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Voice of America

U.S. INFORMATION AGENCY

The Voice of America in Questions and Answers

The Voice of America's sponsor is the American taxpayer. But because its broadcasts are beamed overseas, few Americans have an opportunity to find out just what the Voice is and does. Many, however, show a keen interest in the Voice by the questions they ask in letters and during studio visits. This brief report to the sponsor answers some of the queries most frequently heard.

Q. What is the Voice of America?

A. VOA is the Broadcasting Service of the U. S. Information Agency. With studios in New York City, Washington, D. C., and Munich, Germany, the Voice broadcasts to a world-wide audience over a network of about 75 transmitters, some of which are in distant locations (see back cover).

Q. What is the U. S. Information Agency?

A. Established by Presidential and Congressional action on August 1, 1953, the U. S. Information Agency is responsible for the Government's overseas information program. In addition to VOA, its activities include the operation of 155 information centers in 63 foreign countries, which conduct library and cultural relations programs; a Press Service, which supplies news and many kinds of graphic materials for distribution by overseas posts; and a Motion Picture Service which similarly distributes films. The Agency also conducts a program by which many private organizations in the United States contribute to the information program through their own activities.

Q. What does the Voice broadcast?

A. Chiefly news and news analyses and commentaries. In broadcasts to the Communist orbit—which account for three-quarters of VOA's output—the Voice also provides news and background on Soviet and satellite affairs which is not otherwise available to its listeners. By telling the people the truth, VOA strengthens resistance to oppression and enlists support of United States policies. In addition to coverage of international news, the Voice tells the American story by reporting on many different kinds of community, cultural, and religious activities and by interviews with Americans of every walk of life, as well as with visitors from abroad.

Q. Why does the Voice broadcast?

A. On October 28, 1953, President Eisenhower outlined the mission of VOA's parent organization, the U. S. Information Agency. The Agency's purpose, he said, is "to submit evidence to the peoples of other nations . . . that the objectives and policies of the United States are in harmony with and will advance their legitimate aspirations for freedom, progress, and peace." For, as the President emphasized in an earlier statement, "It is not enough for us to have sound policies. . . . These policies must be

made known to and understood by all peoples throughout the world." The Voice of America is one of the channels through which information about U. S. policies is made available to people everywhere.

Q. How many language services does the Voice operate?

A. VOA operates 34 language services. In addition to world-wide broadcasts in English, they are the following:

Europe: Albanian; Armenian; Bulgarian; Czech-Slovak; Estonian; French; Georgian; German to Austria; German to Germany; Hungarian; Italian; Latvian; Lithuanian; Polish; Rumanian; Russian; Serbo-Croat; Slovene; Spanish; Ukrainian.

Far East: Amoy; Burmese; Cantonese; Indonesian; Japanese; Korean; Mandarin; Thai; Vietnamese.

Near East and Africa: Arabic; Greek; Persian; Turkish.

Q. How are programs produced?

A. Since VOA's 34 language services are, in effect, 34 radio stations broadcasting to different audiences, VOA program production is both centralized and diversified. Three central departments—the news room, the commentary staff, and a unit specializing in interviews and on-the-spot coverage of news and cultural events—produce scripts and recordings for general use. This material is adapted and translated by the individual language services which also originate their own commentaries and other program material.

Q. How much does the Voice of America cost?

A. For its operations during the fiscal year beginning July, 1953, VOA cost the American people \$16.6 million, or about 10¢ each. This is but a fraction of the Soviet Union's yearly outlay for radio propaganda. In fact, it is estimated that the Kremlin spends as much jamming Voice broadcasts as VOA does on all its programs.

Q. How does VOA counteract Soviet jamming?

A. VOA engineers, aided by a distinguished panel of consultants, have waged a continuing campaign against jamming. The battery of transmitters which carries VOA's programs around the globe now includes three of the most powerful known broadcasting stations in the world (see back cover). The Voice also penetrates the jamming screen by repeating programs at frequent intervals and on many frequencies. Reports show that, in spite of approximately 1,000 Soviet jamming transmitters, VOA broadcasts are heard in the Soviet Union and the satellites.

Q. How do overseas listeners hear the Voice?

A. Many pick up short-wave broadcasts directly from VOA's stations in the U. S. Others hear them after they have been relayed on short-wave or standard-broadcast frequencies by VOA's stations abroad or by local networks in their own countries.

