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FAKULTA SOCIÁLNÍCH VĚD

Institut komunikačních studií a žurnalistiky

**Dita Voleská**

**A New Beginning: Radio Free Europe/Radio  
Liberty Moving to Prague**

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Autor práce: **Dita Voleská**

Vedoucí práce: **PhDr. Jakub Končelík, Ph.D.**

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## **Bibliografický záznam**

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## **Anotace**

Předkládaný text se zabývá vývojem celku Rádio Svobodná Evropa/Rádio Svoboda (RSE/RS) v období od konce 80. do poloviny 90. let minulého století. Hlavním cílem této diplomové práce je představení tohoto specifického rádiového projektu v nové době a s novými úkoly. RSE/RS se staly legendárními během studené války, jakožto nástroje boje proti komunistickým režimům v Evropě a Sovětském svazu. S pádem železné opony si však mnozí mysleli, že jejich mise skončila. Rádia musela bojovat s těmito názory a prokázat, že jejich poslání mělo další smysl. Zaměřily se především na prosazování myšlenek a zásad demokracie a liberální společnosti. Toto šíření osvěty se ukázalo jako velmi potřebné v postkomunistických zemích, které se snažily přiblížit standardům západního světa. Tento text popisuje celkové spletité osudy RSE/RS, jejich misi a další vývoj vysílání. Ten souvisel především s plány na radikální snížení rozpočtu a následné přemístění sídla rádií z Mnichova do Prahy. Pro hlubší porozumění této celkové problematice je v práci představen širší historický kontext vývoje RSE/RS od samého počátku v padesátých letech minulého století. Dále je nastíněn vývoj mediálního systému a jeho transformace v Československu a později v České republice. Krátce je také představen obecný politický vývoj v daném období.

## **Abstract**

The presented text is concerned with the development of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) in the period from the late 1980s to mid-1990s. The main aspiration of this Diploma Thesis is the introduction of these specific radio projects in a new era with new missions. RFE/RL gained great popularity during the Cold War period as they were powerful tools in the fight against communist regimes in Europe and the Soviet Union.

However, with the fall of Iron Curtain, it was generally anticipated that their tasks were complete. Both Services had to fight against these general assumptions and prove that their mission had yet more functions. Thus, they focused on promoting ideas and principles of democratic and liberal societies. This type of educational broadcasting proved to be very much needed in the post-communist countries which sought to implement the norms of the Western world. This paper describes the overall, somewhat complicated story of RFE/RL, its mission and further developments in broadcasting, which were fundamentally influenced by plans for budget cuts and resulted in the relocation of RFE/RL's operations from Munich to Prague. For more thorough understanding of these issues, the paper also draws on broader historical context of RFE/RL's development from the very beginning of its operations in the 1950s. Hereafter, developments of Czechoslovak/Czech media system and its transformation are discussed, followed by a brief notes on the overall political development in the given period.

## **Klíčová slova**

**Rádio svobodná Evropa/ Rádio Svoboda, revoluce 1989, transformace mediálního systému, americké zahraniční vysílání, Československo, Česká republika, komunismus**

## **Key words**

**Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), revolution of 1989, media system transformation, American foreign broadcasting, Czechoslovakia, Czech Republic, communism**

**Rozsah práce: 144 164** znaků včetně mezer, bez abstraktů, příloh a literatury

## **Prohlášení**

1. Prohlašuji, že jsem předkládanou práci zpracovala samostatně a použila jen uvedené prameny a literaturu.
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3. Souhlasím s tím, aby práce byla zpřístupněna pro studijní a výzkumné účely.

V Praze dne

Dita Voleská

## **Poděkování**

Na tomto místě bych ráda poděkovala vedoucímu této diplomové práce PhDr. Jakubovi Končelíkovi, Ph.D. za odborné vedení a cenné rady při konzultacích. Neocenitelnou byla také odborná pomoc ze strany PhDr. Prokopa Tomka z Vojenského historického ústavu, který mi zprostředkoval přístup k mnoha archivním materiálům. Velký vděk patří také Mgr. Pavlu Pecháčkovi za milá a obohacující setkání a poskytnutí bezprecedentního přístupu k jeho soukromému archivu. V neposlední řadě moje díky patří celému týmu RFE/RL za nebývalou vstřícnost a podporu. Za finální kontrolu práce po jazykové stránce a cenné podněty děkuji specialistovi Britské rady na akademickou angličtinu Martinu Brownovi BSc

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Objectives of the Thesis**

The main objective of this thesis is to describe the development of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) from the end of the 1980s when these extraordinary services faced many changes brought by the revolutionary which spread across Europe. I shall attempt to outline historical, political, social and cultural challenges which RFE/RL had to deal with. Foremost, I will examine the process of moving RFE/RL from Munich to Prague and its background. This was a complete redirection of its main orientation and purpose, from a former Western democratic environment fighting communism to a country in transition from an undemocratic regime to democracy. The text will attempt to describe the whole process of the stations' reorientation towards a new environment and conditions, both financial and political. Furthermore, attention will be a paid to the stations' focus on a new mission and the associated problems. I will also aspire to break down the new structures and functionality in order to illustrate all these phenomena in a broader context. All this could not be done appropriately without taking into account the historical aspects and social-political situation of that time concerning the significant changes and the slow transformation from communism to democracy. Therefore, the first portion of the paper will deal with the political, social and media changes in Czechoslovakia/Czech Republic from the late 1980s through to the mid-1990s. Consideration will also be given to the processes of media change and transformation and its theoretical background. This analysis will then be followed by a brief historical overview of the development of RFE/RL from its infancy. The main section of the paper will then attempt to uncover developments and the background behind moving RFE/RL from Munich to Prague, focusing on political as well as financial aspects, followed by a description and analysis of RFE/RL's characteristics and its new role in the developing democracies. Possibly the most interesting part will be dealing with RFE's Czechoslovak Broadcasting Department which was chosen to illustrate the development of a national service within the RFE/RL structure. Regrettably, it was not possible to cover all RFE/RL's Departments and their fascinating developments since the end of the Cold War due to the limited extent of this paper. One Department solely seemed to be appropriate to illustrate the developments of the whole service. Overall, the thesis should attempt to answer the following questions:

- How did RFE/RL react to the political and social changes accompanying the end of the Cold War and the fall of communism in the Eastern Bloc?
- What were the plans and options for the further existence and role of RFE/RE?
- What were the main reasons for the move of RFE/RL from Munich to Prague?
- What has been the relevance of RFE/RL since the end of Cold War?

### **Thesis:**

*RFE/RL's initial purpose was to broadcast behind the Iron Curtain and help to fight Communism by providing uncensored information and spreading democratic thoughts. In 1989, after nearly 40 years of existence, revolutionary changes and further development meant that the mission of RFE/RL seemed to be complete and therefore there were calls for its abolition. However, RFE/RL adapted to the new conditions and requirements, changed its outlook and played an immensely important role in establishing new democracies where the threat of reversal in the positive trends was still present.*

### **Reasons for the Choice of Topic**

The main reason for the choice of this specific subject is that it is a relatively new phenomenon, both for the Czech as well as for the international academic environment. Although there have been many texts dealing directly with RFE/RL, the primary focus has always been on the situation and development prior to 1989. Authors usually analysed the role of these radio stations and their engagement in a prolonged battle of information; the fight against the spread of communist ideology within the context of the Cold War. As a result, both the academic and public sphere lack any comprehensive text dealing with the development of these two significant radio stations at and after the eventual fall of communism, especially during the time which preceded its move from Munich to Prague. What is more, there are a limited number of articles dealing with these questions and only then in a partial sense. Therefore the aspiration and main purposes of this Diploma Thesis would be to fill this gap.

## **Definition of the Research period**

Due to the limited extent of this paper, the research will be primarily focused on period between the mid-1980s and the mid-1990s as this time was the most crucial for the aim of this thesis. However, due to the need for setting this thesis in a broader historical and methodological context focus will also be given to the crucial historical developments throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> Century starting from the 1940s.

## **Methods**

This thesis will draw from an empirico-analytical approach with the main objective to serve as a one-case study with explanatory purpose. Furthermore, the classical methods of historical analysis will be used together with discursive analysis of documents and other sources. For this aim the analysis of primarily and secondary sources will be employed as a main research tool in order to gather various data. However, as the subject of this thesis and mainly the examined period is rather unique and has not been reflected in literature to a greater extent, the research will be mainly based on information encountered from primary sources. These will include but not exclusively internal documents of RFE/RL, recordings, archive materials from both public and private archive collections and annual reports. Whilst the elaboration of newspaper articles will also be a valuable source of information, the purpose of this thesis is not to compare and contrast the media content or give a detailed presentation of events as reported by different genres of newspapers. The various articles will serve purely as a source of information. As the topic is of relatively recent history the interviews with the former employees of the discussed radio stations will also be an invaluable source for this thesis as they will offer a direct insight and knowledge of internal affairs. Additionally, secondary resources such as books partly discussing the topic, news articles about the RFE/RL's development and history as well as those dealing with the political, social and media changes in Europe which started during the decline of the Cold War will be also used.

I have decided to use British English throughout. However, as most materials used in direct citations connected to this topic are written in American English, I have quoted them as they were written. Therefore, on some occasions, expressions and spellings from both British and American English are used, such as programme and program.

## **Alteration to the Thesis Proposal**

During the nearly two years since I handed the Thesis proposal in, I have realised that its plan was far more extensive given how broad the topic of RFE/RL's current history is. Consequently, during the months spent going through the archive materials and conducting interviews I realised that certain issues and events deserve much greater attention than I had originally anticipated. This is especially the case for the developments accompanying the revolutionary changes in Europe towards the end of the 1980s and the implications that they brought. Similarly, the development of RFE/RL during the first half of the 1990s deserves great attention as its history was being written at many levels. Likewise, the story of the Czechoslovak Broadcasting Department is so extraordinary and extensive, that there was no alternative but to focus on it at expense of other departments.

For all these reasons, I decided to narrow the original focus of this Thesis in order to accommodate all the burning issues appropriately. Firstly, I reduced the examined period, as originally I wanted to cover the development until the late 1990s and even beyond. Secondly, I narrowed the focus on general issues and developments of RFE/RL as a whole and I did not discuss the developments of individual national service in greater depth. However, I felt that I should focus at one broadcasting department – the Czechoslovak/Czech - which would serve as an example.

Therefore, the originally anticipated chapter entitled “First Year in Prague” was slightly narrowed and incorporated into others describing the development of the Czechoslovak Broadcasting Department throughout the 1990s. The chapter “Targeted Countries and Programme” was originally planned to discuss broadcastings to new regions and countries such as Turkmenistan or Iraq, which fell outside of the newly set timeline. The originally planned chapter “Internal Organisation Structure” was incorporated throughout the whole text. As a result I also made an alteration to the name of the Thesis. I thoroughly believe that the narrowing of the focus extent resulted in higher quality which this topic certainly deserves.

# 1 Political, Social and Media Changes in Czechoslovakia/Czech Republic between late 1980s and mid-1990s

## *1.1 Transformation of Media Systems in Post-Communist Countries*

Transformation of media systems in times of crucial political change is generally a popular area of research focus in media studies and therefore has been discussed by many authors in the past. Even more so, when the primary focus is on the transformation of media within the former Eastern Bloc. The general unifying term describing this process is “transitology”<sup>1</sup>, however, there is a great discussion as to how to describe this whole development and especially how to classify it.<sup>2</sup>

The critical time for this unprecedented process of change was between 1989 and 1991. However, further development lasted for many more years and to some extent has not been fully completed yet. In basic terms, the initial change can be described as a development from state controlled media towards a liberal democratic media system. It was a fairly complex process of rebuilding the basic principles and frameworks of a system which virtually did not exist for forty years. Jakubowicz and Sükösd<sup>3</sup> describe this whole process as “triple or quadruple post-communist transformation, as well as modernisation, globalisation and international integration.” Furthermore, they argue<sup>4</sup> that there were very different expectations of the performance of media in post-communist countries in comparison with those in Western systems. In other words, the transformation had to be gradual and there was no guarantee that the outcome would be the same as in the countries where the free democratic media evolution had never been interrupted.

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<sup>1</sup> JAKUBOWICZ, Karol. Social and Media Change in Central and Eastern Europe: Frameworks of Analysis. pp.5. In: PALETZ, David L.; JAKUBOWICZ, Karol (eds.). *Rude Awakening. Social and Media Change in Central and Eastern Europe*. 1<sup>st</sup> edition. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, 2003.

<sup>2</sup> For a detailed discussion on this subject see PALETZ, David. L.; JAKUBOWICZ, Karol. *Business as Usual. Continuity and Change in Central and Eastern Europe*. New Jersey: Hampton Press, 2003. 438 pages. For a very brief but accurate overview see TRAMPOTA, Tomáš. *Základní kontury transformace českého mediálního systému po roce 1989*. In: TRAMPOTA, Tomáš (eds.). *Česká média a Evropská unie: 20 let smazávání hranic*. Praha: MUP, 2009, 177 pages.

<sup>3</sup> JAKUBOWICZ, Karol.; SÜKÖSD, Miklós. *Finding the Right Place on the Map. Central and Eastern European Media Change in a Global Perspective*. 1<sup>st</sup> edition. Bristol, Chicago: Intellect Books, 2008, pp.8-

9.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.10-11.

The transformation was understood as an unavoidable process with clearly defined outcomes which misread the specifications of each country which often explained the differing rates of development towards democracy. One of many possible explanations is that there were two basic categories of countries making their way to a democratic regime - “pre-transition category” and “mature transition category” - the two extremes.<sup>5</sup> Many authors<sup>6</sup> at the time had doubts as to whether some countries managed to complete the transition at all and to what extent.

Media freedom, its extent, quality, depth and reach are dependent on and determined by the specific political cultural and economic circumstances prevailing within a society. These varied hugely across post-communist Europe.<sup>7</sup> A comparison of transformation processes of all former Eastern Bloc countries is not the objective of this paper and therefore will not be discussed in greater depth.<sup>8</sup> This paper touches on the general transformation of the media system in post-communist countries and uses it as a framework to describe and demonstrate this whole process in the specific case of Czechoslovakia/the Czech Republic.

The Communist media regimes in Central and Eastern Europe were replaced by a market-led pluralistic media system after the Velvet Revolution in 1989. This transformation involved fundamental changes in terms of organisation, management, production, distribution and finally consumption. Different authors view this process from alternative perspectives often comparing several countries from within the former Eastern Bloc. McNair assumes “that a healthy democratic society requires a functioning public sphere - a responsible diverse critical media permitted and resourced not just to produce the information which underpins civic society but to scrutinise power and call it to account on behalf of the people as a whole.”<sup>9</sup> Such media did not exist in Central and Eastern Europe before 1989. Post-communist media, therefore, had to take on many new roles. Jakubowicz and Sükösd see them as crucial pillars for building a democratic society whose roles include “introduction and legitimization of the concepts of democracy, rule of law and constitutionalism; introduction and legitimization of the concepts of political

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<sup>5</sup> PRICE, Monroe, E.; ROZUMIŁOWICZ, Beta; VERHULAT, Stefaan G. *Media Reform. Democratizing the Media, Democratizing the State*. London, New York: Routledge, 2002. pp. 3-4.

<sup>6</sup> Compare, for instance with PALETZ ; JAKUBOWICZ (2003).

<sup>7</sup> MCNAIR, Brian. The Transformation of Media and Journalism in Central and Eastern Europe after 1989: from Control to Chaos? pp. 12-13. In: JIRÁK, Jan; KÖPPOVÁ, Barbara; KASL KOLLMANNOVÁ, Denisa (eds). *Média dvacet let poté/Media twenty years after*. 1<sup>st</sup> edition. Praha: Portál, 2009.

