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Broadcasting Propaganda: Voice OF America's Role in The Hungarian Revolution of 1956

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by
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“Some criticism by the VOA is factual, but some programs seem to incite violence. The VOA should point out shortcomings but not incite people to open resistance.”¹ This was a criticism levied against the VOA by a Hungarian refugee after the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. There has been much debate regarding what prompted the Hungarian people to revolt. The majority of the blame has aptly been placed on the repressive and intrusive Soviet regime. However, in the wake of the revolution, the media criticized Radio Free Europe (RFE) for issuing instigative and presumptuous broadcasts to Hungary. Investigation was limited to RFE, despite Hungarian refugees’ statements claiming that both RFE and Voice Of America (VOA) broadcasts were aggressive and suggestive. Though undoubtedly VOA was much more subtle in their propaganda campaign than RFE, VOA still pursued an aggressive and misguided policy toward Hungary driven by tense relationships between government agencies and ambiguous policies. This unorganized and unchecked aggression was compounded by a general ignorance of the Hungarian political and social climate and ultimately led to ill-conceived VOA broadcasts, which suggested that Hungarians pursue revolutionary change that would be supported by the U.S. These suggestive broadcasts left Hungarians helplessly expecting superpower support that would never materialize.

In the extensive research regarding the Hungarian Revolution, most scholars tend to look at western radio broadcasting as a rather insignificant factor in fomenting the crisis. The most vocal of these scholars tend to be retired employees of RFE. Arch Puddington and Richard Cummings, two employees of RFE, both concluded that the controversy that emerged around RFE broadcasting in the wake of the revolution was exaggerated by the media and based on unfounded and subjective accusations that were not supported by evidence. They claimed all RFE was doing was fulfilling their

¹ “Soviet Reactions to the VOA,” p.1, Soviet Reactions to the VOA (84) 1957-1957, Special Reports, Compiled 1953-1983, Records of the U.S. Information Agency (USIA), 1900 – 2003, Record Group (RG) 306, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

necessary and proper role.² More recently, another former RFE employee, A. Ross Johnson, has taken up the cause of vocally defending RFE and western radio against previous accusations. Johnson defended RFE, claiming that in no way did its' broadcasts encourage revolution among the Hungarian people or assert that the U.S. would supply the Hungarians with aid.³

However, more frequently, scholars of the Hungarian Revolution have begun to criticize western radio, and in particular RFE for its role in the revolution. These arguments have begun to reiterate Gyorgy Litvan's claim that western radio broadcasts had a consequential role in instigating revolutionary action in Hungary and in establishing a belief among Hungarians that they would receive western aid. Litvan argued that irresponsible broadcasts emerged from a general lack of concern for the Hungarian people within the U.S. government.⁴ Recently, Michael Nelson, a historian of RFE, has been very critical of RFE broadcasts, claiming that Johnson's study has glossed over more incendiary broadcasts by RFE, including one that instructed Hungarians on how to make Molotov cocktails. Nelson argues that many broadcasts were overly aggressive.⁵ Other scholars, such as Csaba Bekes, claimed that RFE and VOA broadcasts referenced the U.S. policy of liberation of captive nations in order to spread the illusion throughout the world that the U.S., which had never shown any previous interest in these nations, had made their liberation a cornerstone of its foreign policy. Bekes alleges that this was merely propaganda issued by the U.S. that culminated

² Arch Puddington, *Broadcasting Freedom: The Cold War Triumph of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2000), 100.; Richard Cummings, *Cold War Radio: The Dangerous History of American Broadcasting in Europe 1950-1989* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 2009), 46.

³ A. Ross Johnson, "Setting the Record Straight: Radio Free Europe and the 1956 Hungarian Revolution," History and Public Policy Program Occasional Paper #3, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. October 2006, 28.; A. Ross Johnson, ed. and Eugene R. Prata, ed., *Cold War Broadcasting: Impact on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe: A Collection of Studies and Documents*, (Budapest, Hungary: Central European Press, 2010), 265. On December 15th 2010, Johnson will release another book entitled, *Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty: The CIA Years and Beyond* published by Stanford University Press.

⁴ Gyorgy Litvan, ed. *The Hungarian Revolution of 1956: Reform, Revolt, and Repression, 1953-1963*, (New York: Longman, 1996), 100.

⁵ Michael Nelson, *War of the Black Heavens: The Battles of Western Broadcasting In the Cold War*, (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997), 76.

with the unfortunate death of thousands of Hungarians.⁶ Johanna Granville expands on Bekes' argument in several works. In *The First Domino* and "Caught With Jam on our Fingers", Granville discusses the general lack of knowledge in the U.S. and the Soviet Union regarding the Hungarian situation. She claimed that this ignorance led to many misguided policies and broadcasts that inflamed an audience of which the U.S. was completely unaware.⁷

Although most scholars have focused primarily on RFE, Gary D. Rawnsley has extensively studied VOA's role in the revolution. Rawnsley concluded that VOA was, by its nature, a propaganda organization.⁸ In his study he examined broadcasts issued by VOA from October 23, 1956 to November 8, 1956. He argued that broadcast scripts did not deviate from government policy however, he asserted that the government's policy was aggressive and crusading. Rawnsley did not condemn commentaries written by scriptwriters, but did argue that Dwight Eisenhower's speeches broadcasted on VOA were aggressive in nature and could have led to the Hungarian expectation of aid.⁹ While Rawnsley's work is groundbreaking it is also limited its scope of investigation, as he only examines broadcasts made during the revolution, ignoring revolutionary broadcasts that were issued prior to the inception of violence.

While the issue of foreign broadcasting to Hungary during the revolution has been widely covered, there are few sources that address VOA's role in the revolution, perhaps because RFE's broadcasts were much more incendiary than VOA's broadcasts. However, the Hungarian population listened to VOA regularly and often claimed that the broadcasts were suggestive. Therefore, this

⁶ Csaba Bekes, "The 1956 Hungarian Revolution and World Politics," Cold War International History Project (CWIHP) Working Paper Series No. 16, 5.

⁷ Johanna C. Granville, *The First Domino: International Decision Making During the Hungarian Crisis of 1956*, (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2004), 34; Johanna C. Granville, "Caught With Jam on Our Fingers: Radio Free Europe and the Hungarian Revolution of 1956," *Diplomatic History* 29, no 5. (2005): 838.

⁸ Gary D. Rawnsley, *Radio Diplomacy and Propaganda: The BBC and VOA in International Politics, 1956-1964*, (New York: McMillan Press, 1996), 81.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 82.

essay will add to the scholarship by providing an objective study of VOA broadcasts issued prior to and during the revolution to examine whether they had any role in instigating the rebellion or in creating the Hungarian opinion that they would receive western aid.

In the wake of World War II it was clear the dominant world powers had changed. The United Kingdom and Germany had been decimated by wars and economic hardships. The weakening of old powers along with several other factors allowed the U.S. to emerge as the dominant power in the West, while the Soviet Union emerged as the dominant power in the East. Shortly after the end of World War II the tenuous alliance between the two nations dissolved. The aftermath of the war featured an extensive Soviet state that stretched well into Eastern Europe as a result of territorial gains acquired from Germany in World War II. The post-war structure also featured two opposing powers with dichotomous worldviews and ideologies, each hindering the success of the other. In order to limit the spread and continuation of either ideology, both powers embarked on propaganda campaigns communicating not only with nascent third world nations, but also within the superpowers and their satellites.¹⁰

Each superpower attempted to curb the other's ability to flourish in the world. The U.S. had the much more daunting task due to the isolated nature of the Soviet Union and Soviet censorship. One communication method that proved extremely successful for the U.S. was covert short-wave radio communication with Soviet satellite states, the third world, and inside Russia itself. Thus shortly after World War II, U.S. radio stations, such as VOA turned toward fighting Communism in the third world and the Eastern Bloc. VOA's success encouraged the government and private organizations to sponsor other stations, such as RFE and Radio Liberty.¹¹ However, by embarking on this propaganda venture, the U.S. would have to walk a fine line, trying to implement subtle

¹⁰ *Foreign Relations of the U.S. (FRUS)*, 1955-1957, 25: 66.

¹¹ Arch Puddington, *Broadcasting Freedom*, 22.

evolutionary change without precipitating a violent revolutionary response, which could prove detrimental to the people of Eastern Europe and to the future spread of western ideas, as well as to advancements of democracy and capitalism in the third world and the Eastern Bloc. This fine line was crossed and the issue came to a head in 1956, when the Hungarian Revolution broke out on October 23rd.

The Hungarian Revolution began as a student protest, however the events quickly accelerated when the state police fired at demonstrators. In response, Erno Gero, the General Secretary of the Hungarian Working People's Party, called for Soviet troops. The revolutionaries had initial victories, replacing the unpopular Gero with popular leader Imre Nagy and forcing a Soviet troop withdrawal on October 28. These victories were short-lived, on November 1, 1956 the Soviet Union reversed its decision and re-invaded on November 4, crushing the rebellion. By November 8, 1956 the Soviet Union had suppressed the rebellion, killing 2,500 people and wounding 13,000.¹²

There is no doubt that radio broadcasts were one of the most successful ways in which western ideology penetrated communist nations. Radio broadcasting to satellites proved to be far more successful than the U.S. could have ever foreseen. The U.S. was pleasantly surprised by the results of the 1956 U.S. Information Agency (USIA) reports measuring radio listening. They were overwhelmed by the volume of short wave radio sales, and the number of people who claimed to listen to VOA in refugee reports. In Hungary, the number of homes with radio receivers grew by an average of ten percent during 1956. That same year a total of 1.396 million radios had been sold in Hungary. In fact, one in eight Hungarians owned a radio receiver.¹³ In Hungary, foreign broadcasts

¹² Gyorgy Litvan, ed. *The Hungarian Revolution of 1956: Reform, Revolt, and Repression, 1953-1963*, (New York: Longman, 1996).