VOA

in action



Archbishop Michael of the Greek Orthodox Church speaks to both Greek listeners and co-religionists behind the Curtain.



In answer to hundreds of letters asking the question: "What are American schools like?" the Voice of America microphone visits a New York school room.



Miss Ki Soo Ho and two colleagues broadcast a dramatic program to Korea.

Photograph by Hans Knopf Reprinted by special permission of The Saturday Evening Post



Dr. Milton Eisenhower (right) reports to VOA listeners on his good-will mission to South America.



Billy Brown, Syracuse University student, represents American youth on a weekly "Pen Pal" broadcast.



Former Polish delegate to the UN, Dr. Marek Korowicz, speaks to the Polish people shortly after his defection. Said Korowicz: "There are only two moral sanctuaries for my people: the Church and the American broadcasts."

VOA combat correspondent, Robert Lasher, jumped with paratroops to cover the Korean war.



Two Greek boys watch and wonder as VOA's floating station, the *Courier*, sends its barrage balloon antenna aloft to relay broadcasts through the "electronic curtain" of Soviet jammers.

The Key Question: Who Listens?



A French VOA listener is interviewed on his program tastes.

Surveys: It is estimated that there are at least 100 million radios in the world outside North America, providing a potential audience of about 400 million listeners. Audience surveys in the West Zone of Germany and West Berlin place VOA's listeners there at about 11 million. In Austria, 650,000 of the total radio audience of 3 million hear the Voice at least once a week. The comparable figure for France is 3 million. Special broadcasts sometimes attract unusually large audiences. Japanese sources estimate, for example, that VOA's broadcast of the inaugural address of President Eisenhower was heard by approximately 25 million people in Japan.

Who Listens?



Mail from listeners averages about 500 letters a day.

Audience Mail: Like any radio station, the Voice counts on fan mail to show audience interest and program preferences. During 1953, for example, almost 170,000 listeners wrote the Voice. Some letters are critical; some appear to be Communist-inspired. But the overwhelming majority of those commenting on programs is favorable. At Christmas and other holidays, many listeners send cards to their favorite announcers. In addition to helping evaluate the effectiveness of VOA broadcasts, audience mail provides a wealth of material on listeners' interests which is used in preparing programs. "Mail-bag" programs, for example, are devoted to answering questions.



This cartoon from a Czechoslovak newspaper is typical of Communist attacks on the Voice.