<sup>8</sup> For more detailed studies see JAKUBOWICZ; SÜKÖSD, *.Ibid.*,

<sup>9</sup> MCNAIR. *Ibid.*, pp.13

pluralism, competition and new political parties and candidates as legitimate competitors; developing civil society by introducing NGOs and other civic groups as legitimate public actors; ... safeguarding new democratic institutions; ... democratic education regarding elections and voting procedures; ... offer a space for democratic evaluation of national past...”<sup>10</sup>

Generally, the essential aspects of media system change applicable to post-communist countries can be divided into several levels: a political level which includes the separation of media from any form of political power or influence and complete de-etatisation<sup>11</sup>; an economic level which requires economic independence of media, meaning that there are various types of owners; a social-cultural level for which it is crucial to change media-public relationship towards greater interaction; and a professional level which involves a new approach towards professional ethics and norms.”<sup>12</sup> Aside from essential system changes, such as the abolition of censorship or the introduction of private ownership of media, many authors specialising in transitology point out other typical phenomena of the transformation period. Steve Kettle evaluates the situation in Czechoslovakia in the first half of the 1990s as follows; “the mentality instilled under communism continues to be evident both in their working methods [meaning journalists – author’s note] and in attitudes toward the media on the part of politicians and the general public alike.”<sup>13</sup> Besides this, many journalists were orthodox communists themselves, or at least did not have a problem performing their job according to party requirements during the strictest period of normalisation in the 1970s. Likewise, other authors, for instance Slavko Splichal, draw attention to the low quality of journalists in transforming countries, who were often unable to abandon the habits acquired under the old regime or in contrary, refused to condemn new democratic governments as they regarded it as a criticism of democracy itself.<sup>14</sup> Another category of journalists were young and inexperienced newcomers who had neither the opportunity nor the time to adopt professional and ethical skills.

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<sup>10</sup> JAKUBOWICZ; SŮKÖSD, *Ibid.*, pp.10-11.

<sup>11</sup> Meaning liberalisation from the state.

<sup>12</sup> TRAMPOTA, Tomáš. Základní kontury transformace českého mediálního systému po roce 1989. In TRAMPOTA, Tomáš (eds.). *Česká média a Evropská unie: 20 let smazávání hranic*. Praha: MUP, 2009, pp.32-33.

<sup>13</sup> KETTLE, Steve. The Development of the Czech Media since the Fall of Communism. pp.42. In: O’NEIL, Patrick (eds.). *Post-Communism and the Media in Eastern Europe*. London/Portland: Frank Cass, 1997, 144 pages.

<sup>14</sup> SPLICHAL, Slavko. *Media beyond Socialism - Theory and Practice in East-Central Europe*. 1<sup>st</sup> edition San Francisco: West Press, 1994, pp.66.

Furthermore, commercialisation came too quickly and many media actors did not know how to react to it. This had an essentially negative effect on the quality of media output as all the actors were driven by the desire to gain great popularity and thus survive at the expense of low professional standards. Another aspect of commercialisation was a significant rise in “sensational media” and trends leading to tabloidisation, although the general opinion is that this was only a side effect of democratic development and it was more connected to Western cultural influence.<sup>15</sup>

In general, to realise what media transformation meant for post-communist countries, the historical, political, social along with many other changes have to be acknowledged. As Jirák and Köpplová conclude “the transformation of mass media after 1989 as a historical process is still in fact terra incognita in many aspects. It is a process hidden behind generalized, universal, even ideological narratives. We could not mention for instance the coincidence between political and social changes on one side and the development of communication technologies on the other side.”<sup>16</sup>

## ***1.2 Political Development***

### **1.2.1 Political Development in Czechoslovakia prior to 1989**

The leadership in Czechoslovakia from February 1948 was effectively in the hands of one party - the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (CPC)<sup>17</sup> which had seized power. Formally, the political power was shared within the political umbrella of the National Front which unified public organisations and two other political parties which were allowed to function. The Czechoslovak People’s Party (CPP)<sup>18</sup> and the Czechoslovak Socialist Party (CSP)<sup>19</sup> were regarded as satellite parties<sup>20</sup> as they did not have any

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<sup>15</sup> JIRÁK ,Jan; KÖPPLOVÁ, Barbara. Mass media and Czech society: interpreting media transformation after 1989. pp. 52-53. In: JIRÁK, Jan; KÖPPLOVÁ, Barbara; KASL KOLLMANNOVÁ, Denisa (eds). *Média dvacet let poté/Media twenty years after*. 1st edition. Praha: Portál, 2009.

<sup>16</sup> JIRÁK ,Jan; KÖPPLOVÁ, Barbara, *Ibid.*, pp.54.

<sup>17</sup> In the original Komunistická strana Československa ( KSČ).

<sup>18</sup> In the original Československá strana lidová (ČSL).

<sup>19</sup> In the original Československá strana socialistická (ČSS).

<sup>20</sup> The expression “satellite” is a political term which was at first used to refer to a country that is formally independent, but under significant influence or even control by another country. This could be done in many areas and levels, but most commonly political and economic. The term was used to refer to countries of Central and Eastern Europe during the Cold War which were under the direct influence of the Soviet Union. Later it was used in a similar analogy with leading Communist parties having strong influence over remaining political parties in the country.

political power or influence and followed the orders of the CPC.<sup>21</sup> Although informally, the CPC held political control at all levels in the country and government as well as the National Front which served, in fact, only as a cover to maintain the impression of free political competition in the country. Following the model of Soviet leadership, the totalitarian regime based on communist ideology was gradually implemented. The Constitution of 1960 later only confirmed the leading role of the CPC and formally institutionalised it.<sup>22</sup>

During the Cold War, Czechoslovakia formed a full part of the Eastern Bloc and was, therefore, under the direct influence of the Soviet Union and belonged to a group of so-called satellite states. The gradual changes towards liberalisation, which followed after Mikhail Gorbachev became the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in March 1985, naturally influenced Czechoslovakia and other countries behind the Iron Curtain. However, this was not so much the case at government level, where the CPC in principal refused any liberalisation attempts as they were reminded of the events of the Prague Spring in 1968.

It was clear that Gorbachev came too late to revive the Soviet economy and general lagging, economically as well as technologically, of the Eastern Bloc behind the booming western world, especially the United States. However, his policy initiatives, foremost Perestroika (Restructuring) and Glasnost (Openness), had major effects throughout the Eastern Bloc.<sup>23</sup> They eventually gave potential to the waves of reforms which led to the fall of communist regimes across Europe, starting in Poland. The revolutionary development soon culminated in the fall of the Berlin Wall on 10 November 1989. This symbolised the collapse of European Communist governments and physically demonstrated the end of the Iron Curtain division of Europe. Similarly, in Czechoslovakia, the mass demonstrations during November 1989 unseated entrenched leaders and led to a swift end to communist rule. This process is often referred to as the Velvet Revolution for

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<sup>21</sup> They were nominally represented by individual members chosen not by the parties themselves but by the Communists.

<sup>22</sup> BALÍK, Stanislav; HLOUŠEK, Vít; HOLZER, Jan; ŠEDO, Jakub. *Politický systém českých zemí 1848-1989*. 1st edition. Brno: Masarykova univerzita-Mezinárodní politologický ústav. 2006, pp.135-137.

<sup>23</sup> For a more detailed account on the Gorbachev era and reforms see ZUBOK, Vladislav M. *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev (New Cold War History)*. 1<sup>st</sup> edition., North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007, 228pages. For a more detailed account on the Reagan - Gorbachev relationship and its implication for the development leading to the end of the Cold War see KENGOR, Paul. *The Crusader: Ronald Reagan and the Fall of Communism*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2007, 432 pages.

its non-violent and relatively smooth character. Czechoslovakia then entered the course of fundamental political, economic and cultural changes.<sup>24</sup>

### **1.2.2 Political Development in Czechoslovakia following the Velvet Revolution**

Negotiations between the communist regime and the opposition followed shortly after the mass demonstrations and took place in late November. The Velvet Revolution swept those previously on the fringes of society from dissidence to the forefront of the democratisation movement. The provisional coalition government, in which the CPC had a minority, was formed in December 1989. The Federal Assembly voted to terminate the leading role of the Communist party and superiority of Marxism-Leninism ideology. The most prominent dissident and leader of the November Revolution - Václav Havel - assumed the position of President towards the end of the year. The main decision-making power was, in fact, in the hands of newly formed Civic Forum (Občanské fórum - OF),<sup>25</sup> which can be characterised as “a broad non-party community of engaged citizens, the main role of which was to guarantee the non-violent transfer of power from the hands of communists and to create conditions for the first free elections in the country since 1946.”<sup>26</sup> The main task of the post-revolutionary era was to lead the country to the elections scheduled for June 1990. Over 95% of the population came to vote and the popular Civic Forum gained a comfortable majority which allowed it to implement the substantial steps necessary to secure the further democratic evolution of the country.<sup>27</sup>

However, it was becoming clear that such a concept of broad civic movement was rather problematic. After successfully completing its primary objective of leading the country from communist rule towards democracy, the Civic Forum faced internal conflicts which

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<sup>24</sup> For a detailed description of the development in each country as well as Czechoslovakia and an overall overview of the whole process with regards to the Eastern Bloc see VYKOUKAL, Jiří P. a Bohuslav LITERA a Miroslav TEJCHMAN. *Východ :vznik, vývoj a rozpad sovětského bloku 1944-1989*. 1<sup>st</sup> edition. Praha: Libri, 2000. 860 pages. For an overview on the developments in Czechoslovakia prior to 1989 see MANDLER, Emanuel (ed.).*Dvě desetiletí před listopadem 89*. 1<sup>st</sup> edition. Brno: Maxdorf, 1993. 223 pages.

<sup>25</sup> The roots of this Forum can be traced back to 1977, when hundreds of human rights activists signed a manifesto titled Charter 77 criticising the government for not meeting the commitments resulting from the Final Act of the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe from 1975.

<sup>26</sup> KOPEČEK, Michal. The Rise and Fall of the Czech Post-Dissident Liberalism after 1989. *East European Politics and Societies*, 2011, Vol.25, No.2, pp.245.

<sup>27</sup> For a detailed description of developments between 1989 and 1991, see WHEATON, Bernard; KAVAN, Zdeněk. *The Velvet Revolution: Czechoslovakia, 1988-1991*. Boulder: Westview Press, 1992. 255 pages. For a detailed account on elections and individual political parties and fractions see HLOUŠEK, Vít. Česko. Politický systém a jeho vývoj. pp: 431-438. In: STRMISKA, Maxmilián; HLOUŠEK, Vít; KOPEČEK, Lubomír, CHYTILEK Roman. *Politické strany moderní Evropy - Analýta stanicko-politického systému*. 1<sup>st</sup> edition. Praha: Portál, 2005, 728 pages.

proved irresolvable and therefore led to dissolution at the beginning of 1991. The fractions of the Civic Forum formed new political parties of Civic Democratic Party (Občanská demokratická strana - ODS), led by Václav Klaus, who later became Prime Minister, and the Civic Movement (Občanské hnutí - OH). As the political scene was becoming more fractured, both at federal and national levels, the calls for the dissolution of the Federation were increasing. The Slovak pressure for greater autonomy eventually resulted in an agreement that the two republics would separate. The relevant law was passed on 27 December 1992 and consequently the Czech Republic and Republic of Slovakia were concurrently established on 1 January 1993.<sup>28</sup>

### ***1.3 The Development of Media***

#### **1.3.1 The Media System and the Role of Media prior to 1989**

Following the Communist seize of power in February 1948 the leading role over the society belonged *de facto* to the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (CPC). It held absolute control over every aspect of people's lives as it accomplished appropriate legislative changes. The media system in communist Czechoslovakia was required to function as part of the ideological apparatus of the one-party system in accordance with Marxist-Leninist press theory. Media, therefore, served a primarily political role fulfilling propaganda and educational functions. The scale of these functions varied during different phases of communism. Nevertheless, they dominated throughout the period at the expense of other roles, such as entertainment or commercial functions. Communists developed a very good structure of media control and censorship. All media and broadcasting were centralised directly under governmental administration. Licences for newspapers and magazines were only granted to those who accepted the leadership role of the CPC. Similarly, to become a journalist required loyalty to the CPC. The media were thus accountable directly to Communist Party rather than to society as a whole.

Censorship was a regular and very powerful tool in keeping media in order. It was fully institutionalised and represented by a number of bodies; however, it lacked any appropriate support from the legal system until the 1960s. Officially, the Ministry of

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<sup>28</sup> For background developments see HILDE, Paal Sigurd. Slovak Nationalism and the Break-Up of Czechoslovakia. *Europe-Asia Studies*. 1999 Vol. 51, No. 4, pp: 647-665.

Information operated at state level but its role was gradually marginalised as Communist executives developed their own structure which duplicated the state offices. The most powerful was then the Cultural and Promotional detachment of the Communist Central Committee with Print Media and Publishing departments. Furthermore, a special body called the Central Administration for Print Media Supervision (Hlavní správa tiskového dohledu - HSTD) was created in 1953 and operated under the Home Office. It was responsible for the control and censorship of all print media - a representative was assigned to every newspaper - and its status was classified. On top of that, self-censorship was carried out in all newspapers, magazines, radio and TV. The editors were fully responsible for the ideological and political content and the everyday running of each medium was supervised by politically conscious journalists.<sup>29</sup>

The long awaited Press Act (Tiskový zákon č. 81/1966 Sb.) of 1966 brought significant changes to Czechoslovak media legislation which effectively lasted - with only some minor adjustments - for next thirty years. It partly reorganized the system of media control, but most importantly institutionalised censorship and its mechanisms into the state legal framework with specific competencies. The main tool of censorship - Central Administration for Print Media Supervision - was renamed Central Publication Administration (Ústřední publikační správa) and publically recognised. However, the new office had the opposite effect as the amount of censoring decreased by more than a half.<sup>30</sup> Even this, perhaps, contributed to the overall relaxing of conditions which in 1968 culminated in the Prague Spring. The several month long period of liberalisation even brought an official abolition of censorship. It was a remarkable time when people and media enjoyed freedom of expression and cultural life was booming. However, this extraordinary development was ended by the military invasion carried out by the Warsaw Pact on 21 August 1968 and the subsequent Soviet occupation. The following years, known as normalisation, were marked by attempts to restore the conditions which prevailed before 1968. Firstly, the firm rule of the CPC was restored<sup>31</sup> and subsequently the new status quo was preserved.<sup>32</sup> This era of neostalinist reverse mode marked an end to hopes of any form of liberalisation of Communist power and effectively lasted until the end of the 1980s.

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<sup>29</sup>BEDNAŘÍK, Petr; JIRÁK, Jan; KÖPPLOVÁ, Barbara. *Dějiny českých médií. Od počátku do současnosti*. 1<sup>st</sup> edition. Praha: Grada, 2011, pp.256-258; KONČELÍK, Jakub; VEČEŘA, Pavel; ORSÁG, Petr. *Dějiny českých médií 20.století*. 1<sup>st</sup> edition. Praha: Portál, 2010, pp.139-143.

<sup>30</sup> KONČELÍK; VEČEŘA; ORSÁG, *Ibid.*, pp.178.

<sup>31</sup> Period of 1969-1971 when all reforms and reformists were removed.

<sup>32</sup> Since 1971 onwards.

The total state control over the media system and information channels in the country naturally led to a reduction in the credibility of official media. The Czechoslovak people were not satisfied with the limited range of information, which was often distorted. As a result, many turned to the alternative information sources such as illegal dissident publications or, more commonly, foreign broadcasting.

Similarly, the official state media paid little attention to the events accompanying the protests of November 1989. The television, as well as the radio, completely concealed all information relating to the brutal suppression of students at Národní třída and the subsequent events. The main source of genuine, uncensored information was therefore foreign media, specifically radio stations which were more accessible until jamming was abandoned in late 1988. The irreplaceable role was played by Radio Free Europe, BBC and Voice of America.