¹³ Wilbur Schramm, "Report of Chairman on 4th Annual Conference on US Broadcasting to the Soviet Orbit," p.1, Schramm Report 1957, Reports and Studies, Compiled 1953-1998, documenting the period documenting the period 1944-1998, Records of the USIA, 1900-2003, RG 306, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

attained popularity similar to the fireside chats in America. Broadcasts became a social event. Refugee reports confirmed foreign radio's growing popularity, claiming that 96% of Hungarians listened to foreign radio and in particular to VOA. Reports also revealed that foreign radio was widely popular in all sectors of society. Radio had penetrated into the homes of farmers, workers, soldiers, artisans, and intellectuals.¹⁴ Despite this success, radio broadcasters did have to cope with Soviet jamming of their broadcasts. Yet, reports showed that less than ten percent of English and German broadcasts to Budapest were jammed, and Hungarian broadcasts also went unabated more than 50% of the time. In the Hungarian countryside broadcasts were rarely blocked.¹⁵

The U.S. government did not trust refugee reports suggesting the successes of foreign radio broadcasting. The U.S. feared that refugees might embellish facts about radio broadcasting in order to get the government to take a greater interest in the welfare of their country or that refugees might be more politically charged than the average population. Washington was also wary of trusting the reports because of the small percentage of the population that refugees represented.¹⁶ The government used many other methods to assess the success or failure of broadcasts, such as reports from Red Cross volunteers, travelers to the area, ambassadors, and criticisms that the Soviet Union interjected at broadcasters through their own propaganda institutions.¹⁷

The U.S. believed that Soviet criticisms of radio broadcasts were a much more objective parameter upon which to determine radio successes. This proved to be a dangerous criterion upon which to base judgment because the Soviet Union typically only commented on overly polemic and

¹⁴ Division of Radio Program Evaluation, Department of State. "Media of communication and the free world as seen by Hungarian refugees," p.55, <http://www.osaarchivum.org/digitalarchive/h Hoover/index.html> (June 2010)

¹⁵ Ibid., 55.

¹⁶ "Radio Moscow on VOA Behind the Iron Curtain," p.1, S 28, Special Reports, compiled 1953 – 1983, Records of the USIA, 1900 – 2003, RG 306, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

¹⁷ "Determining the Impact of Radio Broadcasting to the Soviet Orbit," p.1, S-16-57, Special Reports, compiled 1953 – 1983, Records of the USIA, 1900 – 2003, RG 306, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

aggressive broadcasts. Basing broadcast success on Soviet reactions led to an intensification of western broadcasts because if the Soviets did not react, the U.S. believed that their broadcasts were causing no changes. As U.S. broadcasts became more polemical in 1955 and 1956, Soviet publications criticizing broadcasts and broadcasters increased. In 1955 “American propaganda suffers a fiasco” was published in the *Literary Gazette*. The article criticized Americans, particularly Theodore Streibert, the head of the USIA, for wasting money broadcasting to people who were completely satisfied with Communism.¹⁸ A similar case arose in 1956 when *The Kommunist* professed, “The imperialist propaganda of the U.S. is a threat to the peace and security of our nations.”¹⁹ Reports like these led Washington to believe they were having success in Hungary because if the Soviet Union was using resources to condemn radio stations then the broadcasts were causing changes. Soviet leaders also criticized VOA broadcasting. Lajos Acs, the secretary of the Hungarian Workers Party Central Committee, asserted that, “foreign radio stations almost break their backs in their efforts to lessen the Hungarian people’s faith and enthusiasm.”²⁰ Even Imre Nagy, the eventual leader of the free Hungarian government, attacked the VOA for their “despicable slanders.”²¹ Soviet backlash against western broadcasting continued to intensify as foreign broadcasts became more sensational and suggestive. Dangers stemming from these methods of judging success were intensified by policies stemming from Washington.

U.S. broadcasting policy to Eastern Europe dictated by President Eisenhower and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles was rife with ambiguities and contradictions. Differences emerged between policies made public and policies that were kept private. Publicly, Eisenhower and Dulles

¹⁸ Ibid., 1.

¹⁹ Ibid., 1.

²⁰ “Radio Moscow on VOA Behind the Iron Curtain,” p.1, S 28, Special Reports, compiled 1953 – 1983, Records of the USIA, 1900 – 2003, RG 306, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

²¹ Ibid., 1.

emphatically supported “Liberation of Captive Nations.” Dulles defined this policy in an address on January 15, 1953, pronouncing, that “We must always have in mind the liberation of these captive peoples.”²² It is within this policy that Eisenhower defined his foreign policy toward Eastern Europe, which would become an impetus of his presidency. Eisenhower proclaimed:

We should boldly announce that we will never lose interest in a people who want to be free—who live unwillingly behind the Iron Curtain. This means launching of a concerted political program that will establish our peaceful intent, encourage our allies, and assure all the world that as long as any nation is enslaved we shall never be indifferent to its peoples’ lot.²³

Eisenhower issued a similar statement in his 1955 Christmas message to Eastern Europe that was broadcasted on both RFE and VOA. In the speech Eisenhower asserted, “If any East European nation shows a visible opposition to Soviet oppression, it can count on our help.”²⁴ This strategy was reiterated by Dulles, who claimed that the U.S. should foster and maintain hope among the Hungarian population through a psychological offensive. The U.S.’ public policy as defined by both Eisenhower and Dulles was very aggressive, intensifying Truman’s policy of containment which they thought was too passive, instead proposing rollback and liberation. They proposed that the U.S. would aid any peoples who were dominated by the meddlesome Soviet regime.

Policy made public by the U.S. was very aggressive however, government policy that was kept private was much more passive and reserved. Privately, Dulles and other politicians seemed aware of the dangerous situation that existed in the Eastern Bloc. They seemed acutely aware of the risk of a possible Soviet military reaction to any Eastern European uprising. Dulles emphatically

²² Kenneth Allan Osgood, *Total War: Eisenhower’s Secret Cold War Battle at Home and Abroad*, (Lawrence, KN: University of Kansas Press, 2006), 145.

²³ Dwight D. Eisenhower, “Speech 30 June 1955,” p.1, PBC 890.3 Press Releases, PBC 890 Basic Statements, Records Relating to Poland, the Baltic States and Czechoslovakia, compiled 1951 – 1960, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002, RG 59, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

²⁴ Puddington, *Broadcasting Freedom*, 131.

asserted that the U.S. could not risk “condemning the Hungarian people to genocide.”²⁵ He argued that change in Hungary had to be constructed peacefully and slowly, utilizing international institutions and conferences to promote peace between the Soviet Union, their satellites, and the western powers. Dulles insisted that the U.S. enact slow but evolutionary changes within the Soviet Bloc.²⁶ The U.S. also seemed to realize that at no time in the foreseeable future would the Soviet Union allow Hungary to leave the socialist camp, and that the U.S.’ goal should not be to start a rebellion, but to create and maintain a pro-western sentiment among the Hungarians.²⁷ Privately the U.S. was aware that it was not in the position to liberate nations from the Soviet Bloc or to provide these nations with significant support.

The lower levels of the bureaucracy applied specifics to Dulles’ and Eisenhower’s broad and ambiguous policies. Some policy-makers from the State Department and the USIA began to define their policies in accordance with the administration’s public policy while others conformed to policy that was made in private. Policy statements by both the USIA and the State Department were rife with variations that emerged as each bureaucrat inserted their own interpretation to governmental policies. Some bureaucrats, primarily from the International Broadcasting Service and the International Propaganda Service, believed that the VOA should proceed with restraint. They wanted scriptwriters to promote peace through peaceful change, working to reverse the injustices of the status quo.²⁸ This faction directed scriptwriters to limit their broadcasts to news and policy

²⁵ John Foster Dulles, “Speech 30 June 1955,” p.1, PBC 890.3 Press Releases, PBC 890 Basic Statements, Records Relating to Poland, the Baltic States and Czechoslovakia, compiled 1951 – 1960, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002, RG 59, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

²⁶ *FRUS*, 1955-1957, 25: 107.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 90.

statements, omitting commentaries and other superfluous material. They encouraged scriptwriters to be truthful, straightforward, and factual while at the same time avoiding strident and inflammatory content.²⁹ Other bureaucrats, primarily from the USIA and the office of Eastern European Affairs in the State Department, believed that scriptwriters should do anything in their power to bring Eastern European states into the capitalist and democratic bloc.³⁰ As lower level bureaucrats placed their own spin on governmental policy they began to define the intricacies of broadcasting policy to Eastern Europe.

Upon examination of radio broadcasting policy it is clear that the more aggressive interpretation won. The large majority of the two agencies thought that acting with restraint would render radio broadcasting innocuous, making it ineffective and limiting any changes that it could invoke.³¹ The majority of the more aggressive group did not want to see VOA rendered impotent however, they were concerned about the dangers of psychological warfare. They argued that VOA broadcasts should be designed to evoke moral and passive resistance that would slowly chip away at the communist system and its leadership. They hoped this resistance would create insecurity in the Kremlin without proceeding too aggressively and risking war.³² Bureaucrats believed that broadcasts

²⁸ "Global Theme III, Convince Peoples Abroad that the U.S. Stands and Works for Peace, 3 January 1956," p.4, Subject Files, Compiled 1956-1962, documenting the period 1946-1962, Policy Plans and Guidance Staff 1960-1965, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002, RG 59, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

²⁹ Jean Jerolaman, "Memorandum for the President from Jean Jerolaman, Subject: Voice of America Broadcasts to Hungary, 19 November 1956," p. 2, Review of Hungarian VOA Scripts, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 - 1962, General Records of the Department of State, 1763 - 2002, RG 59, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

³⁰ William A. Crawford, "Memorandum, 6 February 1956," p.1, PBC 890.2 Policy, PBC 890 Basic Statements, Records Relating to Poland, the Baltic States and Czechoslovakia, compiled 1951 - 1960, General Records of the Department of State, 1763 - 2002, RG 59, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

³¹ "1956 Report on the Third Annual Conference on Broadcasting to the Soviet Orbit," p.7, Special Reports, compiled 1953 - 1983, Records of the USIA, 1900 - 2003, RG 306, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

should stimulate pressure from below, while not eliciting a military response.³³ While the majority of administrators suggested this type of strategy, policy-makers were not aware of the Hungarian situation and often pursued policies incongruent with their vision. Peter Zenkl, a Czechoslovakian exile, member of the Office of Eastern European Affairs, and chairman of the Council of Free Czechoslovakia asserted, “In its’ foreign policy and psychological strategy the west should be bold, even if this seemingly invokes the risk of war. We cannot know enough to know if our decisions will spark war.”³⁴ U.S. bureaucrats were prepared to lead the Hungarian people blindly, even at the risk of war. The U.S. was certainly not trying to instigate a rebellion that would cost many Hungarians their lives, but they did not have enough information about the Hungarian situation to know when to temper their broadcasts.

