

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY	Czechoslovakia	REPORT NO.	[] 25X1A
SUBJECT	Reception of VOA Broadcasts	DATE DISTR.	12 June 1953
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1. [] VOA broadcasts, on the whole, are quite good. Especially good are news broadcasts and news commentaries; these are very important for the Czechoslovak population, since foreign broadcasts are their only source of accurate news.
2. I think that the hours of VOA transmission are good, with the exception of the broadcast from 2100 to 2130 hours (Central European Time). Although this is a convenient time for the people to listen, it is the same time as BBC transmission to Czechoslovakia (2045-2115 CET), which is very popular.
3. VOA as well as other Western broadcasts are jammed; this jamming includes all frequencies and all programs in the Czech and Slovak languages. The jamming is stronger than the broadcasts in the intermediate frequency ranges. I believe that the jamming stations are located in the vicinity of Prague because the jamming seems to be the strongest in that area. Listening on high frequency ranges is considerably better, but irregularly so. Those people who have especially good sets and know all the VOA frequencies can listen to the frequency with the least jamming. Jamming is especially heavy in the 13 and 16 m. bands, less heavy in the 31 and 49 m. bands. All the frequencies should be given on a special broadcast, because most of the listeners, other than trained radio technicians, know of only two frequencies at the most, and, if these happen to be jammed too heavily, turn off their sets, and their activity is then limited to cursing the

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Communists for jamming the broadcast. In Czechoslovakia, there are a great many people [redacted] who actually depend upon Western radio broadcasts for their "moral and spiritual nutrition". Their daily schedule is based on the times when they can listen to the broadcasts. It seems to me that VOA's biggest problem is to overcome this jamming. VOA could explain to its listeners the best ways to combat jamming. This should be done by radio technicians who could explain how the listeners themselves could make a loop antenna which is supposed to be the best defense against jamming. Perhaps this could be made a part of the Monday program for radio amateurs. Perhaps jamming in high-frequency ranges could be decreased by slightly decreasing or increasing the frequency. This should result in the transmitting frequency being off the jamming frequency and thereby permitting the program to be heard. It would take a few moments to readjust the jamming for the new frequency, during which time the program would be heard clearly. This would have to be explained to the listeners beforehand so they could retune their sets. It is evident that the personnel operating the jamming devices have considerable difficulty in finding the exact frequency.

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4. Group listening to foreign broadcasts was forbidden in Czechoslovakia, as is the dissemination of information from foreign broadcasts. Almost every Czech family listened to foreign broadcasts, but not regularly. [redacted] in Prague or at [redacted] able to use good receivers of US manufacture. The night programs were especially good [redacted] always enjoyed listening to them, [redacted] heard VOA broadcasts in Teplice-Sanov, [redacted]. I cannot say to what extent personnel of the Czech air force listened to foreign broadcasts. My civilian colleagues at Prague-Ruzyně, even those who were Communists, listened intently to foreign broadcasts.

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5. I would say that 90% of the families in Czechoslovakia had radio sets which are capable of receiving VOA and BBC broadcasts. Every radio set must be registered with local post office authorities who issue a permit for its operation. The monthly fee for operation of a radio set is 25 crowns. Failure to register one's radio set is punishable by a large fine and confiscation of the set. Almost all radio replacement parts are available in Prague, although at times certain parts may not be available at once. I heard of no pressure on radio owners to exchange their radio tubes for weaker ones. I estimate that about 95% of Czech radio sets have high-frequency ranges; the remaining five per cent are old sets that were not build for high-frequency reception.

6. There are three different radio sets made in Czechoslovakia, all manufactured by the electronics combine, Tesla National Corporation. They are:

"Talisman", sold for about 5,300 crowns on the open market.

"Pionyr", sold for about 6,000 crowns on the open market.

"Largo", sold for about 14,000 crowns on the open market.

All of these sets are sold through the selling and distributing Elektra National Corporation.

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