### **1.3.2 Media System and the Role of Media from 1989 onwards: New Challenges**

With the factual fall of the Communist regime, Czechoslovakia quickly implemented the main postulates of democracy, such as the rule of law, the reconstruction of democratic institutions and the introduction of essential economic reforms. Similar development came almost instantly to the media sector which entered the process of transformation from the Soviet type centralised, state-governed media system towards a liberalised free market system driven by competition. Media functions other than political grew in importance and thus the Czechoslovak media system was drawing nearer to Western models. Commercial and entertainment functions of media became more important, conversely, political and social roles, once dominant, were transformed. Propaganda was abandoned and replaced by a variety of other political functions. The influx of new newspapers, radio stations and other kinds of media was only a natural reaction to several decades of suppression of a basic human right - freedom of expression. The new democratic society required a functioning public sphere of which the media was a vitally important component. Their most crucial role was to be critical and serve to scrutinise power and call it to account.

Nevertheless, there were many obstacles for the Czechoslovak media system to overcome in order to fully perform its newly acquired role. Generally, the media of developing democracies lack freedom, sufficient financial resources, managing abilities and

appropriately trained journalists. The legal obstacles were perhaps the easiest to surmount. Censorship was instantaneously abandoned during the Velvet Revolution and officially confirmed a few months later, in March 1990, by the amendment to the Press Act (zákon č.86/1990 Sb.) which also granted the right for private citizens, including foreigners, to own and publish periodicals. Further legislative steps meant the end of the Federal Agency for Press and Information (Federální úřad pro tisk a informace - FÚTI), the main form of communist control over media from the 1980s. In October 1991 the Legislation on Radio and Television Broadcasting (zákon č.468/1991 Sb.) was introduced. This was crucial for the continued development of electronic media as, in principal, it opened up the competition to private actors. The new legal framework had a major effect on the media structure and their functionality as it led towards substantial privatisation of media, particularly periodicals, and also to an emergence of many new parties. This, inevitably, brought financial resources as well as greater competition which in turn led to an increase in the quality of media content and also towards tabloidisation.

Another, more deeply rooted problem was connected to journalists and media representatives in general. The destruction of all basic principles of free and independent media, such as professionalism during the Communist rule, cast a shadow over ongoing development in the 1990s. The owners and managers of individual periodicals and radio stations did not quite know how to manage them in the liberal market environment. As a result, many newly established subjects lasted months or, at best, years. Likewise, the majority of journalists were unable to cope with the newly acquired freedom and react flexibly to the challenging conditions of their profession. Moreover, most of them were bound into the communist regime and therefore their objectivity was severely compromised. The new generation was not yet ready to replace them. The ultimate task for all of them was then to understand how the journalism profession functioned in a democratic society. This essentially included learning what it meant to be objective and to be subject to watchdogs and critics.

## 2 RFE/RL - A Short Account of History

### 2.1 RFE and RL - Children of the Cold War

Radio Free Europe was established at the outbreak of the Cold War as a reaction to the political situation in Europe. As the last democratic government of the Eastern Bloc - Czechoslovak - fell in February 1948, the shadow of the Iron Curtain spread across the continent and had severe consequences for the rest of the world. As Western Europe was slowly recovering from the horrors of war, the United States seemed to be the only actor strong enough to face the spread of communism. American President Harry Truman spoke to Congress in March 1947, and introduced his concept which became later known as the "Truman Doctrine".<sup>33</sup> The President stated that this Doctrine would be "the policy of the United States to support free people who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressure."<sup>34</sup> The original concept to support Greece and Turkey in order to avoid any other country falling under communism was later informally extended to become the basis of the US Cold War policy worldwide. It determined the American foreign policy towards the Soviet Union for many years to come with the main task being to stop the spread of communism and Soviet influence and fight it effectively where it already existed. George F. Kennan<sup>35</sup> called it a policy of containment of Soviet expansion.<sup>36</sup>

There were, in principal, three possible means of the anti-Soviet Union opposition; military, economic and ideological. The first one was represented through the establishment of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)<sup>37</sup> - a system of collective

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<sup>33</sup> For a more detailed account on this topic see BOSTDORFF, Denise.M. *Proclaiming the Truman Doctrine: The Cold War Call to Arms*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Texas:AM University Press, 2008. 312pages. Or BROWN. Archie. *The Rise and Fall of Communism*. Oxford: The Bodley Head. 2009. 425 pages.

<sup>34</sup> *Special Message to the Congress on Greece and Turkey: The Truman Doctrine*. Truman Library Public Papers, 12 March 1947. Online at:

<http://www.trumanlibrary.org/publicpapers/index.php?pid=2189&st=&st1=>

<sup>35</sup> A diplomat and leading scholar on Cold War affairs whose writing influenced the development of US foreign policy in the post-war era.

<sup>36</sup> DENNIS, Merrill, The Truman Doctrine: Containing Communism and Modernity. *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, March 2006, Vol. 36 Issue 1, pp 27-37.

<sup>37</sup> The original twelve members of NATO in 1949 were the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, France, Denmark, Iceland, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Belgium, Netherlands, and Luxembourg. Later, in 1952, Greece and Turkey joined. West Germany was admitted in 1955 and in 1982 Spain became the sixteenth member. The member states agreed to mutual defence in response to an attack by any external party. The reaction of the Soviet Union to this partnership, especially the admittance of West Germany, was the creation of the Warsaw Pact in 1955 which contained countries of the Eastern bloc.

defence principal - formed on 4 April 1949 and initiated by Americans.<sup>38</sup> Economic resistance was mainly represented by the European Recovery Program (ERP), more commonly known as the Marshall Plan, of post-war reconstruction which initially aimed to foster economic recovery in Europe by providing material and financial aid from the United States.<sup>39</sup> The project, initiated in 1947, was in operation for four years and its success exceeded expectations.<sup>40</sup>

Despite the last method being often underestimated as the least effective, it proved to be one of the most powerful and persistent tools of the Western fight against communism. The peak of the Stalinist era was accompanied by propaganda which denied people free access to information and objective news. Thousands of people, previously displaced by war, refused to return to their homelands under Soviet orbit. Many more followed them in the ensuing years as they were either persecuted by communist regimes or simply refused to live in undemocratic societies. Most of them found havens in the USA, West Germany, France, UK or Canada. The US Government quickly realised that those emigrants held great potential as representatives of their homelands. More importantly, Americans anticipated that they could serve as mediators communicating with their countrymen behind the Iron Curtain in their own language. All they needed for that was a tool for communication. Consequently, the Committee for a Free Europe (CFE) was, after months of preparation, officially established on 17 May 1949 in New York by a number of prominent American strategists, who believed there were other ways to fight communism than purely by military means. These ideas were mainly conceived by influential figures from the US Department of State, foremost George F. Kennan, Dean Acheson and Joseph C. Grew. Other leading figures who stood at the birth of this initiative were future president Dwight D. Eisenhower and the future CIA director Alan Dulles.<sup>41</sup> The corporate name was soon changed to the National Committee for Free Europe (NCFE) and Joseph C. Grew, who became its chairman, stated that its purpose was “to put the voices

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<sup>38</sup> For a more detailed account on this topic see REYNOLDS, David. *The Origins of the Cold War in Europe: International Perspectives*. 1<sup>st</sup> edition. Yale University Press. 2004. 193 pages. or PARK, William. *Defending the West: a history of NATO*. 1<sup>st</sup> edition. Westview Press. 209 pages.

<sup>39</sup> Sixteen nations became part of the programme and in total received nearly \$13 billion in aid.

<sup>40</sup> For a more detailed account see SCHAIN, Martin. *The Marshall Plan: Fifty Years After*, 1<sup>st</sup> edition. New York: Palgrave, 2001, 245 pages. or MILWARD, Alan S. *The Reconstruction of Western Europe 1945-51*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006, 309 pages.

<sup>41</sup> CUMMINGS, Richard.H. *Radio Free Europe's "Crusade for Freedom" - Rallying Americans behind Cold War Broadcasting, 1950-1960*. 1<sup>st</sup> edition. London: McFarland & Company, Inc. 2010, pp. 9-11.

of the exiled leaders on the air, addressed to their own peoples back in Europe, in their own languages, in the familiar tones.’<sup>42</sup>

Officially, NCFE was presented as a non-governmental organisation and the public was told that it was created out of the “humanitarian desire to provide useful work for the prominent Eastern European exiles who had sought refuge in the United States after the Communist takeovers of their countries.”<sup>43</sup> A few months later an organisation named the Crusade for Freedom was set up in order to raise funds for Radio Free Europe (RFE). Ordinary Americans, in combination with businesses, were urged to contribute to this organisation through a massive advertising campaign starting at the beginning of 1950 with the ubiquitous symbol of the Freedom Bell. The ten-ton bell had a laurel wreath symbolising peace encircling the top and a frieze of five figures representing the five races of humankind passing the torch of freedom. The design was modelled on the American Liberty Bell in Philadelphia. The inscription was based on a statement by Abraham Lincoln, “That this world under God shall have a new birth of freedom.” The tour went to 21 American cities and in addition, its replica was distributed among 48 US states for use in local campaigns. The Freedom Bell was then given to West Berlin as a symbol of the fight for liberation from communism.<sup>44</sup> The contributions for the first Crusade accounted for \$1,317,000. However, expenses for the NCFE amounted to almost double this as the entire establishment of RFE including acquisition of equipment, administrative and personal costs proved to be financially demanding. It was a state secret that RFE was being financed from other sources.<sup>45</sup>

There were several sections of NCFE, such as Free Europe Press. However, the most significant was undoubtedly RFE. At first, the content was produced in America and broadcasted to targeted countries through a short-wave transmitter near Lampertheim nicknamed Barbara. The station went on the air for the first time on 4 July 1950<sup>46</sup> with an experimental broadcast to Czechoslovakia. However, it was only for half an hour as its initial target was to announce the commencement of regular programming and the

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<sup>42</sup> CUMMINGS, Richard.H. *Cold War Radio. The Dangerous History of American Broadcasting in Europe, 1950-1989*. 1<sup>st</sup> edition. London: McFarland & Company, Inc, 2009, pp.7-9.

<sup>43</sup> PUDDINGTON, Arch. *Broadcasting Freedom: The Cold War Triumph of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty*. 1<sup>st</sup> edition. Kentucky: University of Kentucky, 2000, pp.9.

<sup>44</sup> JOHNSON, Ross, A. *Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty: The CIA Years and Beyond*. 1<sup>st</sup> edition. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010, p.14-17.

<sup>45</sup> CUMMINGS (2010), *Ibid.*, pp.44-46.

<sup>46</sup> Independence Day - US federal holiday commemorating the declaration of independence in 1776.

station's purpose and mission.<sup>47</sup> A further trial broadcast followed ten days later, on 14 July<sup>48</sup>. At the same time, broadcasts to other countries behind the Iron Curtain followed with services to Romania, Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria and Albania.<sup>49</sup> By late 1950, the radio was living a life of its own and expanding, therefore, the Americans began to plan the moving of the production and transmission of broadcasts closer to its listeners. It was decided that the most appropriate option for the new home of RFE would be West Germany - it was close to the targeted countries and the American armed forces were still present there. The new facilities were built during 1951 on the edge of Munich's English Garden. Although, the new RFE's building was not fully completed until November 1951, the first regular daily broadcasts, again done by the Czechoslovak Service<sup>50</sup>, were launched there on 1 May 1951. The regular broadcast of other services<sup>51</sup> followed in the subsequent months.<sup>52</sup>

One of the most spectacular projects undertaken by RFE started in August 1951 when the famous balloon operation, which effectively lasted until 1956, was launched. Such strategies had already been used during both World Wars, as well as the Korean conflict, and proved to be highly effective. It was essentially a campaign during which millions of leaflets, informing readers of RFE's existence and reflecting its broadcast themes, were dropped into Central and Eastern European countries through the employment of hot air balloons.<sup>53</sup>

Meanwhile the sister organisation of RFE - Radio Liberation (RL), later renamed Radio Liberty, started broadcasting on 1 March 1953. Its target area was the Soviet Union and first language was Russian. As with RFE, the language services expanded and it was not long before it was broadcasting in other languages of the region such as Ukrainian, Georgian and Azeri.

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<sup>47</sup> CUMMINGS (2009) *Ibid.*, pp.10-11.

<sup>48</sup> Another symbolic day known as Bastille Day, marking the storming on the Bastille in France in 1789, which later became a European symbol of revolutionary action against tyranny.

<sup>49</sup> Although, only from late 1950 to 30 September 1953 due to lack of suitable journalists as well as transmitters.

<sup>50</sup> At the beginning of RFE operations all language services were identified as e.g. Voice of Free Czechoslovakia (VFC), Voice of Free Romania (VFR) etc. The first Director of VFC was Ferdinand Peroutka, Czech journalist and writer.

<sup>51</sup> For a detailed account on other services see RFE/RL official list of all language service history at: <http://www.rferl.org/section/history/133.html>.

<sup>52</sup> JOHNSON, *Ibid.*, pp.19-22.

<sup>53</sup> PUDDIGTON, *Ibid.*, pp.61-62.

Although Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberation were sister organisations operated and supervised by the NCFE, they were technically separate services with independent structures and programmes until 1976. Even though they cooperated at various levels, especially in research, they had slightly different views and approaches towards the liberation of their respective areas of broadcasts. RFE broadcasted to so-called satellite states where the influence of communism was not regarded as strong as in the Soviet Union, its ultimate base. Therefore, countries such as Czechoslovakia or Poland were regarded as potentially more susceptible to democratic influence than the USSR. Consequently, RFE's appeal was evaluated as encouraging individual citizens to take certain actions or minor acts of sabotage that would weaken the communist governments. There was anticipation that if there were enough such attempts, citizens may unify to rise up and force the communist government out of power, perhaps with some sort of military support from the West. On the contrary, the liberation of the Soviet area was regarded as much more of a long-term and gradual effort. It focused on the exposure of governmental inefficiency, corruption, brutality as well as the different treatment of republics within the Union. This slow-phase democratic hacking seemed an effective contribution to the eventual defeat of communism.<sup>54</sup>

## ***2.2 Shadows of the Hungarian Tragedy***

Both radio stations were regarded as more confrontational than other similar Western broadcasters. Nevertheless, the events of 1956 brought a significant shift in programming, and in the broadcasting approach in general, as this year marked one of the major crises in RFE and has remained a dark shadow ever since. The revolution in Hungary which sparked in October 1956 was brutally suppressed by Soviet forces which cost the lives of thousands of people and brought an even tougher communist government into power. During the forty years of the Cold War in Europe, no single event produced as much death and destruction as this tragic uprising. Communist regimes immediately alleged RFE, particularly its Hungarian Service, of support or even initiation of the uprising and assigned it responsibility for all deaths. The rest of the world watched these events with great concern and later RFE's actions prior to October 1956 were scrutinised by many independent commissions. The role of RFE initiating the uprising itself is still subject to

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<sup>54</sup> PARTA, EUGENE, R. *Discovering a Hidden Listener: An Empirical Assessment of Radio Liberty and Western Broadcasting to the USSR during the Cold War*. 1<sup>st</sup> edition. Stanford: Hoover Institute Press Publication, 2007, pp.34-36.

controversy. However, most experts, including those of the UN, concluded that RFE might have created the impression that Western powers would intervene at some point or that some form of aid from the West was already on the way. An American congressional subcommittee conducting a study of American policy toward satellites did not criticise RFE directly, however it stated that “we must not talk more seriously than we are prepared to act”<sup>55</sup> in regards to the overall American position toward Eastern Bloc. It is also obvious from the station’s internal sources that RFE’s management, despite the public denials, knew something had gone wrong in the Hungarian Service. Some announcers, who understandably got carried away by the developments, spontaneously added controversial content to the regular news broadcasting and thus potentially created an impression of Western intervention. These unfortunate individual actions resulted in the tightening of systems of internal supervision as well as government overseeing both radio services.<sup>56</sup>

If there had been any hope of liberalising the Eastern European satellite nations from Soviet domination, the Red Army crushing of the Hungarian revolution definitely ended it. At this point, the West, led by Americans, had to accept the Soviet dominance over these areas for the rest of the Cold War. Both sides then projected their competition in neutral regions of the Third World such as Angola or Vietnam. Similarly, Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberation had to reappraise their conventions and strategies. Suggesting liberation or any form of intervention to the Soviet sphere of influence was then forbidden. Radio Liberation thus had to change its name in 1958 to the less controversial Radio Liberty. Both stations focused on less controversial topics such as economic issues. Their new tactics were to present Western economic prosperity and rapid growth in comparison to the struggling Soviet Bloc which was falling further behind each year and thus highlight the obvious success of Western principals and policies. The emphasis as of 1956 was on evolutionary system change rather than revolutionary actions in any shape or form.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> PUDDINGTON, *Ibid.*, pp.104.