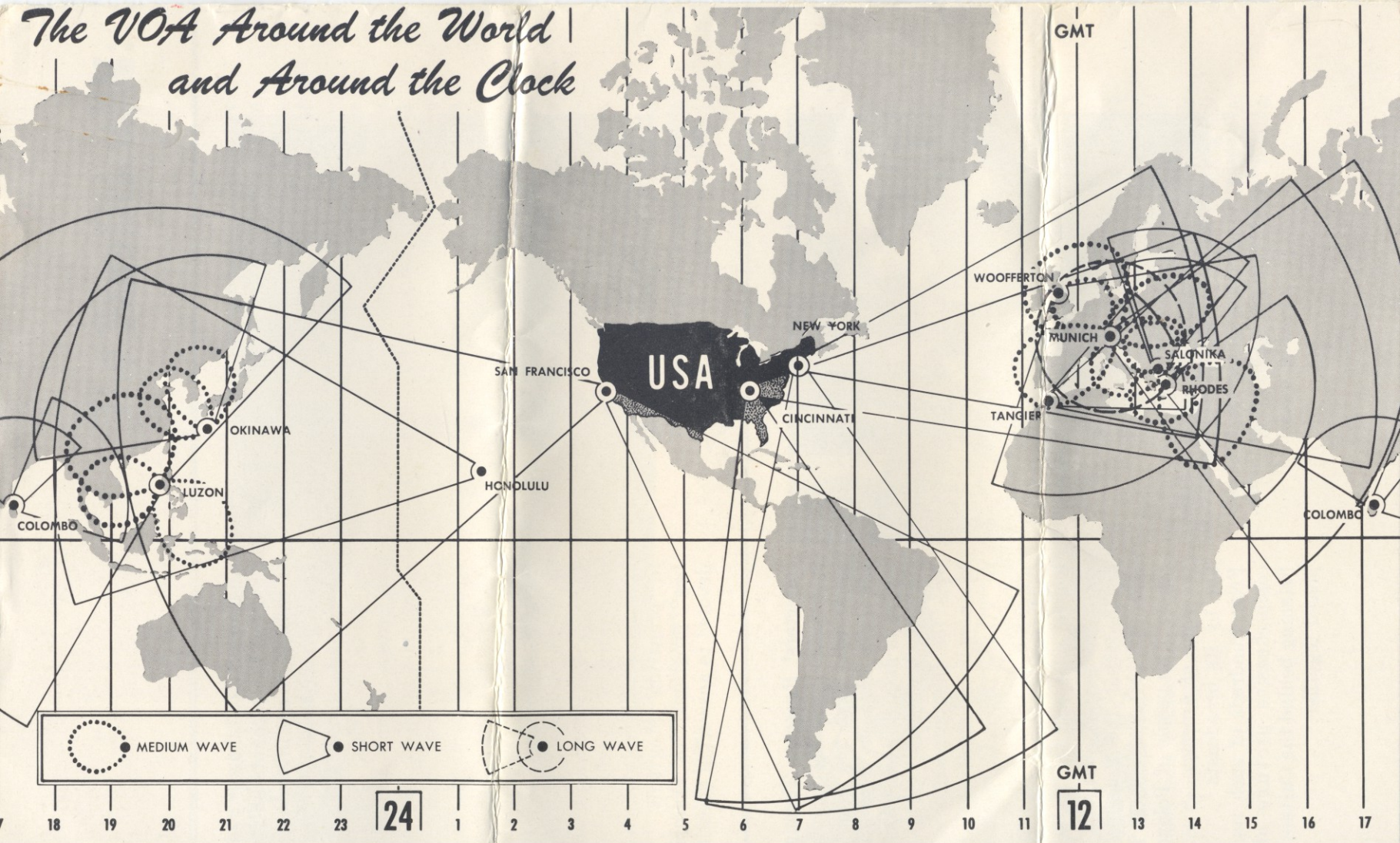
Press Attacks: Behind the Curtain, surveys are out of the question. But the Reds provide their own evidence that the Voice is getting through by assailing it in their press and radio. In 1953, the Communists attacked—and thereby unwillingly advertised—the Voice more than 500 times. A Chinese Communist professor declared that VOA broadcasts are "ten thousand times as destructive as the atom bomb because the bomb can damage only limited areas, while the Voice of America corrupts every person who listens to it." This barrage of attacks, coupled with the Soviets' gigantic jamming effort, leaves little doubt that VOA is getting through—and hitting where it hurts.



Refugees from communism provide invaluable information on radio listening behind the Curtain.

Defectors' Reports: Through the systematic interviewing of thousands who have fled communism, the Voice finds out that while listening is difficult, it is widespread. Refugee estimates vary around 80% for the proportion of radio listeners in the satellites who listen to VOA. Dramatic examples of defectors' reports were those of Lieutenant Franciszek Jarecki, Polish jet pilot, and Dr. Marek Korowicz, Polish UN delegate. Both testified that the Voice is heard throughout Poland. Said Lt. Jarecki: "The people of Poland trust the Voice of America . . . they live by its broadcasts" From hundreds of such reports, a comprehensive picture of VOA listening behind the Curtain can be pieced together.

The VOA Around the World and Around the Clock



About 75 Voice of America transmitters carry its programs to most of the globe. In the United States, 30 short-wave stations, ranging in power from 25,000 to 200,000 watts, are operated under contract to VOA by private broadcasting companies. Relay facilities are located in Woofferton, Munich, Salonika, Tangier, Colombo, Honolulu, Luzon Island in the Philippines, and Okinawa. VOA's million-watt transmitters on Luzon, Okinawa, and at Munich are the most powerful known broadcasting

stations in the world. In addition, re-broadcasts are made through arrangements with local broadcasters in France, Italy, Germany, Austria, Trieste, Greece, the Belgian Congo, Vietnam, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, Formosa, and Latin America. VOA's floating station, the U.S. Coast Guard cutter *Courier*, beams programs through the Iron Curtain and into the Middle East from its anchorage at the island of Rhodes in the Eastern Mediterranean. Vertical lines indicate time zones.