Contradictions that emerged in U.S. policy were compounded by divisions and hostilities that emerged among governmental departments. It is clear that animosities, even at times unprofessional malevolence, emerged between the International Propaganda Service (IPS), the International Broadcasting Service (IBS) branch of the State Department, and VOA scriptwriters. The IPS and IBS excoriated the VOA for deviating from government policy in their broadcasts and for placing U.S. foreign relations in an extremely volatile position. In a review of the January 27, 1956 Paul Ford commentary regarding rapprochement between the Soviets and the U.S., Jean Jerolaman, a reviewer, criticized the column for being overly optimistic and deviating from

³²William A. Crawford, “Memorandum, 6 February 1956,” p.2, PBC 890.2 Policy, PBC 890 Basic Statements, Records Relating to Poland, the Baltic States and Czechoslovakia, compiled 1951 – 1960, General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

³³ Robert Bauer, “Report on Emergency operations of European Division VOA,” p.2, Reports and Studies, compiled 1953 - 1998, documenting the period 1944 – 1998, Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002, RG 306. National Archives II, College Park, MD.

³⁴ Peter Zenkl, “The Liberation of Eastern Europe by Means Short of War, 18 March 1953,” p.10, 890.1 Basic Studies, PBC 890 Basic Statements, Records Relating to Poland, the Baltic States and Czechoslovakia, compiled 1951 – 1960, General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 306, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

government policy.³⁵ Jerolaman castigated Ford, commenting, “This is the usual black and white propaganda approach, which is belligerent in tones and makes people suspect our basically peaceful motives. I suspect that it does not accurately reflect our international posture, certainly not the Eisenhower letter to Bulganin, and hence is counter U.S. Policy.”³⁶ The IBS again found incongruence with government policy in Ford’s Atoms for Peace broadcast, leading her to label Ford no more than a news beat and to threaten Andrew Berding, the head of the USIA. She emphasized that if the VOA did not get their facts straight and cease making false statements that were inconsistent with government policy, the IPS board might have to begin monitoring their broadcasts.³⁷

Despite this ultimatum, broadcasts continued to deviate from U.S. policy and infuriate members of the IPS and IBS review boards. On June 4, 1956 the IBS criticized VOA scriptwriters for commentaries made regarding the Bulganin-Khrushchev talks in London. The IBS concluded that scriptwriters’ opinions were not needed in this instance. The IBS representative wrote, “I think it much more effective to let the excellent press comment on the subject and to make the point rather than the heavy hand of VOA analysis, which is so likely to spoil a good point by overdoing it.”³⁸ On June 20th the IPS again criticized a commentary, this time regarding the innocuous nature of the UN, calling it an unfortunate script that strayed from U.S. policy and that lessened the

³⁵ Jean Jerolaman, “memorandum from Jean Jerolaman to Andrew Berding, Subject Paul Ford Columns,” p.1, Comments to Berding on IPS Material 1956, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 – 1962, General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

³⁶ Ibid., 1.

³⁷ Burris, Phillip H, “Memorandum for Mr. Berding from Phillip H Burris, Subject: Ford Column, 30 April 1956,” p.1, Comments to Berding on IPS Material 1956, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 – 1962, General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

³⁸ Jean Jerolaman, “Memorandum for Berding, Subject: Comments IBS scripts, 4 June 1956,” p.1, IBS-General, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 – 1962, General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

effectiveness of the UN in the minds of many people. Jerolaman contended, “A commentator is on very dangerous ground when he tries to be an apologist for some aspect of U.S. foreign policy. When tempted, he should say nothing or stick to the official line.”³⁹

Intensifying this already strained relationship, the IPS and IBS had an unorganized and ineffective review policy. Although IPS and IBS reviewers often criticized VOA scriptwriters for writing scripts that were inconsistent with government policy, these criticisms had little effect. All IPS and IBS reviews of VOA scripts were performed after the broadcasts had already occurred.⁴⁰ This made the review process ineffective in limiting improper broadcasts, and allowed transmissions that the IPS and IBS review boards thought were harmful to be broadcast unabated. Another problem that emerged in the review process was that reviewers received only a small portion of broadcast scripts that were transmitted from the Munich broadcast station⁴¹, and according to most accounts from refugees, broadcasts from Munich were far more controversial than those from Washington.⁴² In the tense climate of the Cold War this was an extremely dangerous trend, as incendiary scripts could provoke foreign populations into futile and catastrophic rebellions. After the revolution, the USIA observed this difference in broadcasts from Munich and Washington. Dr. Wilbur Schramm, a psychological warfare specialist from Stanford University, was asked to examine diplomatic foreign radio broadcasts and concluded that while broadcasts from Washington were

³⁹ Jean Jerolaman, “Jerolaman to Berding, Subject: World Today Commentary, 20 July 1956,” p.2, Review of IBS, IPS, and IMS Materials, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 – 1962, General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

⁴⁰ This can be examined by looking at the date of the review along with the broadcast date of the commentary.

⁴¹ VOA had numerous broadcast stations. The two most prominent and the ones with the most output were in Munich and Washington. The Munich station allowed VOA to broadcast from multiple locales making it more difficult to jam broadcasts

⁴² Robert Murphy, “General Special Attachment from Mr. Robert Murphy to Allan Lightner Jr., 29 August 1956,” p.1, P to IOP-Comments on IPS Material 1957, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 – 1962, General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

sober in tone, “VOA broadcasts from Munich give the impression of leashed energy.”⁴³ The worthless review process proved to be extremely dangerous in the harsh Cold War climate, and allowed many broadcasts that would have been censored to be broadcast without any alterations.

Ineffective review procedures and departmental tensions were not the only problems VOA faced, they also had to cope with the fact that they had little knowledge of Hungarian social and political attitudes. Ignorance of Hungarian outlooks led to many misguided assumptions and policies. The most notable of which was that the U.S. perceived Hungarians as having a passive attitude and thus attempted to create broadcasts to make Hungarians more politically aggressive. However, in reality the Hungarians had a deep-seated political animosity toward the Soviet regime. This animosity existed underground, primarily in pods of resistance made up of intellectuals and workers. The most notable of these underground coteries of resistance was the Petoffi circle.⁴⁴ Therefore, U.S. propaganda was overly aggressive because in reality there was no need to attempt to build aggressive resistance among the Hungarian people. The U.S. pursued misguided policies because they were not aware of the situation in Hungary. The U.S. did not have many contacts in Hungary. The CIA had one operative, and the legation in Hungary seemed to be disconnected from the general population.⁴⁵ This may be best illustrated by the fact that the U.S. relied on information from vacationers to Hungary. Mr. Zorthian, a VOA scriptwriter, expressed this problem, professing that the VOA did not feel that scriptwriters had enough information on Hungarian attitudes toward the government and western radio in order to create informed broadcasts.⁴⁶

⁴³ Wilbur Schramm, “Report 1956,”p.1, Reports and Studies, Compiled 1953-1998, documenting the period documenting the period 1944-1998, Records of the USIA, 1900-2003, RG 306, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

⁴⁴ Litvan, *The Hungarian Revolution of 1956*, 41.

⁴⁵ Gati, *Failed Illusions*, 222.

⁴⁶ Wilbur Schramm, “Report 1956,”p.3, Reports and Studies, Compiled 1953-1998, documenting the period documenting the period 1944-1998, Records of the USIA, 1900-2003, RG 306, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

One universal theme in radio broadcasting policy was that broadcasters had to eliminate Hungarian passive attitudes toward reform and instill in them hope, optimism, and a more aggressive political attitude. Scriptwriters were encouraged to be sympathetic to the Hungarian cause while at the same time avoiding any comments that could deteriorate any existing revolutionary fervor in the hearts and minds of Hungarians.⁴⁷ Various propaganda methods were designed to create and carefully maintain the hope of freedom and the possibility of free, independent exercise. The U.S. illustrated that they would never accept Soviet domination of captive peoples and asserted that the Soviet regime would never survive the test of history. The VOA also emphasized that all Hungarian and Eastern European actions against Communism had to be glorified, which inherently made radio broadcasts more aggressive.⁴⁸ The government realized that change could not come from outside sources. The only way to achieve democratization in Hungary was to foster and preserve hope via propaganda broadcasts.⁴⁹ Therefore, VOA broadcasted that the U.S. was sympathetic to the plight of the Hungarians and other “captive peoples” in order to increase optimism and U.S. prestige in the minds of Hungarians.