<sup>56</sup> JOHNSON, *Ibid.*, pp.91-94; PUDDINGTON, *Ibid.*, pp.154-156.

<sup>57</sup> NELSON, Michael. *War of the Black Heavens: The Battles of Western Broadcasting in the Cold War*. Syracuse: Syracuse University, 1997, p.93-94.

### ***2.3 New Challenges - the 1960s onwards***

Throughout the 1960s, RFE and RL faced many new challenges. Among the first was the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 which is regarded as one of the most serious confrontations between the two competing superpowers during the Cold War as it brought the bipolar system closer to nuclear war and the threat of total annihilation of mankind than at any other time in history.<sup>58</sup> RFE and RL, therefore, had to be very careful about their broadcasting as the situation was extremely tense and delicate.

In 1968, the centre of international attention was focused on the developments in Czechoslovakia as it was liberalising and steadily shifting toward democracy in a process commonly referred to as the Prague Spring. RFE was, however, put in a very awkward position. On one hand, the promising developments of political reforms were something the RFE and in fact the whole Western world, had always desired. The Americans, bearing in mind the tragic events of 1956, never again gave serious consideration to disputing Moscow's hegemony in its official sphere of influence. As the shadow of the Hungarian events was still present, the radio had to balance on a very thin line between encouragement to Czechoslovaks and exaggerated support which could evoke some radical actions. Although the two situations were principally different, the potential outcome could have been the same and nobody wanted history to be repeated. The stations were fully aware that their broadcasting, directly to Czechoslovakia or other countries reporting the Czechoslovak situation would be closely scrutinised and compared with RFE's performance in 1956. The radio management anticipated this and was very cautious about what precisely went on air. The expression of Western support was accompanied by messages urging Czechoslovaks to proceed with caution and there was absolutely no mention of any form of military backing under any circumstances. The Soviets did not tolerate liberalising attempts for long and their intervention on 21 August extinguished all hopes of further positive development within the Eastern Bloc. Unlike in Hungary, the bloodshed was minimal but further procedures were very similar; a loyal communist government was installed and the Soviet military remained present until the early 1990s.

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<sup>58</sup> For a more detailed account there are plenty of publications specifically discussing this topic or the Cold War in general such as HILSMAN, Roger. *The Cuban Missile Crisis: The Struggle over Policy*. London: Prager, 1996. OR GARTHOFF, Raymond. L. *Reflections on the Cuban Missile Crisis*. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1989.

Another crisis RFE and RL had to deal with was of a purely internal character. It was not until the late 1960s when the true source of their financial background was uncovered. From the very beginning, both stations were funded principally by the US Congress through the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) as a main source of finance.<sup>59</sup> Until then, the general assumption was that the stations were sponsored from private sources and public donations. A fairly naïve attitude, given how little was collected during the most successful Crusade tour in 1950, compared to real costs of the stations' operations. The CIA involvement came as a great surprise, even to many station staff members, but as a deep sense of satisfaction for the Communist Bloc which had long alleged RFE and RL of espionage. However, in general, historians and experts on RFE<sup>60</sup> doubt that the initial purpose of RFE or RL was in intelligence, or at any stage of its existence. The stations could not have acquired any information which had not already been known by the CIA. The only reason the Agency regarded RFE or RL from an intelligence point of view was in order to protect their operations and employees from various forms of sabotage and attacks attempted by communist secret services as well as private formations. The broadcasting promoting democracy against communism naturally created many enemies. This resulted in various attacks against individual employees as well as the stations themselves.

As the CIA involvement ended, President Nixon openly admitted funding for the stations came from public finances. It was more than clear that RFE and RL needed some sort of establishment to oversee their operations. A number of possibilities were considered before settling on the creation of the Board for International Broadcasting (BIB) on 19 October 1973 through the Act for the Board for International Broadcasting. The Act declared that the purpose of RFE and RL would be to provide “an independent broadcast media operating in a manner not inconsistent with the broad foreign policy objectives of the United States and in accordance with high professional standards” and that their operations were “in the national interest.”<sup>61</sup> The initial mission of the BIB was to financially support RFE and RL, supervise their missions, operations and efficient use of resources. Furthermore, to evaluate their effectiveness and most importantly make sure that their broadcasting was in accordance with the US foreign policy.

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<sup>59</sup> CUMMINGS (2009), *Ibid.*, pp.92-95; NELSON, *Ibid.*, pp.127-129.

<sup>60</sup> Such as Cummings, Johnson, Puddington and many others..

<sup>61</sup> International Broadcasting Act of 1973, Public Law 93-129, on October 19, 1973.

As the Cold War seemed to be easing off - a period called *détente*<sup>62 63</sup> - Americans were losing interest in the stations and their mission to fight communism and many officials, among which most notably was Democratic senator J.W. Fulbright, did not approve of their costly operations. There were even suggestions of the services being terminated as a courtesy towards the Soviet Union. Such a gesture was hoped to enhance the promising positive trends established at the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe held in 1975 in Helsinki. Fortunately, thanks to a massive lobbying campaign, support of exile groups and a number of supportive senators and other representatives, RFE and RL managed to survive. Congress still believed that the two operations served a useful purpose and therefore deserved the government funding.<sup>64</sup> However, gradual cuts were made which resulted in the termination of some local bureaus throughout 1974. Further changes were implemented in the following years in order to increase both stations' efficiency and at the same time reduce costs. The US Congress pushed for a station merger. This included the premises and staff, creation of a single administrative board, a consolidated management and joint policy guidance. The official day of the merger was 2 October 1976 with the unifying name RFE/RL Incorporated (RFE/RL Inc.)<sup>65</sup>. This, however, did not have any major effect on the general mission of the stations and outlooks. They continued to operate their broadcast as single entities with all rights and responsibilities. Correspondingly, the work of national broadcast departments was not influenced. However, the budget and general administration were unified and Radio Liberty moved to Radio Free Europe's premises in English garden in Munich. Consequently, the new organisational structure was far more open to public scrutiny than ever before.<sup>66</sup>

Development during the 1980s brought an extension of the broadcast area as well as the worst act of violence against RFE/RL in its history. Unsurprisingly, the Communist governments were, from the very beginning of the stations' operations, attempting to disturb their activities by any possible means. The most serious was the terrorist bomb

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<sup>62</sup> French expression for relaxation gained a completely new meaning during the Cold War. It is commonly used to refer to easing of relations between the two superpowers - the US and USSR during the 1970s.

<sup>63</sup> For more details on this topic see GARTHOFF, Raymond L. *Detente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan*, 2nd revised Edition, New York: Brookings Institution Press, 1994, 1224 pages.

<sup>64</sup> PUDDINGTON, *Ibid.*, pp.194-195.

<sup>65</sup> The official full name of the organisation. However, more commonly used it the shorter form - Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL).

<sup>66</sup> SOSIN, Gene. *Sparks of Liberty: An Insider's Memoir of Radio Liberty*. Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania University Press, 1999.pp. 151-153.

explosion in RFE/RL's headquarters in Munich on 21 February 1981, which injured several employees and caused significant damage to the building. It was not until the 1990s that the true background of this incident was uncovered.<sup>67</sup> The attack was ordered by the Romanian security service, Securitate.<sup>68</sup>

Further ways of discrediting and sabotaging the stations' operations were espionage, diplomatic and propaganda offensives and among the most effective, local and long-distance jamming.<sup>69</sup> In the 1950s, it was Stalin himself who ordered establishment of jamming facilities to try and block RFE and RL broadcasts to the Eastern Bloc. Nevertheless, RFE/RL always found a way of overcoming these attempts and get the message to its listeners. The jamming subsided and intensified according to the political situation of the day. For instance, during the Prague Spring in 1968, jamming from Czechoslovakia was completely stopped for several months. Similarly, after the Helsinki conference in 1975 and during Gorbachev's reforms in the late 1980s tuning into foreign broadcasts behind the Iron Curtain was almost effortless. However, the communist regimes still considered jamming as one of the most effective activities against "Western propaganda" and kept all facilities active and ready to work at full strength. Just as an illustration, in 1987 which was effectively the start of the decline of jamming, in Czechoslovakia alone, there were some 117 transmitters employed as jammers with 251 employees operating them. The total annual cost was 27.4 million crowns. There is no estimate of the total cost of the jamming efforts over the nearly forty years of their operations. Some indication of how expensive these attempts were, can, however, be given by the sum Czechoslovakia was planning to release on their reconstruction. Towards the 1980s, the time when it was becoming clear that jamming would be significantly decreased, Czechoslovak officials allocated the staggering sum of 644 million crowns to their reconstruction. Fortunately, this money did not come in vain as jamming officially ceased on 1 December 1988 to all of the Eastern Bloc with the exception of

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<sup>67</sup> Even though, the background of this attack was known to secret services of Eastern Bloc, nobody ever admit it.

<sup>68</sup> JOHNSON, Ross. A. *Then and Now: the Free Media in Unfree Societies*. RFERL.2008. Online article available at: <http://www.rferl.org/section/history/133.html>

<sup>69</sup> For more detailed account on all kinds of sabotage used against RFE/RL see an excellent study on the Czechoslovak case with some parts on the Eastern Bloc in general by TOMEK, Prokop. *Československé bezpečnostní složky proti Rádiu Svobodná Evropa, Objekt „Alfa“*. Praha: Úřad dokumentace a vyšetřování zločinů komunismu, 2006, 400 pages.

Czechoslovakia where it took another fortnight. It was officially lifted just before Christmas on 16 December 1988.<sup>70</sup>

The Reagan years<sup>71</sup> brought ideologically charged political atmosphere and to some extent a re-intensification of the Cold War. Nonetheless, the policy of strengthening public diplomacy meant more support and money for RFE/RL. On a more positive note, on 8 October 1984 the Baltic Services gained great satisfaction when they separated from Radio Liberty and became individual units under Radio Free Europe - Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian. This was a great victory for Baltic nationalists as it meant that Americans indirectly recognised their right for independence.<sup>72</sup> Another RFE/RL reaction to the Soviet expansive policy was the establishment of Radio Afghanistan in 1985 as it was important to cover a country facing yet another Soviet invasion.

### **3 RFE/RL's Characteristics and its Roles in the New Developing Democracies**

#### ***3.1 RFE/RL Characteristics in the 1980s - 90s***

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Incorporated (RFE/RL, Inc.) could be, in this specific period, characterised as an independent, private, non-profit corporation of radio services to Central and Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union authorised by the Congress of the United States and conducted under private American management with employees from the respective areas. RL broadcasted to the USSR and RFE broadcasted to Eastern Europe, specifically to Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania and the Baltic States. Towards the end of the 1980s it aired 632 hours of programming weekly. At that time, the figure equalled twice the combined weekly air time of the three other leading international broadcasters - the Voice of America (VOA), the BBC and Deutsche Welle. An

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<sup>70</sup> PACOVSKÝ, Jaroslav. *Na vlnách rozhlasu*. Praha: Český rozhlas. 1993, pp.134-135.; TOMEK, Prokop. *Československé bezpečnostní složky proti Rádiu Svobodná Evropa, Objekt „Alfa“*. Praha: Úřad dokumentace a vyšetřování zločinů komunismu, 2006, 160-162.

<sup>71</sup> Ronald Wilson Reagan was the 40th US President, serving from 1981 to 1989.

<sup>72</sup> The Baltic states were occupied by the Soviets in 1940 and subsequently became part of the Union.

independent RFE survey conducted among listeners in respective areas in 1989, ranked RFE first in listener satisfaction among the four stations.<sup>73</sup>

The stations operated under Congressional oversight on grants provided by the Board for International Broadcasting (BIB), a federal agency whose members were appointed by the US President.<sup>74</sup> The purpose of such an arrangement was to preserve the journalistic independence of RFE/RL. The Board for International Broadcasting was charged by public law with overseeing the work of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty. Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states the Board's underlying principle: It is the right of every man and woman "to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas throughout any media and regardless of frontiers."<sup>75</sup>

The radio stations' management was fully responsible for the day-to-day supervision of all its broadcasts in accordance with the guidance of RFE/RL's Professional Code of 1976, later 1987. The essence of RFE/RL was the practice of independent, professionally competent and responsible broadcast journalism. RFE/RL provided uncensored news and information on domestic and relevant world affairs and conveyed a broad spectrum of ideas to audiences whose governments attempted to exercise a monopoly on information, ideas and approved patterns of thought. The stations were not merely a news service. They filled the roles that were normally provided in free societies by newspapers, features services, commentary, magazines, professional journals, and cultural reviews. In contrast to the Voice of America, whose primary mission was to present US policy and project American society and institutions, RFE/RL sought to identify with the interests of its listeners, devoting particular attention to matters directly affecting the peoples of Central, Eastern Europe and the USSR by focusing on the special concerns of its audiences. It functioned as a "home service" and conducted itself as a surrogate free press. The objective of "filling the information gap" was not understood in an exclusively political or narrowly local sense. RFE/RL sought to provide a broad coverage of many issues of universal concern, such as technological and scientific advances, trends in health and medicine, philosophical and religious movements, demographic trends, environmental

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<sup>73</sup> The Board on International Broadcasting, 1990 Annual Report on Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Inc., pp.23-24.

<sup>74</sup> For more details the chapter on RFE/RL's history above.

<sup>75</sup> BIB - The RFE/RL Professional Code, 1987.

standards, urbanisation, the discovery and distribution of world resources, and changing patterns of family life and health care.<sup>76</sup>

Constant re-evaluation of programming was essential for RFE/RL, more so than for any other broadcast service. It was necessary in order to ensure attention was paid to longer-term problems and trends. Analysis of radio and television listening patterns among the audience, research on changing demographic patterns in the broadcast area, awareness to change in the political and cultural world, and careful attention to new trends in domestic media formed the basis for continuous updating of programming. RFE/RL operated for this reason, although not exclusively. In addition to broadcasting, it formed one of the world's largest non-governmental research centres specialising in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. No other Western broadcaster was supported by a comparable research organisation.

It was clear that RFE/RL audiences were not homogenous. Events moved among them at different paces. Unique circumstances distinguished countries and regions from one another. The nations, to which RFE broadcasted, for example, were more exposed than in the USSR to Western information, ideas, economic and cultural influences. Large elements of the populations accepted Western thought and cultural values and aspired to participation in the economic, cultural and political life of Europe. Many citizens had family ties to Western Europe and the USA. Yet the greatest gap was not between countries or regions, but between generations whose personal experiences of the West were strikingly different.

From the time that RFE/RL began broadcasting, a new generation grew up within its broadcast area. In Eastern Europe, for example, many of the younger generation had never known a democratic society, had not had intimate educational contact with Western culture, nor had travelled freely to Western countries or enjoyed the free expression of traditional religious and cultural values in their homelands. To varying degrees, all young citizens within the RFE/RL broadcast areas were subjected throughout their lives to an intensive and rigidly controlled information and propaganda system. Both in terms of the information at their disposal and in the publicly available fund of paradigms, insights, concepts, and arguments through which they evaluated information, their intellectual background was likely to exhibit significant divergences from those of their parents'

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<sup>76</sup> RFE/RL Memorandum on Mission Statement, 1990, pp.4-5.

generation, as well as from those of Westerners of comparable age and station. In this context, one of the primary responsibilities of RFE/RL was to set forth for younger audiences the basic insights, principles, and arguments for such crucial Western concepts as human rights, democratic institutions, and free of welfare economics, of which audiences were otherwise likely to have little or no knowledge. It was crucial for the broadcast audiences to be well-informed about ideas, institutions, and social virtues implicit in Western concepts of freedom and justice.

