

ANALYSIS OF C.B.S. NEWSLETTER BROADCASTS TO GERMANY, FRANCE,  
AND ENGLAND, COVERING A PERIOD FROM APRIL 30 to MAY 14, 1942.

Method: I listened to these broadcasts five days weekly for two weeks, without taking any notes. Thereafter, for the next two weeks, I listened and wrote down what appeared to be the essential points, making no effort to record a detailed summary. While listening, the focussing question was always, "What influence is the broadcaster trying to exert on his listening subjects, and how?"

The question of the effectiveness of the broadcast was left to later consideration. First, efforts were directed to the content represented by the summary notes. Put in another way, my question was, "What are these words presumably attempting to do?" In general, the objectives are different for the different countries. Judging by the samples for the period taken, the broadcasts for England are simple in construction from the point of view of psychological objectives. They are less simple for France. For Germany, however, the objectives appear complicated. This memorandum will concern itself chiefly with the broadcasts to Germany.

NEWSLETTERS TO GERMANY

The broadcasts to Germany seemed to have the following objectives:

- 1) To produce a low state of morale by creating states of profound dissatisfaction and depression, besides feelings of guilt and of anxiety;
- 2) To arouse dissension;
- 3) To incite to surrender, sabotage and revolution.

The data, by which is meant the separate content of the broadcast, were classified under three categories:

- 1) Influences designed to lower emotional tone;
- 2) Influences designed to raise emotional tone;
- 3) Influences to incite to action.

The broadcast of May 1 to Germany may be used as a simple illustration of the first category. It was pointed out that the Russian warfare with Germany destroyed the idea of the invincibility of the

German military machine. Stress was placed on the tremendous absorption of wealth by Goering. This point was elaborated. Added were instances of spoliation of Germany by Gauleiters. This phase of the broadcast led to the general characterization of the Nazi leadership as a system of exploitation of Germans, now reduced to the status of the serf. The weakening of the whole German structure and the ineffectiveness of the propaganda lies, now a repetition to the point of stupid monotony, was emphasized. The power of the United States as a continually increasing menace completed the topics of that date.

This broadcast said, in effect, "Germans, you are victimized by your leaders. You have been enslaved by the people you trusted. You were filled with illusions of their great power and ideals. Your military omnipotence is proven to be a fiction. You have been betrayed. You are enslaved. Your enemies are increasing in strength. Their superiority is inevitable." In classifying this broadcast, the items are checked under the following captions:

- 1) Destruction of faith;
- 2) Arousing general dissatisfaction;
- 3) Feelings of weakness;
- 4) Feelings of failure;
- 5) Feelings of hopelessness;
- 6) Feelings of humiliation; and
- 7) Feelings of fear.

Note all the data are classifiable under "lowered emotional tone." In this particular broadcast there is no direct incitement to activity. From a psychiatric point of view, it is an attempt to produce a depression. In that sense, it calls for an understanding of all those forces that tend to produce crippling emotional states which a psychiatrist ordinarily purposes to ameliorate. It is as though the psychiatrist were asked, "How can you create a depression instead of curing it?"

A broadcast in which the data have to do chiefly with raising the emotional tone was given on May 8. It contained a description of first hand observations of a trip through the munition works in Detroit. The broadcast particularly contrasted and elaborated the condition of the workers in this country and in Germany. It tried to show that the fight against Germany is a fight for the German working man. In essence, the broadcast said to the German listener, "See how much better off the working man in this country is than you are. What a pitiful state you are in! How different the American workman -- his big pay envelope, the short hours of work, his high standard of living, his recreation. But you can have all this too. We are not fighting you German workmen. We are fighting your enemies. Your enemies are your own government." The data are comprised under

the classification chiefly of raising emotional tone. A state of dissatisfaction is aroused; however, especially stressed are the feelings of hope and reward. The incitement to action is indirect.

On the positive side also, there are instances in which German ideals are aroused. For example, in the broadcast of May 8 in which the content deals with the history of the Chinese Republic, much is made of the freeing of the Chinese from a slave status. It states that only free men are real fighters. Ideals of freedom are evoked.

In the ten broadcasts, only a few instances of direct or easily inferred incitement to action were revealed. The one special instance was broadcast on May 13. In that broadcast the increasing devastation of Germany was stressed. Gas reprisals, increased bombings, etc., were threatened. Direct exhortations to revolt against the leaders were made. The broadcast said, in effect, "Germany, save yourself before it is too late."

Classification of the broadcasts, according to the method already described, may now be portrayed. To simplify the classification, and make it of practical value, only direct inferences in terms of meaning of the data were utilized. For example, the story about the visit to the factory in Detroit in which the status of the German and American workmen were contrasted, contains data which, it is assumed, would evoke in the listener feelings of dissatisfaction with his lot and an envy of the lot of the American workmen. Checked are feelings of dissatisfaction and certain positive influences on the emotional life -- mutuality of interests ("We American workmen want you German workmen to have the same conditions"), and reward ("This will be your reward if you can get rid of your leaders"). Of course, numerous other inferences are possible. These are not made for the purpose of classification. The classification answers the simple question, "What are the most obvious effects which the broadcast may evoke in the listener?"