In order to advance U.S. prestige in foreign nations, the State Department and the USIA chose to broadcast about the advancements and achievements of the U.S. Broadcasting policy stated that scriptwriters should instill a craving for democracy in the minds of Hungarians by educating captive peoples about democracy.⁵⁰ Scriptwriters were instructed to address the innate liberating

⁴⁷ Dr. Wilbur Schramm, “Briefing Paper Schramm Meeting, 1 August, 1956,” p. 25, Schramm Reports 1956, Reports and Studies, Compiled 1953-1988, documenting the period 1944-1998, Records of the U.S. Information Agency, 1900-2003, RG 306, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

⁴⁸ “1956 Report on the Third Annual Conference on Broadcasting to the Soviet Orbit,” p.230, Special Reports, compiled 1953 – 1983, Records of the USIA, 1900 – 2003, RG 306, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Peter Zenkl, “The Liberation of Eastern Europe by Means Short of War, 18 March 1953,” p.1,

nature of democracy, the successes and abundance of democratic life, and how democracy would change a person's life after its implementation. Democracy was to be portrayed as the only path Hungarians could pursue in order to attain their right to control their own political, social, and economic institutions.⁵¹ Another subject that was to be discussed in broadcasts was the unparalleled abundance that democracy created. U.S. officials wished to paint a vivid picture of the lavishness of life in the U.S. Scriptwriters wrote about economic, political, and social successes, and contrasted the successes and efficiencies of the U.S. with the failures and deficiencies of the Soviet Union.⁵² Commentators were also directed to write about the future of a democratic Hungary. Policy encouraged them to discuss the social, political, and cultural changes that would occur after the implementation of democracy. Commentators discussed the emergence of Hungarian institutions, such as schools and banks that would improve the Hungarian standard of living. They also claimed that democracy would "depauperize" Hungary. Particular importance was placed on the large quantity of consumer and luxury goods that existed in the U.S. and that would exist in Hungary after the democratization process.⁵³ These broadcasts were designed to encourage pro-Western and anti-Soviet feelings among the subjugated peoples of Hungary.

This process was usually achieved through broadcasts called *Americanas*, which discussed and often exaggerated the abundance and egalitarian nature of American life.⁵⁴ *Americana*

890.1 Basic Studies, PBC 890 Basic Statements, Records Relating to Poland, the Baltic States and Czechoslovakia, compiled 1951 – 1960, General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 306, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

⁵¹ "1956 Report on the Third Annual Conference on Broadcasting to the Soviet Orbit," p.20, Special Reports, compiled 1953 – 1983, Records of the USIA, 1900 – 2003, RG 306, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 230.

⁵³ Peter Zenkl, "The Liberation of Eastern Europe by Means Short of War, 18 March 1953," p.10, 890.1 Basic Studies, PBC 890 Basic Statements, Records Relating to Poland, the Baltic States and Czechoslovakia, compiled 1951 – 1960, General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 306, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

⁵⁴ *FRUS*, 1955-1957, 25: 61.

broadcasts covered an assortment of subjects such as the American election system, Chinatown, baseball pennant races, and jazz music. An example of this was broadcast on July 3, 1956 when VOA broadcast its July 4 special. In this commentary VOA chose to use the American Revolution to depict the greatness of democracy and to show a people striving for peace against a colonial authority.⁵⁵ It seems to the outside observer, that using the American Revolution, a very violent, draining, and extended war would be a dangerous archetype to establish if the U.S. was trying to provoke peaceful evolutionary change. One could even argue that it promoted and glorified revolutionary action as a solution to cope with an occupying and controlling power. The article ended with a quote by Patrick Henry that could hardly be interpreted as promoting evolutionary change, emphatically asserting, "Give me liberty or give me death."⁵⁶ Americana broadcasts became more popular throughout the 1950's because they were viewed as being less instigative than political commentaries. However, some would argue that people are generally more affected by standard of living arguments than they are by a country's position in political affairs. In this case, Americana broadcasts could have had a substantial role in intensifying attitudes of Hungarians who wanted to live more abundant lives.

A popular subsection of Americana broadcasts were broadcasts regarding American economic successes. On June 27, 1956 the U.S. broadcasted that its gross personal income was \$322,900 million.⁵⁷ It claimed that people were working more and were earning significantly more.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ CPSDTFB July Fourth Special, "The Impact of an Idea, 3 July 1956," pg. 1, IBS-General, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 - 1962, General Records of the Department of State, 1763 - 2002, RG 59, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁵⁷ Hungarians did not have a word for billion at the time so million was used in broadcasts

⁵⁸ Gilbert Grant, "Economic Developments Commentary 27 June 1956," p.1, IBS-General, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 - 1962, General Records of the Department of State, 1763 - 2002, RG 59, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

A similar broadcast was issued on October 2, 1956, covering the capitalist American democratic system. The script claimed that “the U.S. economic system has come the nearest to achieving a goal that communist propaganda frequently talks about, but that communist countries singularly fail to approach.”⁵⁹ The scriptwriter claimed that the American economic system was the most egalitarian economic system in the world. The broadcast averred that a greater number of Americans owned stocks and farms and that Americans’ income doubled every 20 years. The same article proposed that 72% of Americans had money in banks.⁶⁰ The article concluded that the capitalist system provided abundance, while at the same time assuring political liberty. Finally, the script ended by telling a story of a Russian immigrant to America who became head of the RCA after 39 years in America.⁶¹ U.S. broadcasts insinuated that the U.S. was a land where everything was perfect, no group lived in a desperate situation, everyone had a fair opportunity to advance in society, and most likely would.

Another common and important topic of Americana broadcasts was the foreign aid ventures and policies of the U.S. These broadcasts, both before the revolution and during it, could have influenced Hungarian opinions regarding whether they would receive aid. The U.S. often decided to broadcast to foreign nations about the multitudes of aid they were giving to other foreign nations. The U.S. emphatically asserted that it had allocated \$5,000 million of aid a year to assist other countries that were beginning to pursue democratic policies.⁶² This allowed the U.S. to bolster its

⁵⁹William A. Wade, “Economic Highlights, 2 October 1956,” p.1, IBS-General, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 – 1962, General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

⁶⁰ Ibid, 3.

⁶¹ Ibid, 4.

⁶² William A. Wade, “ECONOMIC SPECIAL #144 19 March 1956,” p.1, IBS-General, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 – 1962, General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

position in the ever-important third world. Politicians also encouraged broadcasts about other countries that were in a similar situation to Hungary and receiving aid so that Hungary could identify with that country. Politicians hoped that Hungary would gain hope and follow in that country's footsteps and become more democratic if Hungarians saw that they were receiving financial support from the U.S. Broadcasts also highlighted the fact that the U.S. would only give money to nations that had pursued liberal and democratic ideals.⁶³ Transmissions regarding U.S. aid policies most likely led many Hungarians to increase their demands during the Hungarian Revolution in the expectation that they would receive U.S. aid. These broadcasts might be the reason Nagy's policies became so radical, because he was attempting to do anything to obtain aid from the U.S. or the UN to resurrect his floundering regime.

These policies can be observed by examining U.S. broadcasts to Hungary. On March 19, 1956 William A. Wade wrote a broadcast regarding U.S. aid policies to Asia and the Middle East. The script stated that the U.S. would provide nations with aid in order to continue the quest for peace against the Soviet Union. This article documents that the U.S. was giving aid to Asian and Middle Eastern countries because the Soviet Union was encroaching upon their autonomy.⁶⁴ The broadcast professed that the U.S. would provide victims of Soviet aggression with military aid to defend their right of self-determination. The most dangerous message regarding U.S. aid to other countries was broadcast on October 17, 1956 from a script written by Ronald J. Dunleavy. This commentary discussed U.S. policy toward the Suez Crisis and was issued slightly before the revolution in Hungary began. The commentary emphasized that, "The U.S. would assist and give aid

⁶³ AFAC Overseas Understanding, 1956, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 - 1962, General Records of the Department of State, 1763 - 2002, RG 59, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

⁶⁴ William A. Wade, "ECONOMIC SPECIAL #144 19 March 1956," p.3, IBS-General, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 - 1962, General Records of the Department of State, 1763 - 2002, RG 59, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

to any victim of aggression.”⁶⁵ These broadcasts led Hungarians to believe that if they reacted against their communist oppressors, as these other nations had done, they too would receive U.S. aid. This issue was only compounded on October 23 when the revolution broke out and Hungarians, who were now victims of Soviet aggression, were left waiting for aid that would never materialize.

In order to make these broadcasts about the successes of American democracy more persuasive, they were paired with broadcasts that criticized and debased Soviet systems.⁶⁶ Scriptwriters were prompted to portray the Soviet Union as a colonial empire that dominated and controlled Hungary’s economic, political, social, and cultural institutions.⁶⁷ The Soviet Union was depicted as a culturally dominant regime because they censored literature that was detrimental to their regime, while also enforcing that Russian language be mandatory in Hungarian schools. Scriptwriters were also directed to discuss the Soviet Union’s economic dominance over its satellites.⁶⁸ Commentators were encouraged to discuss the Soviet Union’s deprivation of their satellites’ natural resources.⁶⁹ Policy stated that “efforts should be made to weaken and undermine the leadership which was appointed by, and was faithful to, Moscow, and to stimulate and facilitate pressure from below without embarrassing or compromising those elements in the party exerting

⁶⁵ “Memorandum for Mr. Berding, Subjects: Comments on IBS Scripts, Early Morning Commentary 880 17 October 1956,” p.1, IBS-General, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 – 1962, General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

⁶⁶ “Global Theme III, Convince Peoples Abroad that the U.S. Stands and Works for Peace, 3 January 1956,” p.1, Subject Files, Compiled 1956-1962, documenting the period 1946-1962, Policy Plans and Guidance Staff 1960-1965, General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002, RG 59, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Peter Zenkl, “The Liberation of Eastern Europe by Means Short of War, 18 March 1953,” p.11, 890.1 Basic Studies, PBC 890 Basic Statements, Records Relating to Poland, the Baltic States and Czechoslovakia, compiled 1951 – 1960, General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 306, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

⁶⁹ *FRUS*, 1955-1957, 25: 105.

such pressure.”⁷⁰ Politicians urged scriptwriters to be critical of the Soviet regime in order to instill a hatred of the domineering Soviet Union. These policies combined with policies designed to glorify the western world created a spark among the Hungarian population to throw off the yoke of their masters in order to achieve advancements in their standard of living and their material lives.