### ***3.2 RFE's Evolving Role***

As the predominant Western broadcaster to Eastern Europe, RFE served a unique function. Unlike other major international broadcasters, whose missions were primarily to project and explain national cultures and official viewpoints, RFE operated as a set of independent, alternative domestic radio stations. While covering a full range of international topics, the focus of each of RFE's eight broadcast services was on reporting and analysing the domestic events and trends of most immediate concern to its audiences in Eastern Europe. For this reason, and because of its independence, RFE's audiences had long regarded it not as the voice of foreign government but as an independent, alternative national medium of free expression. As the then-dissident Vaclav Havel noted in a letter to RFE shortly before November's Velvet Revolution: "People consider you to be the main independent medium. You are the surrogate of the free and independent communications media which ought to exist over here. This is why I myself and many others turn to you."<sup>77</sup>

RFE/RL's Charter stated that the stations' mission adhered to a stringent code of professional journalism and that RFE seek to "Encourage the understanding and spread of democratic ideas and practises; preserve in undistorted form the histories and cultures of its audience nations throughout Eastern Europe and strengthen a sense of common purpose throughout the region; and build connecting links through news and information among the peoples of Eastern Europe, and between them and the mainstream of Western civilization."<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Václav Havel's letter to RFE Management, 8 November 1989.

<sup>78</sup> RFE's Professional Charter 1989, pp.4.

The political upheavals in Central and Eastern Europe in 1989 set in motion a complex process of democratisation that varied greatly in depth and character across the region. This process, which was predicted to be slower and more difficult than the reconstruction of post-war Western Europe, had only just begun. Before democratic institutions and market economies could take firm root, Central and Eastern Europe faced the possibility of further convulsions arising from the interlocking problems of political instability, social and interethnic conflict, and economic hardship. As US Deputy Secretary of State, Lawrence Eagleburger stated in March 1990: “We are not dealing with the situation similar to post-war Western Europe, where we had to rebuild a region that was physically devastated, but which still possessed the technical skills, public institutions and market experience to recover quickly. In Eastern Europe, which is emerging from a 45-year time capsule and which lacks those skills and institutions, our strategy must be different. We cannot underestimate the challenges they face in institutionalizing democracy and market-oriented economies.”<sup>79</sup>

Success of developing democracies depended critically on the development of genuinely free independent and professional news media. The abolition of state censorship was an important first step, but was not sufficient by itself. An entire generation of journalists were badly-trained. Eastern European media had yet to develop and put into practice a framework of Western style ethical concepts such as objectivity, the separation of news and commentary, and the political independence and non-partnership of reporters and editors. Old habits of self-censorship and subservience coexisted with trends towards sensationalisation among broadcast media and newspapers newly freed of censorship. Many new publications had yet to evolve beyond partisan political broadsheets. Human, technical and financial resources were severely limited. Most Eastern European media faced serious financial troubles. State broadsheet media were burdened with hundreds of unproductive, surplus staff. With few foreign correspondents, the ability of media to report on events and trends elsewhere in Eastern Europe, let alone the West, was extremely limited. The local journalists were not ready to assume responsibility. Legal freedom of press was not enough as the old habits of a one-party system endured and according to many, the young generation was not prepared for the tasks of an independent press.

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<sup>79</sup> BRUNE, Lester. H. *Chronological History of US Foreign Relations: 1989- 2000*. Volume III. New York: Rutledge, 2003, pp.1171.

### 3.2.1 Programme Changes

RFE/RL President Eugene Pell strongly endorsed “democracy” programming and the Directors of RFE and RL issued a memorandum to department and service chiefs on 7 March 1990 requesting that increased attention be paid to “principles and practices of Western pluralist democracies and free-market economies.”<sup>80</sup>

To help the effort and to offer additional material to the texts generated by the various services themselves, the RFE/RL management began, in March 1990, to issue background papers on a variety of topics. Among the topics covered in this project were materials on election practices, labour unions, the role of local newspapers, radio and television stations and advice on “how to set up and run a small business.”<sup>81</sup> To succeed, the new governments needed more than just economic assistance. They needed what decades of totalitarian rule had not provided - institution-building skills, entrepreneurial know-how, and a firm, intellectual foundation in democratic values and human rights. RFE’s broadcasting attempted to provide every possible advice on these matters.

RFE/RL’s traditional mission, as defined in its Congressional charter<sup>82</sup>, was taking on new forms in response to changing conditions and the urgent, new information needs in Eastern Europe. With the help of senior members of the emerging democratic governments and parliaments in Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, some of whom were former contributors to RFE programming, and aided by the first public opinion polls that RFE/RL were able to conduct in Eastern Europe; the stations defined several priority tasks in an evolving mission:

- **“Providing an objective, alternative mirror of East European societies.** In an extension of its traditional role, RFE is serving as an independent mirror of social, economic, political and cultural problems and issues. Throughout its bureaus in Eastern and Western Europe and the United States, RFE was providing a forum for expertise and analytical perspectives not available through domestic media. RFE’s cultural and physical closeness to its audience countries made it particularly effective in this role.
- **Building a foundation of understanding for democratic change.** RFE, along with other major Western international broadcasters, is expanding programs that explain the concepts and working details of political democracy and market economies. RFE’s

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<sup>80</sup> RFE/RL Memorandum: Programming on Democratic Experience, 7 March 1990.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>82</sup> US Congress Charter on RFE/RL Inc., 1990.

location in Western Europe and its professional research staff make it uniquely suited to explain and compare both European and American political and economic models. With its focus on East European domestic affairs, RFE is also helping its audiences understand the need for often painful domestic economic reform.

- **Integration of Eastern and Western Europe.** As Eastern Europe looks toward building political, trade and cultural ties with its western neighbours, RFE is increasing its programming on the activities of the European Economic Community, the Council of Europe and other unifying organizations of growing interest to its listeners.
- **Cross-fertilizing Democracy in Eastern Europe.** It is crucially important for the nations of Eastern Europe to share information and experience among themselves as they evolve toward democracy. Given the severely limited resources of domestic media, RFE's traditional role of cross-reporting among East European nations is now more important than ever. RFE/RL's new bureaus in Budapest, Prague and Warsaw, supported by expanding networks of local freelance correspondents in all eight audience countries, serve this need. In Budapest, for example, multi-lingual freelance correspondents who are Hungarian nationals file reports to Munich through the RFE/RL bureau to the Russian, Czechoslovak, Romanian, and other services as well as to RFE's Hungarian service.
- **A force for interethnic regional harmony.** The recent violence in Transylvania underscores a potential in several countries for instability arising from old ethnic hostilities. RFE is serving as a force for reconciliation and harmony by bringing moderate voices from minority and majority communities together on the air, and by exploring the lessons Western Europe and the United States offer for interethnic relations.
- **Stimulating development of independent, professional media.** A free press is a free-market in information. Free markets are driven by competition. One of the most direct and immediate effects RFE can have over the next several years will be to help raise the level of professionalism in East Europe media, by example and by offering healthy competition for domestic broadcasters.”<sup>83</sup>

The sixth point seemed to be the most crucial and also most appropriate and feasible for RFE as a radio station to be accepted in its audience countries not as a foreign voice but as an alternative domestic medium, local journalists - especially in radio and television - regarded RFE as the one to beat. For the first time, they were free to compete. The major four aspects to RFE's interaction with domestic media were:

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<sup>83</sup> RFE/RL - An Evolving Mission to Build Democracy. Internal RFE/RL document, May 1990, pp.8-10.

- **“Filling the Voids** - Despite the end of censorship, RFE’s domestic news coverage is often faster and more comprehensive. Its international coverage (including from within Eastern Europe) is unmatched by any other news medium. Competition is driving improvements, not only in domestic media but also RFE.
- **On-the-job Training for Local Journalists.** RFE’s domestic reporting relies increasingly on networks of local freelance correspondents filing reports by telephone to Munich or through RFE/RL bureaus to all eight RFE services. By this summer, at least 40 such correspondents will be gaining valuable experience working for a Western news organization. RFE has already begun to bring small numbers of journalists and students to Munich as trainee-interns.
- **Setting Western-style Professional Standards.** RFE is encouraging the discussions and development of Western-style codes of journalistic ethics in Eastern Europe. By adherence to its own detailed Professional Guidelines, RFE seeks to present a model of calm, balanced and intelligent reporting and discourse. Audience surveys indicate that many listeners use RFE as a standard by which they measure the quality of domestic media.
- **Cooperation with East European Media.** RFE is helping to support several small, independent new information services in Eastern Europe by acting as a client. RFE also permits newspapers and journals to use commentaries and analysis, so long as no editorial changes are made. In selected instances, RFE has participated in joint round-table discussions and cooperative programs with East European radios.”<sup>84</sup>

Building the institutions of democracy, including a free press, was a far more difficult and prolonged process than dismantling the institutions of dictatorship. Ending censorship did not instantly or automatically create a free and impartial press. Old habits of subservience, self-censorship and Leninist thinking had to be unlearned over a period of years. RFE’s mission was to help this process in various ways, mainly by providing a model of fair, objective journalism and by friendly competition with Czechoslovakia’s domestic media. Many former dissidents heavily criticised the Czechoslovak media and their approach to the new democratic order. They considered their role and help in building a new state as almost contradictory. The media, which had years of “training” prior to 1989, were very careful about what they were publishing in the new state order. The topics of articles were carefully chosen, and examined from every side, to make sure they did not contain

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<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.11.

something that could offend someone, somewhere. When something was really at stake, most of the media were silent. Such was the case when the presidential amnesty was announced, something which was, according to Václav Havel and many other new official representatives, absolutely necessary as an act of justice. The press, radio and television would only announce news items about how another former prisoner had, for example, attacked or robbed someone without any commentary. At the same time, all journalists had to know that the extensive amnesty was absolutely necessary. Thus, the foreign radio stations, above all RFE, were still, several months after the Velvet Revolution, the only free, objective and reliable mass media broadcasting in Czechoslovakia just as they had been before. As a radio station independent of the structures within the country, financially independent and totally non-partisan, foreign radio stations were at that time the only objective observers of the newly forming Czechoslovak democracy; able to point out all dangers in time. Many ordinary people, as well as representatives of the state and media itself, were expressing the need for RFE's broadcasting at that crucial time for these precise reasons. For instance, Radomír Malý, Editor of Czechoslovak Daily Lidová Demokracie, expressed his views in a letter addressed to RFE/RL as follows:

“The establishment of democracy in Central Europe has not reduced the significance of Radio Free Europe. There still exist and will probably exist for some time to come, the so-called dark forces - the mafia of former secret policemen, spineless CP apparatchiks, members of the former party nomenclature, etc. These people - although the probability is light it cannot be entirely ruled out - might try to reverse the state of things back to what it was. Therefore it is necessary for Radio Free Europe to stand on the sidelines to be there in the event that the free exchange of information is not automatic. Judging by all kinds of different phenomena, we still have reasons to fear this possibility. But even in the event that this peril ceased to exist, RFE is nevertheless needed. The Czechoslovak citizen needs to hear information and commentaries from someone who has been living outside of the country and is not encumbered by the problems from the inside, someone who has a broader range of view, which makes for a better quality picture of himself and his country. He learns to be objective, he is learning democracy and is not closed off in his hermetically sealed off ghetto.”<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Thanks to RFE - internal translation of letters from listeners, April 1990. Radomír Malý, Editor of daily Lidová Demokracie, member of the Czechoslovak People's Party, representative of the Christian Union for Human Rights.

Similar urgent requests were also coming from the political establishment such as the Board of the Czechoslovak Democratic Initiative - Liberal Political Party which addressed RFE/RL with following words:

“The leadership of the Czechoslovak Democratic Initiative are pointing out with all urgency the irreplaceable mission of Radio Free Europe. At the present time there is a growing market of a free exchange of information and views. The process is a gradual and difficult one and from its very beginnings threatened by the newly forming forces of the old communist and police system. The existence of a totally independent broadcasting station, albeit outside of Czechoslovakia, is exceptionally significant precisely in this extreme situation, significant for the creation of a free pluralistic structure of Czechoslovak political life. We rightly fear that the journey which we have just embarked upon, might be hindered by these newly mobilizing destructive forces. Therefore we consider Radio Free Europe’s broadcasts to Czechoslovakia as very necessary and in fact, unconditionally necessary, even for the future. Our citizens are relying on serious and truthful information from RFE.”<sup>86</sup>

## **4 RFE’s Czechoslovak Broadcasting Department - Early 1990s Perspective**

### ***4.1 RFE at the Centre of Revolutionary Events in Czechoslovakia***

As the situation in Czechoslovakia in autumn 1989 was becoming serious, RFE Deputy Director Robert Gillet wrote a letter to the Czechoslovak Embassy requesting a journalist visa for Pavel Pecháček. It took a remarkably short time to get an answer which, to everyone’s surprise, was positive. It was the first time a member of RFE’s Czechoslovak BD had been allowed into the country. Mr Pecháček commented on this event with astonishment “I still cannot explain it. The Czechoslovak Ambassador in Bonn, Dušan Spáčil, was the same man who called for the liquidation of the Radios at the Conference on the Free Flow of Information in London.”<sup>87</sup> But of course, I was not about to question

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<sup>86</sup> Thanks to RFE - internal translation of letters from listeners, April 1990. The Board of the Czechoslovak Democratic Initiative - Liberal Political Party.

<sup>87</sup> Held in London in November 1989. (Author’s note).

the decision.”<sup>88</sup> Mr Pecháček arrived in Prague on Tuesday 21 November. When the hotel manager at Wenceslas Square found out about his arrival, he immediately ordered him a different room facing the square. That was from where the first live report about the events happening below his window was sent to RFE/RL headquarters in Munich.<sup>89</sup>

Pavel Pecháček’s trip to Czechoslovakia put him at the centre of dramatic developments in the country. He was able to provide hours of actual eye-witness programming from the scene of the demonstrations. “With our live coverage of events from Prague, RFE was able to keep people all over the country informed. We were the only radio broadcasting uncensored information from the centre of events for the Czechoslovak people. The government controlled electronic media remained silent. The secret police even threw stacks of newspapers from the trains leaving Prague to keep people outside the capital from reading about the demonstrations. Our broadcasting was especially important as we were able to transmit the atmosphere and determination from Wenceslas Square which then encouraged people all over the country.”<sup>90</sup> The British newspaper *The Times* later quoted a student leader in Slovakia as saying “The RFE broadcast from Prague was our signal, like a flame. We had contacts with the student movement in Prague and we made ourselves the database for the passing of information and plans for workers all over Slovakia.”<sup>91</sup> However, the freedom of Pecháček’s broadcasting from Prague did not last long. His visa was annulled on 24 November and the reporter was expelled two days before the visa was due to expire. Nevertheless, his presence surpassed all expectations at, perhaps, the most crucial time in the nations’ history and spread the news of it across the country and globe.

## ***4.2 RFE Czechoslovak Broadcasting: A New Beginning***

The jamming of RFE/RL broadcasting by Communist authorities officially ceased towards the end of 1988. However, the listenership of RFE’s Czechoslovak broadcasting did not increase as expected. The radio management put such a development down to internal problems. Therefore, it was decided to appoint a new Director in 1989, which later proved to be one of the most important decisions with far-reaching consequences. RFE was

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<sup>88</sup> RFE/RL’s monthly *Shortwaves*, December 1989, pp. 1.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>90</sup> Author’s interview with Pavel Pecháček, RFE/RL Headquarters Prague, April 2012.

<sup>91</sup> *The Times* (UK) 30 Nov 1990, pp.11.

fortunate to attract Pavel Pecháček<sup>92</sup>, formerly the successful Director of Voice of America's Czechoslovak Service, and Director of the Czechoslovak BD. Shortly after he assumed the Directorship on 1 August 1989, he started to implement various changes which he believed would not only lead to the improvement of broadcasting itself but also to a greater popularity in terms of listenership. He succeeded in resolving past personality clashes and other conflicts within the Service, ending polemics and initiating recruitment activities. Furthermore, his excellent contacts with the new leaders of Czechoslovakia, including President Havel himself, brought great potential to RFE's development.

