

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

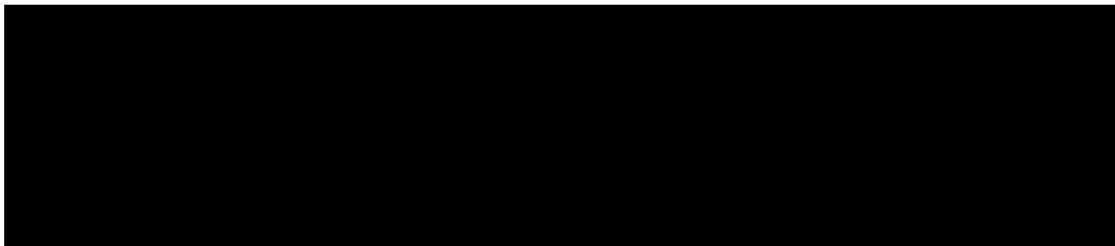
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SECURITY INFORMATION

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SOURCE:



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1. The most popular foreign broadcast in Slovakia is that of the "White Legion", the clandestine radio station in Austria, followed closely by the Slovak station in Rome. These two stations transmit in the Slovak language and for the Slovak people. Slovak intelligentsia frequently listen to the Czechoslovak radio from London, although they may object to what is said for political reasons. Those people in Slovakia who understand German, Hungarian, or Polish, prefer to listen to VOA transmissions in these languages rather than the VOA programs beamed "to Czechoslovakia". In Slovakia, there is open criticism of VOA's Czechoslovak programs because they offer no hope of Slovakia ever becoming an independent state. Slovaks do not recognize any so-called Czechoslovak nation; they consider themselves a different nationality. VOA broadcasts to Czechoslovakia, in my opinion, dwell on an ideology with which the majority of Slovaks do not agree. Although the broadcasts are in both Czech and Slovak, the Slovak is so poor that the people make jokes about it. It seems that the broadcasts are meant primarily for the people of Bohemia and Moravia. Many of the programs are very unpopular in Slovakia and result in bitter criticism of VOA. The Slovaks are not interested in hearing praise of Czech Sokol activities, Czech cultural activities, Dr. Eduard BENEŠ, or the other things which are completely Czech. VOA broadcasts to Czechoslovakia may be compared with Radio Prague broadcasts prior to 1939 and between 1945 to 1948. As far as Prague is concerned, Slovakia has always been a peripheral area, and the Slovaks are completely fed up with this attitude.

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2. It is the opinion of the Slovaks that members of the so-called Czechoslovak National Council in the US control most VOA broadcasts to Czechoslovakia. These are people who were responsible, either directly or indirectly, for the assumption of power by the Communists in 1948. The reasoning in Slovakia runs something like this: "Are these the people we are supposed to listen to? Are these the people who want to run the country again? With the support of the US, these people will again give the orders on how to run the country". The members of the Czechoslovak National Council in the US represent a very small minority; they never cared about the welfare of the Slovak people, and now are interested only in enriching themselves. Eighty-five percent of the Slovak population is Roman Catholic. About 700,000 Slovaks, mostly Roman Catholics, are living in the United States, and those people in Slovakia want to know why they never hear on VOA about these people, their organizations, such as the Catholic Union, Slovak League, Brotherhood of Slovak Catholics, and their various publications in the US. I would suggest that this group of Slovaks develop a separate program of broadcasts to Slovakia.

3. It should be remembered that, in 1946, the Czechs voted for the Communists; Slovakia voted anti-Communist, thanks mostly to the efforts of the Catholic clergy. If VOA wants any support in Slovakia, it must not forget these facts. If VOA had taken these facts into account some time ago, resistance to the Communist régime would be much more stubborn than it is today. Furthermore, more Slovaks would have defected to the West. Many of those Slovaks who fled before the Soviets to Austria after World War II would have never returned to Slovakia if the US had had a better grasp of the political situation. As the result of US policies, many Slovaks paid with their lives or freedom. 25X1X

The US is now following an entirely different policy from that of the years immediately following World War II, but this new policy has not been reflected in VOA broadcasts to Czechoslovakia. Slovakia is small, with only 3,500,000 inhabitants, but Slovaks have a right to enjoy freedom in their own manner, just as any major world power.

4. Life will be worth living for the Slovaks, when world policy is aimed primarily toward waging the most effective fight against Communism, and setting up some sort of European federation, on the pattern of the proposed United States of Europe, or even the Danube Federation of States. These federations would be based on ethnological and cultural independence, each state according to its own desires. The policy of VOA is to support the old form of union of Czechs and Slovaks in the modern Czechoslovakia as it existed before the Munich pact. The majority of Slovaks will never accede to such a union; they believe in close cooperation with Bohemia and Moravia as with all countries, but they do not want to be ruled from Prague.

5. I would like to make the following suggestions with regard to VOA broadcasts:

- a. Broadcasts should support the most effective battle against Communism.
- b. Further, they should emphasize cooperation among the European nations.
- c. They should not try to force the idea of national union upon a people such as the Slovaks.
- d. A more responsible group should be put in charge of the programs.

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6. Jamming of VOA broadcasts is quite strong, but, most programs can be heard and understood, including the news, which is most important. Listening to foreign broadcasts is not forbidden, but group listening or spreading what is heard is punishable by law.
7. Most of the radio sets in Slovakia are pre-World War II and are, in most cases, better than sets produced since that time. In Slovakia, radio sets, of Tesla manufacture, are easily obtainable at a cost of from 3,400 crowns up. People including those in small outlying villages seem to have enough radio receivers. Most of the listening is done at night, after working hours, and afternoon VOA transmission has virtually no value. A tax of 75 crowns is levied against every radio-set owner, payable each quarter year to the local post office.

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