Broadcasts discussing Soviet failures or weaknesses were often utilized in an attempt to undermine communist influence. On April 11, 1956, a broadcast likened the Hungarian people to slaves. The broadcast recounted a report from the International Labor Organization that asserted that slavery still existed on a large scale in China and the Soviet Union. The document claimed that people living under the authority of communist governments were slaves.⁷¹ The broadcast contrasted this with a recent impressive upward swing in the American economy. On April 26, 1956 a similar broadcast was issued which condemned the feeble Soviet economic system. This broadcasts chastised the Soviet Union for placing restrictions on trade with the free world. It claimed that these restrictions were necessary in order to maintain the myth that the Soviet economic system was superior to the capitalist economic system.⁷² Broadcasts attacked the communist system in order to render it impotent in the minds of Hungarians, even going to the extent to compare communists to slave-owning overlords in an attempt to foster Hungarian political activity.

⁷⁰ Robert Bauer, “Report on Emergency operations of European Division VOA,” p.2, Reports and Studies, compiled 1953 - 1998, documenting the period 1944 – 1998, Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002, RG 306, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

⁷¹ “Labor and World News and Views 162, 11 April 1956,” pg. 1, IBS-General, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 – 1962, General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

⁷² “Economic Special 147, The Tricks of the Communist Trade, 26 April 1956,” pg. 1, IBS-General, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 – 1962, General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

Khrushchev's speech at the Twentieth Party Congress was another factor that was considered by policy-makers when defining radio broadcasting policy to the eastern bloc. Scriptwriters were directed to exploit the process of De-Stalinization in order to assess whether the Soviet Union was truly looking to democratize, or if De-Stalinization was simply propaganda used to improve the Soviet position in the third world.⁷³ The U.S. believed that the latter was far more likely, thus broadcasts became far more critical of the regime in an attempt to test whether it had any real intention of reforming.

This policy proved to be very dangerous, as Khrushchev pursued reformist policies and began to eliminate elements of the Stalinist Rakosi regime. However, the U.S. perceived Soviet changes as being inadequate, and thus broadcasts became more aggressive. The U.S. saw De-Stalinization as an opportunity to instigate changes by making the Soviet regime "put up or shut up."⁷⁴ This culminated in a series of aggressive broadcasts, which only intensified Hungarian animosity toward the regime, raising the potential for Hungarian revolutionary action.

U.S. misinterpretations of De-Stalinization can be observed in broadcasts discussing Hungarian political figures. On July 23, 1956 VOA issued a commentary that assailed Erno Gero for being a hard-line Stalinist, when in reality he was a reforming moderate. It was clear that the U.S. was growing impatient with moderate reforms and wished to push for much more. In this particular commentary written by Benjamin West, Rakosi's replacement, Gero, was castigated for being a Stalinist sympathizer.⁷⁵ West wrote:

⁷³ "Subject: Voice of America Hungarian Programming, Nov 54- Nov 56," p. 1, Reports and Studies, compiled 1953 - 1998, documenting the period 1944 - 1998, Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002, RG 306. National Archives II, College Park, MD.

⁷⁴ Dr. Wilbur Schramm, "Briefing Paper Schramm Meeting, 1 August, 1956," p. 41, Schramm Reports 1956, Reports and Studies, Compiled 1953-1988, documenting the period 1944-1998, Records of the U.S. Information Agency, 1900-2003, RG 306, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

Rakosi's replacement by Erno Gero, however, is hardly likely to draw widely enthusiastic applause from either Tito or the Hungarian people. For Gero, is himself, a hard-line communist and his reputation is that of a man who will follow the Soviet line without question. Like Rakosi, Gero was trained in Moscow. Like Rakosi, he had been Anti-Tito and Pro-Stalin. Thus, Rakosi's ouster appears at best a token gesture.⁷⁶

The commentary claims if Moscow had really wished to make a change they would have chosen Nagy. The U.S. wanted quick radical reforms in Hungary and urged the Hungarians off the path of slow evolutionary change and onto the path of quick and revolutionary reform.

In order to pursue quick reforms, the U.S. implemented an ultimately dangerous broadcasting strategy, attempting to appeal to Hungarian national sentiment in order to drive a wedge between the Soviet Union and Hungarians. Policy dictated that scriptwriters exploit national history, national heroes, native religion, and national literature.⁷⁷ Scriptwriters were encouraged to discuss elements of the nation's culture that set them apart from the Soviet Union in order to foster a zeal for independence and self-determination among the Hungarian people. Policy prompted scriptwriters to utilize certain historical events that occurred in the Hungarian past. These events were generally strategically selected to feature a Hungarian hero bravely fighting for the independence of his people against a foreign invading force.⁷⁸ For instance, broadcasts mentioned Lajos Kossuth and Sandor Petofi, two leaders of the Hungarian Revolution of 1848 and Casmir

⁷⁵ "EUR review of USIA Material 1956, Subject: Behind the Curtain Commentary, Benjamin E. West, 23 July 1956," p. 1, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 - 1962, General Records of the Department of State, 1763 - 2002, RG 59, National Archives II, College Park, MD .

⁷⁶ Ibid, 2.

⁷⁷ Jean Jerolaman, "Memorandum for Andrew Berding from Jean Jerolaman, 9 May 1955," pg. 1, Country Plans, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 - 1962, General Records of the Department of State, 1763 - 2002, RG 59, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 1.

Pulaski, a Hungarian commander and the father of the American Calvary.⁷⁹ Scriptwriters, likewise, were encouraged to utilize national literature, both past and present, to appeal to the idiosyncrasies of the Hungarian population. This strategy was often employed in Hungary because of the great Hungarian writers of the past as well the burgeoning Petofi circle.⁸⁰ Attention was also placed on the religion of “captive nations”. This was particularly important for Hungary because it had a very strong link with the Roman Catholic Church. Most Hungarians were very religious and scorned the Soviet Union for shutting down their churches. To exploit this, policy-makers encouraged scriptwriters to write religious programs to be broadcasted in Hungary. These broadcasts proved to be very popular.⁸¹ U.S. policy-makers encouraged scriptwriters to utilize nationalism as a method to foster revolutionary spirit in Hungary.⁸² However, the U.S.’ exploitation of revolutionary national figures and events glorified revolutionary violence, and without a doubt instilled a volatile revolutionary spirit in the hearts and minds of Hungarians waiting to erupt at any time to fight for national independence and self-determination as their forefathers had done.

Policy-makers did sense danger in broadcasting about national issues, however they solved this problem by broadcasting about events in nearby countries. Scriptwriters were dissuaded from writing about domestic political events except on certain occasions when the omission of the event would be unavoidable or weaken the credibility of the station. On occasions where covering internal events was inevitable, broadcasts were to be limited to confirmed news reports. Commentaries on

⁷⁹ Ibid., 1. Lajos Kossuth was the Governor-President of Hungary, who declared Hungarian independence and a freedom fighter in the Hungarian Revolution of 1848. Sandor Petofi is Hungary’s national poet. He wrote “Nemzetai Zal” which supposedly sparked the revolution in 1848 against the Austrians. Casmir Pulaski was a skilled Hungarian commander who led the Hungarian Confederates to many victories over the Russians to ensure Hungarian autonomy.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 1. The Petofi circle was a group of revolutionary anti-Soviet authors who wrote literature condemning the Soviet rule under the banner of Sandor Petofi, a Hungarian revolutionary and poet who sparked the Hungarian revolution of 1848 against the Austrians.

⁸¹ Ibid, 1.

⁸² Ibid, 1.

the events were strictly forbidden.⁸³ To replace broadcasts covering domestic events, policy dictated that scriptwriters cover events that happened in nearby countries.⁸⁴ Policy asserted that these broadcasts be utilized to create a sense of jealousy toward reforms achieved by other nations. For instance, Hungarians believed that they had a close connection to Poland, thus broadcasts about democratic changes taking place in Poland were broadcast into Hungary. This was done under the assumption that Polish achievements would stimulate an interest among Hungarians to enact similar democratic changes.⁸⁵ Broadcasting about other nations was embarked upon to create jealous and optimistic sentiment among nations, encouraging them to catch up to other nations that had ascended from similar plights.

The U.S. strategy of broadcasting about foreign events as opposed to native events proved to be dangerous as the situation escalated in Poland, and the U.S. continued to broadcast about situations that could lead to revolutionary interpretations and actions. On September 7, 1956, VOA broadcasted about the Pozan protests and the trial in Pozan. The Pozan protests occurred in June 1956, and featured 100,000 Polish demonstrators demanding better working conditions. VOA asserted that in order to put down the demonstrations, the communist police killed 53 people and injured hundreds. The broadcast documented both the protests and the trial of Polish protestors. The broadcast claimed that these events had elicited a thaw in Poland. There was improvement in the freedom of expression for journalists and the legislature was granted more power and influence.⁸⁶ The broadcasts glorified the actions of the demonstrators insinuating that they pursued

⁸³ "1956 Report on the Third Annual Conference on Broadcasting to the Soviet Orbit," p.245, Special Reports, compiled 1953 – 1983, Records of the USIA, 1900 – 2003, RG 306, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ronald Dunlavey, "Early Morning Commentary 852, On Trial in Pozan, 7 September 1956," p.1, IBS-General, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 – 1962, General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

the only possible ways to elicit change. Dunleavy wrote, “There is little doubt that the regime has made such admissions and concessions only because it has had no alternative, the workers’ rising brought these injustices out into the glaring light of day, and they could not be ignored.”⁸⁷ The broadcast regarding Pozan dangerously established the demonstrations in Poland as an archetype of how to elicit democratic change within the Eastern Bloc.