The listenership of RFE in Czechoslovakia, like in other countries in similar situations, peaked in autumn 1989, before starting to decrease slightly at the beginning of 1990. The decline in RFE's popularity can be explained by the overall euphoria spreading across the country immediately after the November events accompanied by erroneous ideas that the fall of communism automatically led to the establishment of a fully functioning democratic order. However, the developments of the following months showed how mistaken these thoughts were and people realised how great the need for RFE broadcasting was. A prompt reaction in order to attract audiences back was, therefore, necessary. Thus, Pecháček helped the RFE Management, to redefine the mission of the CS BD and introduced corresponding programme adjustments. He promptly organised RFE's Prague Bureau, which opened in May 1990. Consequently, in August 1990 RFE started, for the first time in its history, broadcasting from the country of its interest. This was possible thanks to the agreement among RFE and the Czechoslovak Administration of Radio-communication office signed on 19 July of the same year which provided for the use of three Czechoslovak medium-wave transmitters. In accordance, the provisional Czechoslovak government permitted RFE to broadcast into the country using local transmitters. This step was unprecedented as it was the first time in history that a former alien radio station was permitted to use the very same transmitters as the national radio. This meant that the signal and coverage of RFE's broadcasting was of similar quality to that of the Czechoslovak Radio.<sup>93</sup> The results of the new CS BD management efforts were immediately obvious in the summer. After the shift to medium-wave transmitter broadcasting together with the many programme changes initiated by Pavel Pecháček and his team, the listenership was consistently on the rise again. This was also due to the

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<sup>92</sup> Pavel Pecháček worked at RFE in Munich from 1968-1974. He left to the VOA based in Washington in 1974 when his father, Jaroslav Pecháček, became the President of the radio station.

<sup>93</sup> RFE/RL press release, 30 August 1990

general elections of June 1990 about which people had a strong desire to be objectively informed.

Nevertheless, the great success of using the Czechoslovak transmitters were preceded by a long set of negotiations. It all started in February 1990 when a delegation from Czechoslovak Radio visited the RFE/RL Headquarters in Munich in order to work on mutual relations. On this occasion, RFE representatives were informed about the availability of transmitters in Czechoslovakia and immediately started investigating the matter. Moreover, Czechoslovak Radio expressed interest in cooperating with RFE in a variety of other areas. Its Director, Václav Vrabec, even suggested that RFE organise joint coverage of the upcoming elections. However, the early relationship between the two radio stations was not ideal. The Czechoslovak radio perceived RFE as a rival which no longer had justification. What was more, RFE served in many ways as a substitute for Czechoslovak Radio, through both its coverage of various topics and its popularity.<sup>94</sup>

Broadcasting of RFE for Czechoslovakia on commonly used shortwave frequency which had lasted for decades finally ended on 5 November 1990 and the whole system switched to medium wave frequency - 1287 kHz. This meant that RFE broadcasting was closer to its targeted listeners and of a higher quality. However, some listeners criticised the complete abandonment of the shortwave frequency as they had a shorter range and Czechoslovaks living in the USA or Canada could not tune into them.<sup>95</sup>

#### **4.2.1 Czechoslovak Broadcasting Department: New Challenges**

Competitive disputes and transmitter switches were, nonetheless, minor problems compared to those that the Czechoslovak Broadcasting Department and its team had to face in the years to follow. The whole RFE/RL establishment had to deal with perhaps the most vibrant and dangerous era to threaten the station's entire existence. As early as the beginning of 1990, the leadership of RFE initiated a shortening of programming, the process which was eventually intended to lead to a complete abolition of RFE's existence. Mr Pecháček, together with most employees of the radio, fundamentally disagreed with this perspective and persistently fought to defend RFE's continuing existence as they

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<sup>94</sup> RFE/RL's President Gene Pell's letter to the Director of Czechoslovak Radio, Václav Vrabec 31<sup>st</sup> May 1990, Pavel Pecháček's private archive.

<sup>95</sup> Letter to RFE, 26.2.1991, Vajda Jaromír- "Svobodná Evropa, jen jediný kmitočet?"

believed it still had an important function. He expressed this view in a letter to Ross Johnson, a senior executive of RFE/RL from April 1990 as follows “After the euphoria of the past several months following the marked change in the Czechoslovak media, the listeners are returning to RFE in mass numbers. I anticipated this development. In Czechoslovakia all problems have not been solved by far. A truly functioning democracy is far away and its birth will be accompanied by great pains. In helping establish true democracy in Czechoslovakia, RFE will play a significant and irreplaceable role for a long time to come. This can also be seen from an increasing response to RFE broadcasts coming from Czechoslovakia. We have to help Czechoslovakia on her difficult journey back to Europe, so that one day there may come to be a Europe without borders.”<sup>96</sup>

At that time, Pavel Pecháček probably did not quite anticipate how prophetic these words would be. As he was deeply concerned about the situation in his homeland, he developed the idea of Ross Johnson, who suggested programmes reacting to the overall development in the country under a unifying label “The Democratic Experience”. The idea was to introduce the Czechoslovak society to the values and ideologies of democracy, liberal society and a state based on a legal order, doctrines which had been alien to most of the Czechoslovak nation for over 40 years of authoritarian regime. In Pecháček’s view, it was necessary to do more than just to promote democracy and the principles of a free market. He called for cross reporting from different former Eastern Bloc countries as he believed it was important for the Czechoslovak nation to know of the different approaches to problems the others had encountered on their way to democracy. Equally important was to provide programmes concerned with domestic affairs in order to map a number of different routes to the new order. In order to do so, a crucial step for the RFE service was to establish itself in the country and create a network of local correspondents. As the demand for reduction of expenditure was a burning issue, it was necessary to convert and make better use of station’s resources. This was done in several ways: the reorganisation of programming; the reorganisation of the department’s internal structure and changes to work procedures. As the necessity to reduce the volume of programming was inevitable, there was a great concern about an uncontrolled “avalanche effect”. It was, therefore, suggested to coordinate such measures with the Polish BD which was facing a similar

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<sup>96</sup> Pavel Pecháček’s letter to Ross Johnson, 11<sup>th</sup> April 1990.

situation regarding broadcasting time and number of employees as well as with the other RFE Services. The target was to introduce all changes by the end of the 1990 fiscal year.<sup>97</sup>

#### **4.2.2 Programme Changes**

A significant programme shift was the introduction of two basic blocks - Domestic and International - each of 50 minutes, which became the first priority of the new programme scheme. This served as a basis for different editorial structures. All editors and correspondents were to contribute to them. Furthermore, each block was to have its chief editor of the day, who was at the same time the moderator. The new work procedure was based on a simple principle that everyone does everything. “The I do culture, you do domestic block, he does Panorama...type of thinking had to go and be replaced by a new, more universal brand of journalism.”<sup>98</sup> Short individual programs of 10 or 15 minutes were, therefore, considered inefficient and incorporated into larger blocks. As a result, the time for preparation and production was greatly reduced. In addition, RFE programmes focused more on a “classical radio journalism” meaning that employees were encouraged to learn how to use their voices and gain experience in covering events and making interviews among other areas. Correspondingly, editors had to undergo training courses in order to learn how to operate recording equipment. This was in an attempt to improve sound quality.<sup>99</sup>

The broadcasting concept of CS BD changed accordingly as the developments in the country progressed. Whilst there were still information about international affairs, greater attention was paid to the domestic political situation. For instance, the programme “Hlasý a Ohlasý” - Voices and Responses, analysed different issues in great depth and attempted to suggest solutions. On the other hand, the old scheme programmes such as Cultural Magazine, Lessons in History, Bridges, Gong, Living Church, Telephone Replies, Uncensored Literature had to be gradually cut. One thing, however, remained unchanged. The original repeat of broadcasts and other programmes designed to overcome jamming

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<sup>97</sup> Author’s interview with Olga Kopecká, RFE/RL Headquarters Prague, May 2012.

<sup>98</sup> Author’s interview with Pavel Pecháček, RFE/RL Headquarters Prague, April 2012.

<sup>99</sup> Pavel Pecháček’s Memorandum on Alternative Programme Concepts of RFE/RL’s CS BD, April 1990.

during the Cold War persisted even during the 1990s as it proved to be an appropriate substitute for the decrease in original broadcasts caused by budget cuts.<sup>100</sup>

In reporting on open society, RFE/RL programmes reflected their diversity and free competition of ideas, and covered their problems and setbacks as well as their achievements. Most listeners found the open political, economic and social processes through which problems were identified and approached in open societies, and through which solutions were formulated, criticised, debated and reviewed as a welcome change. As a great portion of population, particularly the younger generation, would not have known the basic principles of democracy and open society, care was taken to explain how decisions were made on various social levels - by executive, legislative and judicial branches of government; at national, provincial and local levels; by the independent media of public opinion; and by concerned individuals, multiple voluntary associations, civic groups and free political parties.<sup>101</sup>

#### **4.2.3 RFE Enhancing the level of Czechoslovak Journalism**

Apart from promoting the ideas of liberalism and democratic society, CS BD had another important mission to fulfil - to educate local journalists and guide them towards a higher quality of journalism. This was, in fact, an initiative of the whole RFE/RL establishment. Various departments cooperated on educational programmes designed for media representatives from post-communist countries. Among the most significant were study tours, internships and, for the most aspiring journalists, even prospects of freelance cooperation. The launching event of this programme was a one-month study tour for a dozen Czechoslovak journalists to travel around the United States in March 1990. The visit was arranged by the United States Information agency (USIA) and CS BD of RFE/RL and took the participants to several American cities to study how free press operated. Many more such tours followed in the subsequent years. Similarly, RFE granted many internships to young, as well as experienced, journalists in its Headquarters in Munich. The essential tasks for them to perform were writing articles about the station for Czechoslovak newspapers and contributing broadcast scripts.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Broadcast schedule of CS BD, applicable from 5 November 1990, Pavel Pecháček's private archive.

<sup>101</sup> Author's interview with Olga Kopecká, RFE/RL Headquarters Prague, May 2012.

<sup>102</sup> RFE/RL Memorandum on Educational Programmes, 6.4. 1990.

Furthermore, in order to address a wider audience spectrum, together with informing Czechoslovak media how to create Western style talk shows, a project called “At the Invitation of Radio Free Europe” was introduced during 1991. The TV show initiated and presented by the CS BD was based on cooperation with the Czech television station, F1. It was essentially a monthly television programme conceived as a talk show, recorded in Prague in F1 studios and moderated by members of the Czechoslovak BD such as Pavel Pecháček or Lída Rakušanová. Among guests invited were representatives of political and cultural life such as President Václav Havel.<sup>103</sup>

## **5 RFE and Dissolution of Czechoslovakia and Move to Prague**

### ***5.1 Reflection of the Events of 1993***

As Czechoslovakia split into two separate republics, RFE CS broadcasting followed the same line. As of 4 January 1993, the Czechoslovak department had to follow the rules of distribution of broadcasting time and employees for its Czech and Slovak operations. The principal was exactly the same as at state level in proportion of Czech to Slovak broadcasting of 2:1. The broadcasting in Czech accounted for 8 hours a day from which 5 hours were of original content, prepared by 40 employees. The 24-member Slovak Service had a four-hour broadcasting day with more than two hours of original programmes. The length of the broadcasting day reflected the demographic breakdown of the Czech Republic and Slovakia. The Czech BD then expanded its “Democratic Experience” programme as well as “Voices of Czechoslovakia” in order to provide useful programming which applied to specific problems facing the Czech people.<sup>104</sup> The establishment of the Slovak branch of the RFE was an expression of respecting for the evolution taking place within the country, based on free and democratic expression of the will of citizens of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic manifested in the elections. The Slovak branch wanted to build on the experience of the Czechoslovak Department. However, they stated that they saw the establishment of their own department as a chance to improve the overall broadcasting service. They regarded the present system as impractical and ineffective as, according to them, it provided little flexibility in editorial

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<sup>103</sup> Author’s interview with Pavel Pecháček, RFE/RL Headquarters Prague, April 2012.

<sup>104</sup> RFE/RL imonthly Shortwaves, January 1993,pp. 1.

and production work which was resulting in working time being insufficiently exploited. Despite all the difficulties and even some hard feelings, the two services separated peacefully with arrangements for further cooperation within the RFE/RL network as well as on an individual basis.

Even though the CS BD was undergoing turbulent times, its popularity was consistently increasing. At the beginning of 1993, Pavel Pecháček, who remained in his position of the Service's Director, announced that the CS BD had, in the previous year, the highest listenership ratings among all 23 departments of RFE/RL, which was an extraordinary achievement. Similarly, the audience analysis survey from May 1993, conducted by AISA agency for the first quarter of 1993, showed that the audience figures for RFE Czech broadcasting stood at 25% for listeners who tune in at least once a week. The figure for regular listeners was about 13%. The survey also indicated that listening levels were higher among residents of Prague, among university graduates and among men. RFE's large audience reached a broad spectrum of social groups, but it was typified by listenership among those who were leading the process of social change in the country, either through economic and political activism or intellectual activity. Almost half of RFE's listeners fitted this description. Other findings showed the detailed reasons that listeners had for tuning into the Munich-based radio service. They felt that RFE was more objective, timely, thorough and insightful than the domestic media and closer to the Czech people and their concerns than other international broadcasters. Listeners also highly valued RFE for its professionalism and the depth of its analysis, as well as for being a representative of democratic journalism and a model for democratic media to emulate. Furthermore, they regarded RFE as playing an important role as an educator in areas such as economics, politics, democratic practices and social issues. The research findings were overall very satisfying and showed that RFE's position as an outside Western observer had not only led to substantial credibility, but had also allowed it to provide useful perspectives on future changes in the Czech Republic.<sup>105</sup>

## ***5.2 The Move to Prague***

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<sup>105</sup> RFE/RL CS BD Research Memorandum July 1993, pp.. 2-5.

In 1994, the radio station went even further in terms of its independence. For the first time in the history of the RFE/RL service, Czech programmes originated entirely from the within the country, from studios in Prague. The RFE's Czech operations in Munich formally ceased on 30 June 1994 and officially started in Prague the following day. RFE's Czech programmes were then produced by a new, independent, non-commercial US corporation operating in Prague and called RSE Inc. (Rádio Svobodná Evropa, Incorporated).<sup>106</sup> Its new base became the rented premises of Czech Radio in Prague. The new operations were headed again by Pavel Pecháček, who until then had been the director of RFE's Czech Service. The new body was set up to supply Czech programmes to Radio Free Europe under a contract. This all happened as a result of the US Congress ordering RFE/RL to seek new ways to privatise - though not necessary to commercialise - some of its operations. As a first step, RFE/RL's Czech and Polish broadcasting were re-established in Prague and Warsaw respectively. The creation of an independent corporation for Czech broadcasting was authorised by the Board of Directors of RFE/RL, from which the RSE Board of Directors<sup>107</sup> was drawn. This was in order to formally govern the new service and yet still remain under American supervision. The new Czech organisation continued to use RFE/RL worldwide news and research services to provide Czech listeners with accurate news and impartial analysis of developments in the Czech Republic, the region and around the world. The Americans agreed that the service would be entirely funded for by the Congress for a period of fifteen months from the launch of broadcasting from Prague. Its future thereafter was to be decided by both the Czechs and Americans. The latter still operated with the plan of either abolishing the RSE and other regional broadcasting by RFE/RL or just shifting mainly the financial responsibility of it to the relevant countries.<sup>108</sup> However, at that time it was, in many respects, a victory as the broadcasting did not cease completely, but rather continued with fifteen members of the Czech editorial staff remaining. There were even strong hopes, supported by the development in America that the whole RFE/RL operations could relocate from Munich to Prague as early as the following year.

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<sup>106</sup> These changes resulted from the new legislation passed in the spring of 1994 by the US Congress and signed by President Clinton in April of the same year.

<sup>107</sup> Members of the RSE Board of Directors were Daniel A. Mica, a former member of the US Congress; Kenneth Tomlinson, a former director of the Voice of America and the worldwide editor-in-chief of Raeder's Digest magazine; and Lane Kirkland, President of the AFL-CIO, the leading American trade union organisation.