A. Lowered emotional tone. Attempts to

- |                             |                  |
|-----------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Destroy faith in Hitler  | ///              |
| in Goering                  | /                |
| In Gauleiters               | /                |
| in Nazi Principles          | /                |
| 2. Create dissatisfaction   | <del>///</del> / |
| 3. Feelings of inadequacy   | ///              |
| 4. Feelings of failure      | <del>///</del> / |
| 5. Feelings of hopelessness | ///              |
| 6. Feelings of humiliation  | ///              |
| 7. Feelings of fear         | <del>///</del> / |
| 8. Feelings of guilt        | //               |
| 9. Feelings of conflict     | —                |
| 10. Feelings of hostility   | /                |

B. Raised emotional tone.

1. Mutuality of interest, background, etc.   /
2. Appeals to ideals   /
3. Rewards   /

C. Incitement to action.

1. Appeals to liberation from slave status   //
2. Appeals to destroy the leaders   /
3. Appeals to save Germany from destruction   /
4. Appeals to wreak vengeance upon the oppressors   /

Judging by the analysis of the ten broadcasts, it is clearly revealed that most important stress is placed on weakening the German faith in the Nazi leadership. This is understandable in view of the psychologic structure of the German state with its deification of Hitler and the implied complete surrender of the German mind to his omnipotence. Since the foundation of the state rests on such a belief, hence the attack on Hitler would appear to be the best strategy. The attack on other factors would from that point of view be less important. In the broadcasts reviewed, there was little attack on the Nazi principles. For example, no attack was made on the principle of blood purity, national superiority, German paganism. A check of the particular emotions evoked shows that aside from the attempt to destroy faith, efforts are made to produce a state of depression. The strategy behind the broadcasts may rest on the thesis that the German is prone to depression, that that is a special weakness in his personality. Feelings of failure, of weakness, of hopelessness, and of dissatisfaction comprise most of the items checked in the classification. Proneness to depression may be characteristic of the German personality. That has been emphasized by others. Of course it would be difficult to prove this. If it were true, it would be an important point in determining the propaganda employed. The fact that there was little direct incitement to anxiety or hostility would confirm the view that there is a belief on the part of the writer of the broadcast that there is a kind of national German mind. The broadcaster tries to shake the faith of the German in his "god," and prove to him that he is in a very sad state. He does not spend much time trying to arouse his sense of guilt, to produce hysterical states, and the like. When he tells him how he is victimized by the Gauleiters and others, the inference may be made that he ought to rise in wrath against them, though, as previously described, the incitement to direct action occurs in but one of the ten broadcasts.

Judging by the material presented, there is very little attempt to stir the German conscience, except by implication. For example, it may be assumed that the German conscience would be affected by the stories of brutalities in Poland. This is an interesting point in view of the fact that a significant factor in the morale of the British people is assumed to be due to their lack of guilt. The bombed people of Britain can rightly say, "We are not to blame for this. We tried every possible way to avoid it. In fact, we went quite too far in that direction," and the like. But the German conscience, however, is not clear, as proven by their consistent effort to prove they were not the aggressor nation, etc. Their own propaganda is designed to assuage feelings of guilt, hence such feelings are predominantly present.

Sources of guilt in the German personality were certainly not utilized in this series of broadcasts. They extended, of course, quite beyond the problem of the initiation of aggression. As sources of guilt, all the "evil" impulses were utilized. These have to do with all their persecutions. The sense of guilt is fostered also by the feelings of isolation. In fact, the sinfulness of the Germans has increased the feelings of decency of other people. In the same connection, the religious conflict as a source of guilt is particularly important. The clash of German Paganism against Christianity must represent a most fertile source of propaganda from this point of view. Around this conflict anti-Semitism is especially involved. The Nazi as a force of evil representing the Anti-Christ is the most graphic portrayal of this conflict of forces. No check was made after "feelings of conflict."

The primary German method of divide and conquer was not utilized in any of the ten broadcasts noted, and in only one of the previous series of ten, as far as I remember. In that appeal, the Austrians were depicted as much more like Americans than Germans, more democratic, genial, intolerant of regimentation, and the like. The trouble with the "dissension-creating" propaganda is that it is heard by both sides. Therefore, where it weakens in one place, it may strengthen in another. For example, the same working people who are told that if the United Nations win, their lot in life will be much better, hear at another time an appeal to the Austrians to break away from the brutal alien Germans. In the one broadcast the workmen hear a special plea to their interest. In the second, they are lumped together with all the Germans as enemies of the Austrians. It may be because such propaganda is so tricky that it was utilized so infrequently. There are sources of dissension, however, in Germany which could be attacked directly without this difficulty. Among others they include: 1) army vs. party, 2) people vs. government, and 3) older Germans vs. youth. They represent conflicting interests within the nation. They represent also conflicts within the personality.