Although VOA claimed that it did not broadcast about internal events, it did issue a very inflammatory commentary on October 24, 1956 regarding the Hungarian situation. This broadcast termed the Hungarian events a ‘revolution’ when the VOA had never previously called any event occurring in the tensions of the Cold War a revolution. In their review of this script, the IPS criticized McCardle for calling the Hungarian demonstrations a revolution, when the East German Uprising in 1953 and the Pozan Uprising in June 1956 were not termed revolutions. Instead they were called armed provocations, riots, or demonstrations.⁸⁸ This instilled passions and expectations among the Hungarian people regarding the eventual outcomes of the events. The broadcast also criticized Nagy for attempting to maintain some sort of order in Hungary after the events, because the U.S., or at least this VOA scriptwriter, wanted the events to escalate. The broadcaster criticized Nagy for being a communist collaborator, asserting, “It is questionable whether Nagy’s regime will satisfy the masses who are straining away from Soviet style communism. For virtually in his first official act - calling – in Soviet troops - Nagy has evoked aid from the very Soviet system from which he has earlier said Hungary must seek greater independence.”⁸⁹ In reality Nagy did not call in troops, he simply told Hungarians to obey the troops that Gero had requested. Nagy wanted to see

⁸⁷ Ibid., 1.

⁸⁸ Carl W. McCardle, “World Today Show Commentary, 24 October 1956,” p.1, Comments to Berding on IPS Material 1956, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 – 1962, General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

⁸⁹ Ibid.,1.

the events concluded with as little bloodshed as possible and with the Hungarian population receiving as many gains as possible.⁹⁰ However, the U.S. believed that Nagy was aligning with the Soviets when in reality he was trying to maintain order and act in a way that most benefited his fellow countrymen.

After the revolution had been crushed, 200,000 Hungarians fled the country. Most of them immediately traveled to Austria and from there went to various countries. In Austria VOA, RFE, RL, and British Broadcasting Company (BBC) interviewed refugees in an effort to determine the success of radio broadcasting. All of the interviews were conducted on military bases before refugees had had any contact with western ways of life. However, even if all precautions were taken in obtaining unbiased information, refugee statements were not totally representative of the Hungarian population. Refugees were typically more politically active. They were also mainly males, who were willing to leave their families and their lives to escape communism.⁹¹ Another factor that could have led to biased results was that these refugees were planning on living in the west and may have tried to respond in a way that benefited the west hoping it would improve their lives there. To add to this, interviews were conducted at military bases and the presence of troops may have affected refugee responses. It is likely that refugee reports and the methods in which they were conducted could have easily made refugees respond in an untruthful matter that exonerated U.S. broadcasting. However, it is also possible that refugees responded in a manner condemning western radio in order to have the west accept some responsibility for their role in the revolution in hopes that they would do all they could to better refugee lives. This being said, refugee reports provide the historian with the most objective account of the affects of radio broadcasting on the Hungarian people, due to their proximity to the event, and the scarcity of oral histories documenting the Hungarian Crisis.

⁹⁰ Litvan, *The Hungarian Revolution of 1956*, 71.

⁹¹ Audience Analysis Section Radio Free Europe "Hungary and the 1956 Uprising, March 1957" p. 10, <http://www.osaarchivum.org/digitalarchive/hover/index.html> (June 2010).

Although Hungarians expected to receive aid it seems that the majority of Hungarians maintained a positive disposition toward the U.S. and to foreign broadcasts. Refugee reports showed that 92% of Hungarians thought that western radio should continue broadcasting to Eastern Europe, and a majority thought that it should not amend its policies.⁹² Hungarians did not want to see western radio rendered innocuous. They believed that there was a need for a force to respond to communist propaganda. Refugee reports show that 1 out of 200 Hungarians believed that the revolution was not worthwhile, while 84% thought that the revolution did not go too far.⁹³ A Hungarian respondent commented regarding VOA, “The programs were critical; that’s why we liked them. It was firm but truthful. Truth is sometimes unpleasant, but it must be told.”⁹⁴ Hungarians generally found western radio to be more truthful than regime radio and wanted it to be maintained so they had a source from which to obtain more factual news.

However, not all Hungarians approved of what VOA broadcasted. Refugee reports also illustrated that 42% of Hungarians found VOA broadcasts untruthful, 35% believed it was too aggressive, and 21% believed that it was not objective.⁹⁵ Hungarians often issued negative comments regarding VOA, claiming that the only reason for VOA’s existence was to utilize any methods to discredit the Soviet government in the eyes of the people. One refugee claimed that the Hungarian people did not believe VOA broadcasts, they saw them as mere propaganda. Another respondent commented, “VOA was dead wrong on the Hungarian events. I listened to both VOA and BBC during the Hungarian uprising. I definitely felt that the VOA was too excited.”⁹⁶ People believed

⁹² Ibid., 14.

⁹³ Ibid., 18.

⁹⁴ “Soviet Reactions to Voice of America,” p.7, S 13, Special Reports, compiled 1953 – 1983, Records of the USIA, 1900 – 2003, RG 306, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 25.

that the U.S. had a tendency to exaggerate in its broadcasts in order to make most of its points. Hungarians believed that the U.S. embellished facts in their broadcasts because they thought that the Hungarians could not grasp the thesis from normal news broadcasts, unless the point was made explicitly several times. Hungarians criticized broadcasts for overly exaggerating in order to shove a point down their throats. One respondent claimed that listening to VOA was like listening to a radio shouting at you like you were an ignorant child.⁹⁷

Refugee reports show that the large majority of Hungarians were misled by the U.S. government into believing that they would receive aid. The RFE even conceded this, privately, stating that the only reasonable explanation why Hungarians pursued an armed uprising amidst such insurmountable odds was that they expected U.S. aid. “How such a belief could have taken route so strongly and universally is explained at least partly by references to the context of western broadcasts beamed at Hungary in the past.”⁹⁸ Polls taken by RFE illustrated that half of the respondents believed that American broadcasts had given the impression that the U.S. was willing to fight to save Hungary, and less than one-third denied it. Reports concluded that 87% of Hungarians expected aid with 55% of that group expecting military aid.⁹⁹ One thing that is clear is that Hungarians felt western radio had some role in insinuating that the U.S. would provide them with support.

After the revolution, the USIA and VOA claimed that Hungarian broadcasts were factual, objective, and that care was taken to omit material that may have incited the Hungarian population. However, the USIA and VOA still decided to alter their broadcasting policies because they had now

⁹⁶ Ibid., 38.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 53.

⁹⁸ Audience Analysis Section Radio Free Europe “Hungary and the 1956 Uprising, March 1957” p. 6, <http://www.osaarchivum.org/digitalarchive/hover/index.html> (June 2010).

⁹⁹ “Soviet Reactions to Voice of America,” p.7, S 13, Special Reports, compiled 1953 – 1983, Records of the USIA, 1900 – 2003, RG 306, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

Europe were apparent, it was imperative that scriptwriters be more cautious. He concluded that there could no longer be any lenience in broadcasting to Eastern Europe. Revolutionary broadcasts were no longer an acceptable alternative to evolutionary change.¹⁰⁵

After the revolution, the USIA and the State Department agreed to institutionalize a more efficient and effective script review procedure. Reviews of scripts were to be completed a week before the proposed date of broadcast by the IPS service in the State Department. In addition, to become a broadcaster one had to go through a two-year training program.¹⁰⁶ This program encompassed an intense study in governmental policy, as well as in broadcasting, and in the native language. Prior to the revolution broadcasters were mainly émigrés.¹⁰⁷ VOA believed that these émigrés may have deviated from scripts in order to broadcast more aggressive and accusative material. This situation was to be remedied by establishing training for broadcasters, as well as by hiring on-site reviewers to listen to foreign broadcasts as they went on air. Changes in radio policy and review policies after the revolution reflect that the U.S. was at least concerned that something had gone amiss, rather they thought blame lay with the policy, the script writers, or the broadcasters.

VOA broadcasting had a consequential role in the Hungarian Revolution as broadcasts undoubtedly intensified Hungarian opinions against their Soviet oppressors and insinuated that the U.S. would provide the Hungarians with aid. Upon examination of broadcasting policy and radio broadcasts, it becomes clear that these ill-advised broadcasts stemmed from ambiguous policies put forth by the Eisenhower administration. The administration encouraged scriptwriters to be aggressive publicly, while privately scriptwriters were implored to proceed with restraint. This

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 10.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 11.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 15.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 15.

ambiguous policy was compounded by the fact that the U.S. government had an ineffective review procedure, which ultimately led to many aggressive transmissions that should have been censored. This unorganized system was a direct component of a fledgling propaganda organization that was recently escalated due to Eisenhower's policy of Liberation of Captive Nations in order to free the peoples of the Eastern Bloc. Broadcasts were also intensified because the U.S. was ignorant of the Hungarian social and political climate. However, despite being relatively unknowledgeable regarding the Hungarian situation the U.S still felt justified in broadcasting to Hungary, without knowing what the outcome of their broadcasts would be. The U.S. was unconcerned with how their propaganda would affect the native peoples, and ultimately led the Hungarians into a revolution where they expected aid that would never materialize. Unfortunately, this practice was common in the Cold War as the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. often ignored, misled, and took advantage of third world nations, in their attempts to undermine their Cold War rivals.

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In his monograph Cummings, a retired director of the RFE, argues that the RFE did not step outside its bounds in broadcasting to the Eastern Europe or any other region. They simply fulfilled the role that was prescribed to them by the U.S. government.

Gati, Charles. *Failed Illusions: Moscow, Washington, Budapest, and the 1956 Hungarian Revolt*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006.

This book recounts the events of the events of the Hungarian Revolution, and offers an interesting perspective because Gati was present during the event. Gati explores the heroism of the revolutionary figures and condemns the Soviet's ruthless military actions. He specifically chronicles the evolution of Imre Nagy's policies. Gati is also very critical of the American response to the event, citing the CIA's lack of interest in Hungary as well as the fact that Eisenhower never intended to react. The roll back policy was just for intimidation.

Granville, Johanna C. "Caught With Jam on Our Fingers: Radio Free Europe and the Hungarian Revolution of 1956," *Diplomatic History* 29, no 5. (2005): 811-839.

Granville documents the charges brought against the RFE by an investigation that followed the revolution and determines that broadcasts support the findings of the panel that found RFE at blame. She concludes that psychological warfare broadcasting in the Cold War placed the United States in a dangerous position since it had limited knowledge of contact with the people it was broadcasting to.