<sup>108</sup> RFE Director Robert Gillette Memorandum on RSE, July 1994; Author's interview with Pavel Pecháček, RFE/RL Headquarters Prague, April 2012.

President Havel welcomed these developments and presented reasons for his immense support of RFE, both during the Communist era and more importantly afterwards, in an interview for RSE on 12 November 1994. Radio employees regarded him as a *de facto* joint creator of Czech broadcasting who had substantially influenced the decision for its continuation and potential move of the whole corporation of RFE/RL to Prague. Havel commented on it as follows:

“I believe that this move has been an immeasurable strategic significance for our country. When Prague becomes the place from where the whole troubled area of the former Soviet Union is being served by broadcasting - that is by Radio Liberty - and the whole Radio Europe is based in Prague, then this will be a clear indication that we belong to the West. That the message of freedom emanates from here, from this country and that we therefore belong to this free world. This moves us to the West by leaps and bounds, without having to pay billions. Maybe, we could even make some profit in the form of rent. However, I can hardly imagine that for example - and God forbid - in a situation of some threat, some confrontational situation in Europe, the West would abandon us as easily as at the time of the Munich Treaty, when it now has put here a radio station that spreads through the world the basic values of the West and of freedom. This is in my opinion immensely important for our republic from the political and strategic point of view. I cannot imagine that this radio would be based in Prague and at the same time not broadcast in Czech. That does not make any sense, but I mainly feel that this broadcasting is of good quality, that it creates a good competition for Czech Radio, in many respects being often of better quality and I could point out in which things in particular. I would regard it as a great loss for the free media milieu here, if this voice, this medium were missing. Perhaps also because there are people there, editors who have lived in the West for a long time, who have extensive experiences that many of our editors do not possess. And those experiences are being put to good use in their work and thus set high standards for others to look up to.”<sup>109</sup>

As the prospective of relocation of all RFE/RL broadcasting to Prague was becoming more and more likely, calls from some radical groups or former communist ranks against such a move emerged. The most significant was perhaps the petition initiated by the former Deputy of the Supreme Court of Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, Emanuel Kubín. He argued that it would be principally against Czech law as the stations were financed by

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<sup>109</sup> RSE Interview with Czech President Václav Havel, 12<sup>th</sup> November 1994 - official RSE translation, Pavel Pecháček's private archive.

foreign government. However, according to Igor Němec, the head of the Czech Government Office, a potential RFE/RL operation in the Czech Republic would not be in conflict with the Legislation on Radio and Television Broadcasting (zákon č.468/1991 Sb.).<sup>110</sup> The RFE/RL President, Robert Gillette reacted by stating that the stations' status was as a "private non-profit corporation" and therefore could not be regarded as governmental in any way.<sup>111</sup>

### ***5.3 Cooperation with Czech Radio***

The cooperation between CS BD, later to become RSE, and Czechoslovak Radio, later Czech Radio (Český Rozhlas - ČRo) started very shortly after the events of November 1989. Although there were some minor disputes, mainly over competition, the general relations were continually improving. This was proved by the previously mentioned leasing of Czech Radio premises for RSE's operations. The actual contract was signed by Pavel Pecháček, in his title of director of RSE, and the Managing Director of ČRo, Vlastimil Ježek on 22 March 1994. Both sides stated that such move did not mean any sort of merger or mutual dependence.<sup>112</sup>

However, a year after ČRo accommodated RSE in its building on Vinohradská Třída, the two directors announced a further development in mutual relations. The press conference of 28 June 1995 revealed the plans for a new radio station named Český Rozhlas 6/Rádio Svobodná Evropa (ČRo6/RSE).<sup>113</sup> The actual broadcasting was launched on 6 November 1995. The newly established radio station was fundamentally based on cooperation of six previously existing services: Czech Radio, the Czech and Slovak sections of RFE, the Czech Section of Voice of America, the Czech Section of Deutsche Welle and BBC World Service Czech.<sup>114</sup> Due to the unusual number of parties cooperating in this project, the programmes themselves, as well as the broadcasting schedule, were rather unusual too. The ČRo6/RSE specialised in serious, non-commercial content with a focus on the analysis of current domestic and international affairs. It was aiming at a minor audience of

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<sup>110</sup> For more details see above.

<sup>111</sup> The RFE/RL President Robert Gillette Statement on petition against RFE/RL, December 1994, Pavel Pecháček's private archive.

<sup>112</sup> ČTK press release, Český rozhlas a Svobodná Evropa: smlouva o vysílání, 22 March 1994.

<sup>113</sup> Czech radio 6/Radio Free Europe.

<sup>114</sup> MORAVEC, Václav. *Deset let duálního systému rozhlasového vysílání (1989-1999)*. Praha: Český rozhlas, 2000, 1st edition, pp. 33-34. 159 pages.

intellectuals with interests in culture, politics, the economy and social issues. The RSE Director Pavel Pecháček praised the cooperation between all stations assisting in this project “I consider it a Czech phenomenon - nowhere in the world have former competitors been able to switch to real cooperation. Elsewhere such a reliable and high-quality radio station could emerge only with difficulties at such low costs.”<sup>115</sup> The cooperation continued until 2002 when American officials decided to pull the plug on RSE. However, the ČRo6 continued to broadcast, living the RSE legacy.<sup>116</sup>

## 6 The Ever Present Threat of Closure

After the revolutionary changes toward the end of 1989, questions were immediately asked as to what would happen to these stations, which had originally been established to broadcast behind the Iron Curtain, once it had finally fallen. The vital question was whether they would be outmoded and no longer needed. The RFE/RL themselves, together with new democratic leaders such as Václav Havel and Lech Wałęsa, called for the stations to be preserved as, according to them, they had not yet completed their mission. The argument was that the recent developments throughout Central and Eastern Europe were only an opening act in a historic drama as these countries underwent the transformation from communism. No one dared to predict where exactly this transformation would lead them. There were no guarantees that the result would be the establishment of prosperous and stable democratic states as the West hoped for. However, there were strong voices among the US Government for the immediate end of RFE/RL as a “Cold War relic.” The Czech leaders and audience fundamentally disagreed and on many occasions pleaded with President Bush and later Clinton to keep it going. As a reaction to these urgent calls, President George Bush issued a statement immediately in November 1989. “The Radio’s mission is not yet complete. As long as peoples of the USSR and Eastern Europe continue to be denied full national sovereignty and human rights, as long as there remains the threat of reversal in the positive trend toward greater democratization in the East, there will be a need for organizations like Radio Free Europe

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<sup>115</sup> RSE press release, 6 November 1995.

<sup>116</sup> For more details on the development of this station see MORAVEC, Václav. *Deset let duálního systému rozhlasového vysílání (1989-1999)*. Praha: Český rozhlas, 2000, 1st edition, and RFE/RL official webpages.

and Radio Liberty.”<sup>117</sup> However, he was under great pressure in the subsequent months and years to reduce the cost of American foreign broadcasting and even abolish some of its services.

All American foreign broadcasting operations - a form of defence establishment of the United States - were facing difficulties regarding the reductions and possible abolition as early as the beginning of 1990. The greatest concerns were especially over RFE/RL and Voice of America (VOA).<sup>118</sup> The latter was the first and most affected as it suffered budget cuts forcing it to curtail some language services. For the fiscal year of 1990 the VOA, which broadcasted in considerably more languages - including English - to considerably more countries and regions, had to operate with a budget of just under \$171 million with further cuts for following years.<sup>119</sup> On the contrary, RFE/RL with a considerably smaller and more specialised service of 23 languages without English broadcasting, did not encounter such cuts at that time and its budget was actually higher, reaching nearly \$200 million a year. Nevertheless, the future of RFE/RL was still in doubt as there were consistent calls for its partial or total abolition in the ensuing years.<sup>120</sup> Therefore, the competition between these two services was getting tenser as it was not just for the audience and prestige as in previous years but for mere existence.

There were numerous suggestions throughout the first half of the 1990s on how to solve this whole unpleasant situation between the US foreign broadcasting services. Some USIA<sup>121</sup> officials suggested that the RFE/RL should be merged with Voice of America and their resources shared. There were also suggestions to create an independent public institution like the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and thus make all US foreign broadcasting unified. The USIA Commission's report from May 1990 stressed the intensifying financial difficulties: “A resources decline that began in 1985 continues. Field staffing remains at the lowest level in the Agency's history. Cutbacks have forced

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<sup>117</sup> Message from President George Bush for RFE/RL Fund's Conference in Washington DC, November 1989.

<sup>118</sup> Unlike RFE/RL, VOA broadcasted globally, originally in 43 languages, including its service for Czechoslovakia. It was founded during the WWII in 1942 and later also broadcasted to Eastern Europe and Soviet Union.

<sup>119</sup> DAVID BINDER, Special to The New York Times. *Evolution in Europe; As Cold War Recedes, Radio Services Face Cuts Published*: June 29, 1990. <http://www.nytimes.com/1990/06/29/world/evolution-in-europe-as-cold-war-recedes-radio-services-face-cuts.html?pagewanted=all&src=pm>

<sup>120</sup> As Radio Liberty's mission was to broadcast exclusively to the Soviet Union, its continued usefulness was not questioned as much as the US officials were aware of its vital importance for the perilous times ahead.

<sup>121</sup> The United States Information Agency - the agency which operated the Voice of America and other stations, with the exception of RFE/RL which was operated by BIB as described in the previous chapters.

reductions in programs and broadcast hours at the VOA and significantly delayed the modernization program.”<sup>122</sup>

As a reaction to the intensifying debate on this topic, the US National Security Council, which had a major say in setting US foreign policy, immediately started reviewing the mission and structure of all US international broadcasting efforts during 1990. Some members of Congress also favoured establishing a special presidential commission to study the long-term mission and structure of all services. In the meantime, President Bush reiterated the message from his original statement from late 1989 that there was a continuing need for both RFE/RL and VOA to support the establishment of democracy, human rights and national sovereignty in Eastern and Central Europe. However, the radio debate was sharpened in May 1990 as the Presidential Commission on Public Diplomacy issued a report urging plans to terminate some of RFE’s language services and eventually transfer its resources to VOA. The Board for International Broadcasting, RFE/RL’s overseeing body, strongly opposed this suggestion and accused the Commission of non-objective perspective undoubtedly favouring VOA. This was, though, in complete contradiction to the preferences of listeners in the countries where both stations broadcasted, the RFE was by far the most listened foreign radio station.<sup>123</sup> For reference see Appendix no.4.

The demands of RFE/RL members to keep the service running were heard by the Board for International Broadcasting at its meeting in Munich in September 1990 during which the mission of RFE/RL and the principles of surrogate broadcasting were reaffirmed. The Board noted that millions of people in Central and Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union continued to depend on RFE/RL as an independent source of objective news, commentary and analysis and that the need for its broadcast had never been greater. In addition, an emphasis was put on maintaining the present levels of RFE/RL broadcasting with progress towards democratic rule in the countries to which broadcasts were directed. BIB also made several recommendations for the RFE/RL services such as attempt to acquire access to medium-wave and FM transmission facilities in all countries that were served. Furthermore, it was suggested to explore opportunities to at least partially privatise the

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<sup>122</sup> The USIA - A Commemoration p56. <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/usia/abtusia/commins.pdf>

<sup>123</sup> Programme Guidance, OFFICE OF RFE Director; 16 May 1990

broadcast services through such means as commercial funding and private and institutional support.<sup>124</sup>

Even though there were many pressures on US officials, foremost President Bush, both favouring and opposing the abolition of some American foreign broadcasters, the final decision was still to be made. The White House National Security Council directive from late 1991 suggested that US Government funding for broadcasts to Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland were to cease at the end of 1993. However, President George Bush appointed yet another commission to help him reach the final decision - a White House Commission examining US international radio and television broadcasting - a task force to help determine possible solutions and the future of these projects at the end of April 1991. It consisted of a panel of eleven bipartisan members and initially was to examine all aspects of US federally-funded international broadcasting in the overall context of US foreign policy and public diplomacy approach. This included Radio and TV Marti, which broadcasted to Cuba, the Voice of America, RFE/RL and the US Information Agency's WorldNet TV service. Most members of the Commission were fighting for these broadcasts to continue, foremost was David Abshire, chairman of the BIB between 1974 and 1977.<sup>125</sup>

Abshire defended the existence of RFE by pointing out that there was a crisis in Eastern Europe which called for continued US Government funding for RFE. The government leaders of all three respective countries also endorsed the idea of continued RFE broadcasts when requested by the members of the Commission during their visit to Eastern Europe earlier in 1991. Mr Abshire stated numerous reasons for RFE to continue at the Commission meeting in June 1991. He said that there were "enormous uncertainties" in the region and that media were not of much help to enhance it as the quality of journalism was very low and extremely partisan in nature. The Commission operated for six months and then reported its findings directly to the President together with their recommendations on the best organisational structure. The original plan was to create one organisation and structure under which all US international broadcasting elements, until then fractured under various overseeing bodies, would be consolidated.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> BIB Memorandum on future of RFE/RL, 28 September 1990.

<sup>125</sup> White House Commission meeting minutes, 27 April 1992.

<sup>126</sup> RFE/RL B-wire internal report, 30 April 1992; RFE/RL monthly Shortwaves, June 1992, pp.2.

During 1992, there was a continuous pressure to decrease the American budget. This naturally led to repeated considerations over the expenditure of foreign broadcasting. In August, President Bush's Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy yet again recommended the phasing out of RFE/RL as, according to their findings, the stations had outlived their mission. The Chairman of the Commission, Tom C. Korlogos, explained that the broadcasts, which cost over \$200 million a year, largely duplicated those of the Voice of America. On the contrary, this service, promoting America and its values should be, according to recommendations, strengthened. Similarly, there were calls for a focus on new broadcasting areas, such as China, which still suffered under dictatorships.<sup>127</sup> The last remark was another important deciding factor throughout 1992 when the possibility for setting up new services for Asia similar to RFE/RL became a reality. The big question was whether to set up a completely new radio station or rely on the existing network and gradually shift the RFE focus toward Asia.

The final decision was repeatedly postponed. However, towards the end of 1992, there was a significant turn in those discussions as Americans finally acknowledged that the need for RFE/RL still existed. Instead of abandoning the whole department, the Americans decided to shut down local supporting bureaus in London, Paris, Rome and Bonn and focus more on broadcasting to the East. This reduced the running costs although not sufficiently. President Bush kept the stations running until the very end of his mandate. He never reached an explicit decision on the future of RFE/RL. It can only be speculation as to whether it was deliberate attempt to prolong the existence of the stations or not. Bush's successor Bill Clinton, however, could not afford to delay the final decision of the overall American foreign broadcasting services much longer. President Clinton was much in favour of RFE/RL and in the general support of post-communist countries in Europe. For instance, he had close ties to the Czech Republic, mainly due to his friendship with President Havel. Thus, during 1993, it was broadly recognised that the development of independent, professional journalism in RFE/RL broadcasted countries was incomplete. As surrogate domestic radio stations, the two services continued to be important sources of accurate news. This was also confirmed by the establishment of a new broadcast<sup>128</sup> in 1994 focused on Yugoslav successor states whose break up was accompanied by severe bloodshed.

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<sup>127</sup> AP press release; Recommendations on RFE/RL phase out, 29 August 1992).

<sup>128</sup> A multicultural broadcast in Serbian, Croatian and Bosnian.