*4. South & central Germany vs. Prussia*

As mentioned previously, little was done to arouse feelings of hostility. In the series of ten, only one was checked that way. Stress on feelings of humiliation may be considered a type of propaganda that by inference arouses such feelings, but since no allusion to revengeful behavior was made, they were not checked in the classification. Since all evidence of frustration may incite an aggressive response, direct implication of hostility may have been wisely left out, though I doubt it. An analysis of the broadcasts gives no evidence of careful plotting of its emotional effects on the personality. There were evidently a few central ideas for which the entire series represented an elaboration.

In regard to influences designed to inspire positive feelings on our behalf (raised emotional tone), there was little to record. What there was had to do with an appeal to German ideals, to the advantages gained by overthrowing the government, also to mutuality of interests of German and American workmen. There may be a valid argument for the paucity of data under "incitement to action." Since the psychologic propaganda represents in a sense a long period of preparation to that end, there is a question nevertheless whether "activity data" should not be made a more integral part of the programs. There is probably less reason for the scanty material under "raised emotional tone." Almost all the broadcasts attempt to give Germans a feeling of the weakening of their military and political state, and the inevitability of doom. They are given little comfort or feelings of friendship in case they lay down their arms.

In general, the propaganda is of the direct and partly concealed variety centralized by two main modes of attack: 1) to produce feelings of depression by demonstrating the weakness of every part of the German structure, and 2) to prove the inevitability of defeat because of the growing might and success of the United Nations.

To summarize, the propaganda that had been neglected or hardly utilized:

- 1) Arousing a sense of guilt
- 2) Arousing conflict
- 3) Arousing all the positive feelings on behalf of the United Nations
- 4) Incitement to action

Most serious, it seems to me, is the neglect of the conscience. The conflict of Paganism vs. Christianity must be a most difficult adjustment for the middle-aged and older German. Their abandonment of moral ideals could be utilized in a thousand ways. It should be mentioned, however, that this analysis applies to ten broadcasts. Others may have utilized the points enumerated. However, the first series of the broadcasts closely resembled the second. It is worth noting also that the devices used did not seem powerful. To put it in another way, the script writer seemed to be asking the question, "What are the best arguments to employ," rather than, "What feelings am I trying to arouse?" Certainly this analysis shows the importance of making an emotional chart for all the programs.

Technique: In attaining the objective of the broadcast, in nine of the ten a single speaker was used. In the tenth, there was a dialogue of the question and answer variety. In general, the matter-of-fact kind of argument was employed. There was no dramatization, little exhortation, practically no theatricalisms. The argument was fairly sustained; that is, one would have to listen to the entire fifteen minutes to get the full benefit of it. If one listened to just a part of it, the broadcast would sound more like the usual news broadcast. A question arises on this point, in view of the fact that the German listener is presumably risking his life when he tunes in. That fact should suggest a different construction of all broadcasts to Germany as compared, for example, with broadcasts to England. Whatever method is used, it should, therefore, be repetitious. In a fifteen minute broadcast the point should be apparent in any few minutes of it. The same suggestion holds for the news broadcasts to Germany.

On the whole, it seemed to me that the mental level of the listener would have to be of a fairly high order to understand the meaning and get the implication of this propaganda. Certainly it was not geared to the simple mind. Evidently those who prepared the script write for the level of a "New York Times" reader, whereas a tabloid level would enlarge the range of listeners. It may be that the fairly intelligent listener is considered the most potent influence, hence the need for such simplification does not arise. Unless the listener were decidedly interested and intelligent, I believe he would find the programs monotonous. The dialogue especially was deadly because of the lack of dramatic devices. In all the programs there was little to catch the ear, to arouse attention. The arguments were clear enough, well prepared and sustained. I would think, however, they were definitely intended for rather a superior audience. I would suggest greater variety, emotional appeal, repetition, and brevity.

#### NEWSLETTERS TO FRANCE

Other than the attack on Laval, the propaganda to France consisted chiefly of "raised emotional tone." Of the latter, stress was placed on interests and background, common ideals of freedom, prestige-raising data for the United Nations, encouragement of the French in their hope of liberation. In short, the French were regarded as victims of exploitation with whom we had no quarrel. Laval was made synonymous with Hitler. The attacking propaganda was made on that basis. The French broadcasts were done in dramatic style. They were consistent, simple in construction. The same ideas were hammered hard, repeatedly, though never monotonously.

NEWSLETTERS TO ENGLAND

These seemed designed largely to bolster up the morale of the English people by proving:

- 1) The high productivity of munitions in the United States, Canada and England;
- 2) Unity and confidence in victory;
- 3) Military success (for example, the U.S. naval success in Coral Sea, R.A.F. success in Europe, the Commandos, etc.);
- 4) Mutuality of ideals and war aims (for example, comparison of Churchill's talk and Wallace's);
- 5) The weakness of the enemy (for example, Italy's weakness and dissatisfaction, unrest in occupied countries, dissatisfaction in France, etc.).

As compared with the other newsletters, those to England seemed more like amplifications of news broadcasts. They gave information. The propaganda was mostly concealed; that is, it is propaganda by implication. But the implication was clear. It was largely factual and seemed quite convincing.

The broadcast was limited to the objectives mentioned. It did not try to solve any of the psychologic Anglo-American problems, such as the problem of the traditional American antagonism to England, which is part of every American text book.