Granville, Johanna C. *The First Domino: International Decision Making During the Hungarian Crisis of 1956*. College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2004.

Granville in her monograph explores the international policies of five countries; Hungary, the Soviet Union, Poland, Yugoslavia, and the United States. She states that both the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. were ignorant of the political and social climate in Hungary. Granville argues that this led to many irresponsible policies by the Soviet Union and the U.S. She also criticizes the United States for false broadcasts over Radio Free Europe promising the Hungarians aid.

Johnson, A Ross. "Setting the Record Straight: Radio Free Europe and the 1956 Hungarian Revolution," History and Public Policy Program Occasional Paper #3, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. October 2006.

In this working paper Ross, a retired RFE director, attempts to defend the RFE against its many detractors, who have asserted that the RFE instigated the revolution and suggested that it would support Hungarians. He also defends RFE against claims accusing RFE broadcasts of convincing the Soviets to crush the revolution. He ultimately concludes that while some RFE broadcasts

overstepped certain bounds, that these broadcasts were not the norm and were not a significant factor in fomenting the Hungarian rebellion.

Johnson, Ross A. ed. and Prata, Eugene R. ed. *Cold War Broadcasting: Impact on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe: A Collection of Studies and Documents*. Budapest, Hungary: Central European Press, 2010.

In this work Johnson defends the broadcasting policies of RFE claiming that their broadcasts adhered to U.S. policies and played an insignificant role in both encouraging the Hungarian Revolution and in creating the Hungarian assumption that they would receive aid.

Litvan, Gyorgy, ed. *The Hungarian Revolution of 1956: Reform, Revolt, and Repression, 1953-1963*. New York: Longman, 1996.

Litvan's account addresses that the revolution was not counterrevolutionary, and that it was a popular revolution. It challenges the beliefs that were proposed by Soviet propaganda and were accepted in most of the world. The book also discusses Soviet actions in the revolution, with particular interest on the reasons that they intervened. This is a useful account because it interprets American policy towards the event. It also is useful because it attempts to explain Soviet decision-making.

Puddington, Arch. *Broadcasting Freedom: The Cold War Triumph of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2000.

This is a document by Arch Puddington, a retired deputy director of RFE and RL. In this document he chronicles Radio Liberty's and Radio Free Europe's successes broadcasting to the Eastern Bloc. Puddington concludes that RFE was extremely successful in their attempts to broadcast, and that accusations made against RFE were unfounded.

Rawnsley, Gary D. *Radio Diplomacy and Propaganda: The BBC and VOA in International Politics, 1956-1964*. New York: McMillan Press, 1996.

Rawnsley's work examines VOA's and BBC's role in various Cold War disturbances. He concludes that the VOA was an organization intended to send propaganda to Eastern Europe. He also concludes that the VOA did not deviate from government policy however, he asserts that government policy put forth by Eisenhower was dangerous and crusading and could have encouraged Hungarian actions.

Primary Sources:

"1956 Report on the Third Annual Conference on Broadcasting to the Soviet Orbit." Special Reports, compiled 1953 – 1983. Records of the USIA, 1900 – 2003, RG 306. National Archives II, College Park, MD.

The Third Conference occurred slightly after the Hungarian Revolution. The conference addressed many of the issues that arose from the revolution. Dr. Schramm, a Psychologist specializing in analysis of Psychological warfare concluded that the VOA was deserving of no blame for the event in Hungary. The conference also discussed many strategies to make sure that a Hungarian situation

did not occur again in the future. Schramm argued that all radio broadcasting stations must become more vigilant about what types of interpretations could be derived from their broadcasts.

AFAC Overseas Understanding, 1956. Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 – 1962. General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59. National Archives II, College Park, MD.

The document on overseas understanding is a document that addresses that U.S. aid is not given out without strings attached. The United States is trying to eliminate the belief that they provide every nation with aid because they have so much money. However, in this document the United States clears this belief by emphatically stating that U.S. aid is aid with strings attached.

Audience Analysis Section Radio Free Europe “Hungary and the 1956 Uprising, March 1957” p. 14, <http://www.osaarchivum.org/digitalarchive/hover/index.html> (June 2010).

This document is an analysis of radio communication in Hungary. All the information in this document comes from interpretations of Hungarian refugee polls that the RFE took in Austria. The document asserts that radio broadcasting did encourage Hungarians to believe that the U.S. would provide them with aid to fight against the oppressive Soviets.

Bauer, Robert. “Report on Emergency operations of European Division VOA.” Reports and Studies, compiled 1953 - 1998, documenting the period 1944 – 1998. Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002, RG 306. National Archives II, College Park, MD.

This document argued that the United States needed to do whatever it could to place pressure on the Communist leadership of Eastern European countries especially with the recent development of De-Stalinization. Bauer also discussed many other ideas that later became interwoven into U.S. broadcasting policy. He asserted that countries should utilize other nations' achievement to create a jealous atmosphere in nations where they were seeking change.

Burris, Phillip H. “Memorandum for Mr. Berding from Phillip H Burris, Subject: Ford Column, 30 April 1956.” p.1, Comments to Berding on IPS Material 1956, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 – 1962. General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59. National Archives II, College Park, MD.

In this memorandum, the IPS service is very critical of Paul Ford for his policies that deviated from government policy. In this instance Burris even threatens to have IPS review all commentaries coming out of the VOA. IN this document the particular commentary that frustrates the IPS service regards the United States atoms for Peace program.

Crawford, William A. “Memorandum, 6 February 1956.” PBC 890.2 Policy. PBC 890 Basic Statements. Records Relating to Poland, the Baltic States and Czechoslovakia, compiled 1951 – 1960. General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59. National Archives II, College Park, MD.

In this document Crawford asserts that the United States should do everything in its power to foster and cultivate hope in Hungary. He also states that the United States should attempt to raise its

prestige their because in doing so he believes that it will make the Hungarians more active and more willing to pursue moral resistance from Communism. He thinks that the best way for the U.S. to raise its prestige in Hungary is to show a genuine concern for the welfare of the Hungarian people.

“CPSD/TFB July Fourth Special, The Impact of an Idea, 3 July 1956,” pg. 1, IBS-General, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 – 1962, General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

The July fourth commentary is one of the more inflammatory commentaries that the VOA released. This commentary glorifies the violence of the American Revolution, particularly focusing on Patrick Henry’s famous quote, “Give me liberty or give me death.” The commentary also discusses freedom comparing it to breathing arguing that it is something people do not notice unless they are deprived of it.

“Determining the Impact of Radio Broadcasting to the Soviet Orbit.” S-16-57. Special Reports, compiled 1953 – 1983. Records of the USIA, 1900 – 2003, RG 306, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

This document discusses many of the methods that the United States utilized to determine what kind of affect U.S. broadcasting was having on Eastern European countries. The document is useful because it shows the lack of knowledge that the U.S. had regarding the situation in Eastern Europe.

Division of Radio Program Evaluation, Department of State. “Media of communication and the free world as seen by Hungarian refugees,”
<http://www.osaarchivum.org/digitalarchive/hover/index.html> (June 2010)

This document is an analysis of radio communication in Hungary. All the information in this document comes from interpretations of Hungarian refugee polls that the RFE took in Austria. The document argues that radio broadcasting was very successful and that Hungarians did not regret the revolution. However, it also asserts that most Hungarians did believe that the U.S. would come to their aid, and that they were somewhat disillusioned when the United States did not intervene.

Dulles, John Foster. “Speech 30 June 1955.” PBC 890.3 Press Releases. PBC 890 Basic Statements. Records Relating to Poland, the Baltic States and Czechoslovakia, compiled 1951 – 1960. General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002, RG 59. National Archives II, College Park, MD.

Dulles speech, delivered shortly after Eisenhower’s give the reader a better view of the Eisenhower governments policy. Dulles clarified Eisenhower’s speech by explicitly stating that the United States was not willing to liberate every nation, in the risk of sparking a war or condemning those people to genocide. Dulles speech as well as Eisenhower’s provided the political framework in which foreign policy to the Eastern Bloc would be defined.

“Economic Special 147, The Tricks of the Communist Trade, 26 April 1956” pg. 1, IBS-General, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 – 1962,

General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

This document asserts that the Soviets are only pursuing certain reforms as propaganda measures in order to make it appear to the common observer that De-Stalinization is really taking place in the Soviet Union. However this article asserts that although the Soviets may not be as openly repressive, they have created furtive organizations that enforce Soviet oppressive underground.

Eisenhower, Dwight D. “Speech 30 June 1955.” PBC 890.3 Press Releases. PBC 890 Basic Statements. Records Relating to Poland, the Baltic States and Czechoslovakia, compiled 1951 – 1960. General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002, RG 59, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

This document contains a speech given by Eisenhower that many people believed defined the United States liberation Policy in the 1950’s. Many believed that this speech asserted that the United States would liberate any country that wanted to be free. However, Eisenhower asserted this was not the objective of this speech and that it did not insinuate that the U.S. would aid in the liberation of nations in the Eastern Bloc.

“EUR review of USIA Material 1956, Subject: Behind the Curtain Commentary, Benjamin E. West, 23 July 1956.” Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 – 1962. General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59. National Archives II, College Park, MD.

This particular view addresses an extremely dangerous commentary regarding the events in Pozan that was broadcast into Hungary. This broadcast proved to be dangerous for several reasons. The broadcast was hazardous because the broadcast it glorified violence as a method to attain democratic reforms. It even at one point asserted that the only way the Pole were going to garnish any changes from Moscow was if they rebelled.

Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1955-1957, Vol. XXV.

This document is composed of declassified, published foreign relations documents composed by the United States. The majority of the documents regard the United States policies toward certain events occurring in Eastern Europe between 1955 and 1957. The document discusses the situation in Hungary as the U.S. perceived it and ultimately is an excellent source of primary sources that have allowed me to gain a wealth of background knowledge for my more in depth study.

Grant, Gilbert. “Economic Developments Commentary 27 June 1956.” IBS-General, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 – 1962. General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59. National Archives II, College Park, MD.

