS IN THE PEOPLE'S
EVERYDAY LIFE.

SOURCE TRIESTE: A 52-year-old Bulgarian emigrant en route to Venezuela.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: May 1956.

EVAL. COMMENT: This report is another proof of the ever-growing appreciation of RFE Bulgarian language broadcasts by Bulgarian listeners.

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"An objective evaluation of the role of Bulgarian language broadcasts on the Bulgarian people's everyday life may be made only on the basis of an objective evaluation of the state of mind now existing in Bulgaria. If in the immediate postwar period these broadcasts acquired a value solely from the information standpoint, nowadays it is no longer so. In the 12 years of their government, the Communists have actually succeeded in imposing a new way of life and primitive ethics on the Bulgarian people. Do you know that many educated Bulgarians do not succeed nowadays in recognizing themselves? Many friends of mine of the past, doctors, engineers, artists, and others, confessed to me they don't recognize themselves. I have to admit that I,

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too, find myself in this Hamletic philosophy. All the more tragic is that certain educated people in Bulgaria have reached the conclusion of not being what they were, but of representing something new, of having been reborn, of having changed into "Socialist men," obstinately trying to make people believe in this "miracle!" Do not imagine it is a question of adaptation, of a certain elasticity in the relations with the Regime, but you must conceive the fact as a sort of collective mania, an infectious mania, to which are subject all those who breathe the Bulgarian air. Such a situation is difficult to understand by people who have not lived long in a Communist country. I myself, cannot explain it, as it is a question of a delicate conscience created as a consequence of a certain type of life. If you want to ask a person who says he feels he is not what he used to be: the reason for such a fact, it would be the same as asking a lunatic why he is one. The political mania is one of the worst consequences of Communism as a political system and a public order. Most of the Bulgarian people are suffering from this mania which takes on various forms of gravity: some people get through without serious damage; others never get over it. Persons with a good education are more susceptible to it than those, who are not well-educated. The youths are artificially infected with this "disease" but there is a percentage of these young people who have a miraculous, natural immunity. Everyday life in Communist Bulgaria! Socialism, Communism, assault work, high production, fight for peace, group leadership, objective criticism, constructive self-criticism, pledges to the Party, fight to improve quality of production, fight to cut down production costs, civil duties of the masses, discipline of the citizens, fight against waste -- this is what a Bulgarian is obliged to hear over and over again, and without realizing it one finds he is telling his wife: "assault me a couple of eggs," or "make an objective self-criticism." But it is not only a question of terminology; life is so full of these things that at first one feels suffocated by them, but then slowly one gets used to them; they become second nature and a necessity. When a person who comes to the West does not see propaganda slogans in the streets and other public places, he feels something important is missing. He is not yet completely aware he is out of Communist Bulgaria and has become a free man again. I've said all these things to help you to understand what the voice of freedom means in that noxious atmosphere.

"Bulgarian language broadcasts from the West are the only

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remedy against this political psychopathy. The West must use every possible means in carrying on the war to save the souls and minds of the peoples enslaved by Communism. Communism is more dangerous as spiritual slavery rather than as economic slavery.

"I believe RFE has understood its responsibility and, in my opinion, is waging a successful battle. The radio is the only means by which the Bulgarian citizen can escape for a few minutes from the reality that poisons him. RFE offers something for everyone: political and cultural news, political conferences, literary reviews and criticism, religious conferences, sports, criticism of Marxism-Leninism, humor etc. I remember, for example, the impression RILSKI's talks made upon me during a moment of depression.

"It is my personal opinion that RFE has gained more listeners during the past few years as a result of the improvement of its programs. I remember the first programs which were a bit "thin." Although the number of listeners has increased, I feel the amount of hours of listening has dropped. This is not due to a lack of interest, but simply to the hard life the Bulgarians lead. At present, the Bulgarian people have very little free time.

"Recent events have further stimulated interest in RFE broadcasts. I must say that RFE has done a good job of evaluating what is going on in the Soviet Union and in Bulgaria. The Bulgarian people have regained some of their faith despite the fact that they do not see what positive effects these events can have on their salvation.

"I don't see anything wrong with RFE broadcasts, although I can't say the same for some other Western stations. The only people in Bulgaria who want to see RFE bring its broadcasts to an end are those ruling assassins of the Bulgarian people. I don't understand why these murderers are no longer being reminded of the evil they have done and the fate in store for them. They must not be given a moment's peace.

"Jamming of Western broadcasts is a sign of Communist weakness to defend its ideas which day by day become less popular and less applicable to the life of modern man. In my opinion, the jamming of Western broadcasts plays a positive moral role: they convince the very men of the Regime that Communism fears free discussion and makes them suspect that the cause they are defending

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is perhaps not just. This leads me to believe that many of the people -- both Communists and non-Communists -- who listen to Western broadcasts do so precisely because they suspect that the truth is being kept from them. The more Western broadcasts are jammed, the more they take on a mysteriously magic quality and this attracts the listeners even more."

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