This commentary is an examination of how several of the countries that the United States gave aid to are doing. With this article the United States is able to discuss how much aid it gave to certain nations and it could also hand pick which countries were succeeding to broadcast about. In this particular case they chose to address Korea and Lebanon.

“Global Theme III, Convince Peoples Abroad that the U.S. Stands and Works for Peace, 3 January 1956.” Subject Files, Compiled 1956-1962, documenting the period 1946-1962. Policy Plans and Guidance Staff 1960-1965. General Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002, RG 59. National Archives II, College Park, MD.

This document addresses Global theme three and how that theme should be weaved into foreign broadcasts in order to proliferate the United States’ position in Eastern Europe. Global theme three was that the United States through whatever means necessary had to convince captive peoples that it stood and worked for peace and peaceful change.

Jerolaman, Jean. “Memorandum for Andrew Berding from Jean Jerolaman, 9 May 1955.” Country Plans. Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 – 1962. General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59. National Archives II, College Park, MD.

This document asserted that nationalism was a proper topic that VOA broadcasters could utilize in order to instill hatred for the Communist regime in the minds of Hungarians. Nationalist heroes, writers, and religions were to be utilized in broadcasting as a method to instill national pride and revolutionary fervor.

Jerolaman, Jean. “Memorandum for the President from Jean Jerolaman, Subject: Voice of America Broadcasts to Hungary, 19 November 1956.” Review of Hungarian VOA Scripts. Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 – 1962. General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59. National Archives II, College Park, MD.

This is a memo from Jean Jerolaman to President Eisenhower, discussing whether VOA broadcasts during the revolution were dangerous, or could be interpreted as instigating the revolution or forcing the United States into a position in which they had to provide the Hungarians with aid. Jerolaman concluded with the help of Andor Klay that the broadcasts issued during the revolution adhered to party line.

Jerolaman, Jean. “Memorandum from Jean Jerolaman to Andrew Berding. Subject Paul Ford Columns.” Comments to Berding on IPS Material 1956, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 – 1962. General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59. National Archives II, College Park, MD.

This document is a memo written to Paul Ford’s supervisor Andrew Berding regarding flaws with Ford’s commentaries. Jerolaman points out many times in which Ford deviates from governmental policy, and even concludes by threatening Berding that if unacceptable commentaries do not cease that their broadcasts would have to be overseen directly by the State Department.

Jerolaman, Jean. “Memorandum for Berding, Subject: Comments IBS scripts, 4 June 1956.” IBS-General, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 – 1962. General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59. National Archives II, College Park, MD.

In this document Jean Jerolaman, the head reviewer for IPS is writing to Berding to discuss an improper commentary that was made by a VOA broadcaster. Jerolaman concludes that the VOA commentator distorted government policy, and implored Berding not to allow his commentators to act like news beats. She claims that speculation is left up to the press. The VOA's goal should be to reiterate government policy.

Jerolaman, Jean. "Jerolaman to Berding, Subject: World Today Commentary, 20 July 1956." Review of IBS, IPS, and IMS Materials, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 – 1962. General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59. National Archives II, College Park, MD.

In this document Jean Jerolman is very critical of a broadcasts which stems from the USIA. In this particular instance she is frustrated by a Paul Ford commentary regarding the UN. She does not approve of Paul Ford asserting that the UN is a powerless organization that takes no actions, and simply sits around discussing items all day.

"Labor and World News and Views 162, 11 April 1956." IBS-General, Subject Files, compiled 1956- 1962, documenting the period 1946 – 1962. General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59. National Archives II, College Park, MD.

In this document the VOA is examining the state of slavery in the world today. The VOA utilizes a report from the International Labor Organization to make the claim that slavery is still rampant in the Soviet Union and in China today. This goes along with the fact that the VOA often referred to Hungarians as the "enslaved peoples." In contrast to this the commentary also addresses the upswing in the American economy.

McCardle, Carl W. "World Today Show Commentary, 24 October 1956." Comments to Berding on IPS Material 1956. Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 – 1962. General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59. National Archives II, College Park, MD.

This is a broadcast that was broadcast to Hungary at the inception of the Hungarian rebellion despite the fact that the VOA claimed that during the rebellion it issued no commentaries about local events. In this particular commentary McCardle makes two dangerous claims. He calls the Hungarians events a revolution and he attacks Imre Nagy the mover of the free movement as being a Communist collaborator. One IPS reviewer even stated that there was a possibility that this broadcast could lead toward Soviet interpretations of the event.

"Memorandum for Mr. Berding, Subjects: Comments on IBS Scripts, Early Morning Commentary 880, 17 October 1956." IBS-General, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 – 1962. General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59. National Archives II, College Park, MD.

Although this commentary does not receive any formal criticism, it is definitely an aggressive broadcasts, which could have led many Hungarians to expect U.S. aid. This occurs because Dunleavy asserts that the United States would assist any victim of aggression.

Murphy, Robert. "General Special Attachment from Mr. Robert Murphy to Allan Lightner Jr., 29 August 1956." P to IOP-Comments on IPS Material 1957. Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 - 1962. General Records of the Department of State, 1763 - 2002, RG 59. National Archives II, College Park, MD.

In this document Robert Murphy is inquiring as to why the IPS does not receive all VOA broadcasts from Munich. Murphy is aware of the fact that Hungarian refugees often said that the Munich statement was much more vehement. This document represents one reason why the broadcast review policy was so inefficient and ineffective.

"Radio Moscow on VOA Behind the Iron Curtain." S 28, Special Reports, compiled 1953 - 1983. Records of the USIA, 1900 - 2003, RG 306, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

This document addresses Moscow's responses to VOA broadcasts. It addresses responses by Hungarian leaders as well as by Soviet publications. Since the document is written by an American it is also useful into gaining insight into the attitudes of American radio broadcasting. For instance it seems that the Americans believed Soviet backlash was a good thing because it meant they were instigating changes and pressuring the regime.

Schramm, Wilbur. "Report of Chairman on 4th Annual Conference on US Broadcasting to the Soviet Orbit." Schramm Report 1957. Reports and Studies, Compiled 1953-1998, documenting the period documenting the period 1944-1998. Records of the USIA, 1900-2003, RG 306, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

The fourth Annual Conference on broadcasting to the Soviet Union was led by Dr. Schramm a psychologist at Stanford University who specialized in analysis of Psychological warfare. This conference takes place in 1957. It is pertinent to this study because they discuss changes that have to be made after the failed revolution in Hungary, as well as the results of the refugee reports. This document also discusses how the United States managed to turn the Hungarian situation to its advantage through various broadcasts in the wake of the revolution.

Schramm, Wilbur, "Briefing Paper Schramm Meeting, 1 August, 1956." Schramm Reports 1956. Reports and Studies, Compiled 1953-1988, documenting the period 1944-1998. Records of the U.S. Information Agency, 1900-2003, RG 306. National Archives II, College Park, MD.

This paper is a account of the subjects and topics that would be covered at the third conference on broadcastiung to the Soviet orvbit. The document was issued to allow broadcasters to prepare for the conference so that they could have a productive, organized, and beneficial conference.

"Soviet Reactions to the VOA." Soviet Reactions to the VOA (84) 1957-1957. Special Reports, Compiled 1953-1983. Records of the U.S. Information Agency, 1900 - 2003, Record Group 306, National Archives II, College Park, MD.

Soviet Reactions to the VOA is a document derived from reports that the VOA conducted with Hungarian Refugees in Austria after the revolution to determine Hungarian opinions on VOA broadcasting to Hungary. The document is composed of many statistics that reveal Hungarian opinions toward the VOA as well as quotes both approving of VOA and slandering it.

“Subject: Voice of America Hungarian Programming, nov 54- nov 56.” Reports and Studies, compiled 1953 - 1998, documenting the period 1944 – 1998. Records of the Department of State, 1763-2002, RG 306. National Archives II, College Park, MD.

This document asserted that the United States had to take advantage of De-Stalinization. The U.S. needed to intensify their broadcasts to Hungary to test the Soviet regime to see if they were going to make any changes. The United States needed to test to see if reformist Soviet policies were sincere or simply propaganda.

Wade, William A. “Economic Highlights, 2 October 1956,” IBS-General, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 – 1962. General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59. National Archives II, College Park, MD.

This document is a prime example of an Americana broadcast. In the article Wade discusses that the United States has come the closest to achieving economic egalitarianism. Wade also discusses that 72% of Americans have money in the bank. Finally Wade concludes with a story of an East European becoming the head of RCA in only 39 years in America.

Wade, William A. “Economic Special #144 19 March 1956.” IBS-General, Subject Files, compiled 1956 - 1962, documenting the period 1946 – 1962. General Records of the Department of State, 1763 – 2002, RG 59. National Archives II, College Park, MD.

In this broadcast William A. Wade asserts that the United States had 5 billion dollars allocated to foreign aid. This was a very influential broadcast because no Hungarians could even fathom 5 billion dollars much less money that was going to be given away. Wade also discusses that U.S. aid was not given out without strings, the United States expected nations to strengthen their free institutions if the United States was going to provide them with aid.

Zenkl. Peter. “The Liberation of Eastern Europe by Means Short of War, 18 March 1953.” 890.1 Basic Studies. PBC 890 Basic Statements. Records Relating to Poland, the Baltic States and Czechoslovakia, compiled 1951 – 1960. General Records of the Department of State, 1763 –2002, RG 59. National Archives II, College Park, MD.

This is a rather inflammatory document issued by Peter Zenkl that argues that the United States must be bold in their foreign policy. He argued that the United States should accomplish this by any means necessary, short of war. Policies like these led to insinuating and dangerous broadcasts which put captive peoples in danger. Zenkl realized that we were uninformed about the situation Eastern Europe, and argued that the U.S should proceed boldly because there was no way that anyone could know enough to know whether U.S. broadcasts could instigate a Hungarian war. Since this was the case Zenkl preferred that the United States react boldly as opposed to rendering itself to a position of trivial impact.