In regards to their future, however, President Clinton wanted to commit to two principal things – creating a more efficient international broadcasting system and saving money in the process. The most appropriate and least harmful solution seemed to be putting all US government backed international broadcasters under one umbrella organisation. In order to achieve these conditions, the President signed the International Broadcasting Act on 30 April 1994, which established the International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) within the US Information Agency (USIA), and also created the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) with oversight authority for all US international broadcasting services. Thus, they were unified, which in turn led to the prevention of broadcasting duplication and more efficient distribution of financial resources.<sup>129</sup>

## **7 RFE/RL's Relocation Plans**

As the discussion on the future of RFE/RL had been ongoing pretty much since the first Communist governments in Europe started falling, RFE/RL employees themselves started considering possible options for their services to survive. One of the obvious solutions to save RFE/RL Inc. was to relocate its operations to a considerably cheaper location, as Munich was proving to be an expensive base. Pavel Pecháček first made the suggestion of relocating to Prague as early as 1990. This option not only made financial sense, but also carried a great symbolic potential. Czechoslovakia was the first country to which RFE broadcasted and also to have a regular service. Consequently, Czechoslovak Broadcasting was always among the top departments regarding both listenership and quality of journalists and content. Furthermore, the Prague option was popular among both Czech political leaders and ordinary people as in the fragile political situation, the broadcasting was crucial for helping maintain the country's direction toward democracy. Furthermore, the Czech Government was also willing to accommodate any of RFE/RL's needs. Foremost was the offer of a former Parliament Building at the top of Wenceslas Square from the Czech authorities as possible premises.

In 1993, RFE/RL already knew that they were to face the challenge of reducing the budget for its operations from \$200 million per year to \$75 million from the 1996 fiscal year. Therefore, as part of the austerity measures, it was decided by RFE/RL representatives

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<sup>129</sup> ČTK Press release, 27.1.1994 Mnichov Petr Vobor; ČTK Press release 136 – 11.1.1994; DUMBRELL, John. *American Foreign Policy: Carter to Clinton*. 1<sup>st</sup> edition London: Macmillan, 1997, pp.190-192.

themselves in October 1993 that Afghan and Hungarian broadcasting would be brought to an end and the Czech and Polish BD would be moved to Prague and Warsaw respectively.<sup>130</sup> Another possibility for the future was relocating the whole of RFE/RL Inc. to either the Czech capital or back to the US, specifically Washington. In order to make the best decision, RFE/RL conducted several studies to investigate the least harmful option. After considering the results of preliminary analysis, the RFE/RL's Board of Directors determined that the services should relocate operations to Prague as part of a restructuring plan. The Board also requested the preparation of an alternative plan to continue operations in Munich for comparison. Issues such as the number of personnel, staff terminations and transfers, renovations, telecommunications and system requirements were all examined.

The final funding for RFE/RL was set at \$75 million annually, regardless of whether operations moved to Prague or remained in Munich. Therefore, it was clear that the restructuring would result in significant staff reductions. Historically, personnel costs constituted 70% of total operating costs. With regards to the Prague plan, the analysis indicated that the relocation costs could be paid for within projected funding for fiscal years 1994 and 1995 and that additional cost reductions would enable RFE/RL to operate in Prague within the \$75 million funding guideline for fiscal year 1996 and subsequent years. The study then recommended moving operations during 1994 and 1995 so that broadcasting in Prague could become effective in 1995 at the latest.<sup>131</sup>

This decision had to await the approval of US Congress and President Clinton which came in early 1995 and the Czech Government generously offered use of the former Federal Parliament building for a symbolic rent of one dollar a month. After these arrangements had been made, the relocation plans could go ahead. The first broadcast from RFE/RL's new headquarters in the former Czechoslovak Federal Parliament building took place on 10 March 1995. The full programming of 725 hours a week was launched two months later on 5 June. The entire operations in Munich were terminated by the end of June and the premises were given to the University of Munich. The whole process of moving was thus completed. According to the President of RFE/RL, Kevin Klose, 60% of all journalists from Munich and Washington relocated to Prague. The RFE/RL then

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<sup>131</sup> RFE/RL Study of Restructuring and Relocating Options, 13 May 1994, pp. 40-41.

broadcasted in 23 languages to an estimated audience of 25 million regular listeners around the world.<sup>132</sup>

## Conclusions

In the late 1980s the defining era of European history was coming to an end. The time of bipolar world order during which Europe was divided into two competing blocs was, after over 40 years, on decline. The unofficial winner of the Cold War competition was the Western bloc, led by America and comprising of all the countries of NATO on the one side, and the defeated Soviet superpower with the Warsaw Pact on the other. However, for many countries of the latter, it was, in fact, a long-awaited liberation from supremacy of communist dictatorship. Similarly, the fall of undemocratic regimes across Europe was of great satisfaction for a unique establishment, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, as its sole existence was based on the fight against undemocratic communist regimes of East-Central Europe and the Soviet Union. In these countries, where media served as a tool of collective propaganda and agitation in accordance with the demands of the Marxist–Leninist press theory for several decades, an independent source of information was very much needed. Many people thus turned to various foreign radio stations such as the BBC or Voice of America. However, for many RFE/RL occupied a special place as it was, from the very beginning, quite different from other Western stations. Not only because of its content, which was far closer to everyday life, but different also in terms of its use of language to which every listener in the broadcasted countries could understand.

However, this unique service had to deal with many new challenges in order to continue to broadcast in the years after the end of the Cold War. RFE/RL was always very flexible in reacting to new unstable situations. As a result, the end of communist rule in Europe and beyond did not come as a great surprise to this service. RFE/RL was able to react to the changing conditions and demands fairly promptly and effectively. In order to accommodate the modified demands of its listeners, RFE/RL implemented changes into its programme structure as early as late 1989. The main task was to make the broadcasting

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<sup>132</sup> RFE/RL Memorandum on Moving to Prague, June 1995; U.S. Radio Services Move Base to Prague, NYT online archive, Published 6 June 1995. Available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/1995/06/06/world/us-radio-services-move-base-to-prague.html?scp=202&sq=radio+free+europe&st=nyt>

more directed at topics which would help increase the pace of democratic development in the areas of economic, political and social life. It was necessary for RFE/RL to deal even more intensely with the domestic situations of the countries they broadcasted to as they were undergoing unprecedented changes. For instance, in the specific case of Czechoslovakia, the main task of RFE broadcasting was to be objective and balanced and avoid any form of external influence, either political or commercial. This was, unfortunately, not the case of domestic media which were easily influenced by negative trends of a free media system such as tabloidisation. This posed another task for RFE/RL within the whole broadcasting area – to serve as a model for local media and to educate local journalists who had a long path to follow before deeply rooted routines of forty years of communist rule could be abandoned completely. RFE/RL thus organised various programmes such as internships and study tours for these journalists in order to help them acquire the basic principles of democratic reporting.

Even though RFE/RL reoriented itself towards the new problems and challenges and consequently played an immensely important role in newly developing democracies of the former Eastern Bloc, there was a general assumption that the services had outlived their mission. The threat of closure or at least the severe reduction of the RFE/RL's broadcasting was a permanent presence throughout the first half of the 1990s. There were various options available, ranging from a total abolition to a merger with other American foreign broadcasting operations. However, the RFE/RL had strong supporters among the new democratic leaders, such as Václav Havel, who continually stressed the need for these services in their homelands in order to help build public understanding for the changes the country had to undergo on its way to the creation of a permanent, free-market democracy.

Finally, Americans realised that their national security and foreign policy interests would be enhanced significantly if democratic governments and free market economies became firmly established in East-Central Europe. Therefore, they eventually acknowledged the importance of their foreign broadcasting even after the end of the Cold War. However, they conditioned its further existence by making significant cuts to their budgets. The only option for RFE/RL to survive was to reduce its expenditure significantly. The least harmful option seemed to be the possibility of relocation, and the most appropriate place as Prague, suggested by Pavel Pecharček. This was both a pragmatic and symbolic choice. The cost of operations of RFE/RL services would be significantly lower than anywhere else. Furthermore, the Czechoslovak Broadcasting Department had always played a

special role within the structure of the radio stations. It was from the very beginning one of the most visible services which played an immensely important, leading role within the whole structure. It was therefore not a coincidence that the whole of RFE/RL's operations continued its existence in the capital of their broadcasted country, Prague, from where it started its renewed mission. RFE/RL managed to advocate its new purpose and proved its relevance even after the end of Cold War. According to all findings mentioned above it can be concluded that the research thesis of this paper has been verified.

## **Summary**

The ultimate task of this paper was to briefly cover the development of RFE/RL from the end of Cold War until its final relocation from Munich to Prague and attempt to put it within the context of accompanying trends, foremost the media system transformation. Czechoslovakia was then chosen as the country on which all developments were demonstrated. At first, the political social and media changes in Czechoslovakia, latterly the Czech Republic, were examined. Special attention was paid to media system development and its further transformation. Consequently, RFE/RL's entire history was briefly introduced in order to put the developments of the 1980s and 1990s in a broader context. After that RFE/RL's characteristics and roles in the new developing democracies could be examined properly. Furthermore, the thesis attempted to examine the development of RFE/RL from broader as well as more specific perspectives. The latter was carried out through a focus on a single broadcasting department, specifically the Czechoslovak and later the Czech service. This was done in order to reach a thorough understanding of RFE/RL's operations on the basic structure level. In general, RFE/RL then had to overcome many new challenges. To retain credibility and listeners, they had to become even more diversified and adaptable to constant and rapid change. The essential mission of RFE/RL was to nurture the democratic values of free speech and civil public discourse; to preserve a sense of national culture, language and historical memory. RFE's unique qualities – its acceptance as a local medium, its geographical location in the heart of Europe, and its highly respected research staff – made it a powerful catalyst for democracy throughout the region. The need for this instrument of democracy-building remained for many years. It was concluded that RFE/RL was unique among Western broadcasters and remained a significantly important voice of democracy even after the collapse of communist regimes.

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## **Appendix List**

**Appendix no.1: RFE's promotional sticker distributed in Czechoslovakia at the beginning of the 1990s. (picture)**

**Appendix no.2: Leaflet from 1990 promoting RFE broadcasting in Czechoslovakia. Side 1.(picture)**

**Appendix no.3: Leaflet from 1990 promoting RFE broadcasting in Czechoslovakia. Side 2.(picture)**

**Appendix no.4: RFE's 1990 Czechoslovak listenership compared to other foreign broadcasters, BIB Annual Report 1991, pp. 34. (graph)**

**Appendix no.5: Pavel Pecháček, Director of CD BD pictured for the interview with magazine Svět v obrazech, 27.6.1991, Vol.XLVII, no.26. pp.6-8. (picture)**

**Appendix no.6: RFE/RL monthly Shortwaves, November 1989. (picture)**

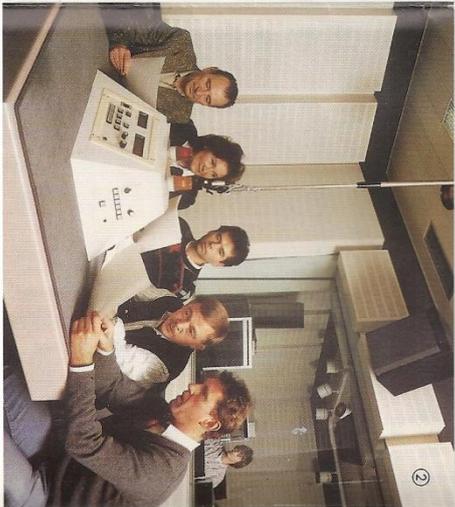
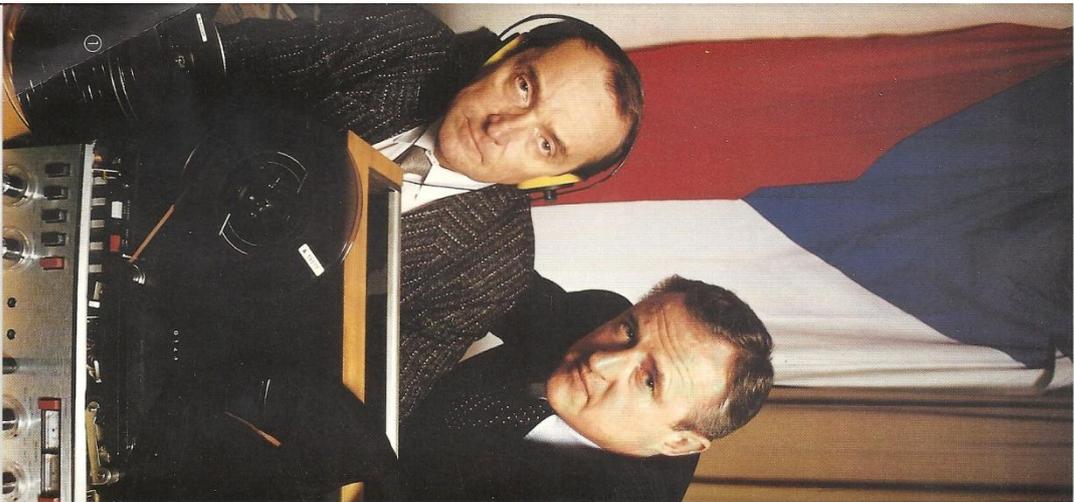
**Appendix no.7: Bishop Jaroslav Škarvada, accompanied by Director of CS BD Pavel Pecháček, consecrated RFE/RL at the opening ceremony of its move to Prague on 8 September 1995. (foto Karel Neškudla, Pavel Pecháček's private archive)**

**Appendix no. 1: RFE's promotional sticker distributed in Czechoslovakia at the beginning of the 1990s. (picture)**





**Appendix no.3: Leaflet from 1990 promoting RFE broadcasting in Czechoslovakia.  
Side 2.(picture)**



Po mnoha letech vysílání  
československé oddělení rozhlasu  
Svobodná Evropa zdraví  
posluchače v Československu

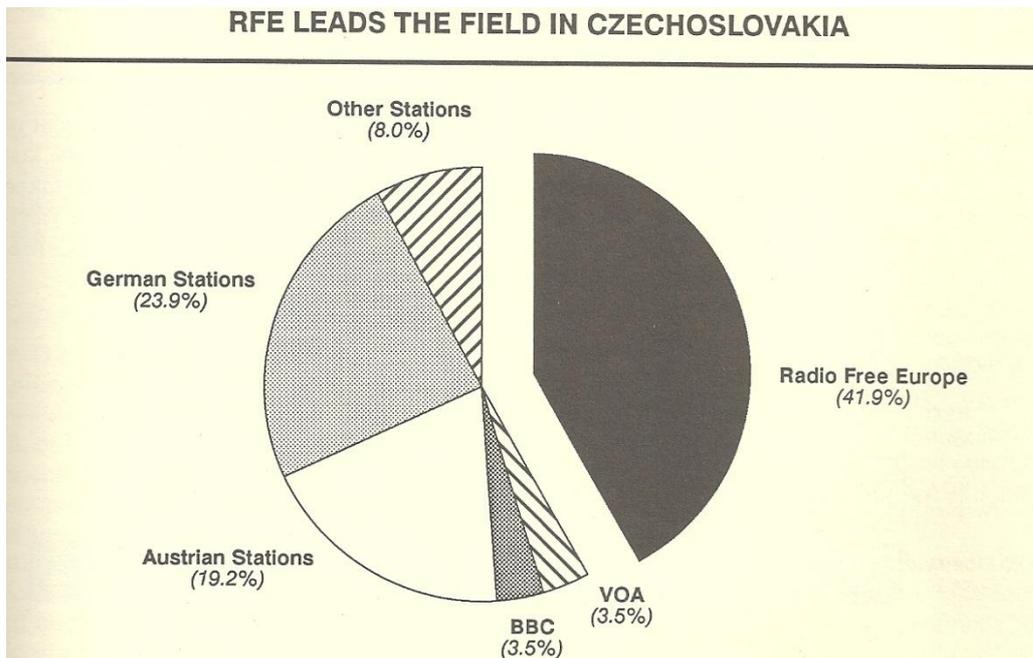
*Po mnohoročnom vysielaní  
česko-slovenské oddelenie rozhlasu  
Slobodná Európa zdraví  
poslucháčov v Česko-Slovensku.*

- ① Ředitel československého oddělení rozhlasu  
Svobodná Evropa Pavel Pecháček/první zpravavatel  
jeho zástupce dr. Ivan Čikl.
- ② Pracovníci československého oddělení Svobodné  
Evropy při natáčení v mnichovském studiu:  
Miroslav Valenta /první zleva/, Klára Hoppová,  
Dušan Fiedler, Karel Kryl a Jiří Preissner.

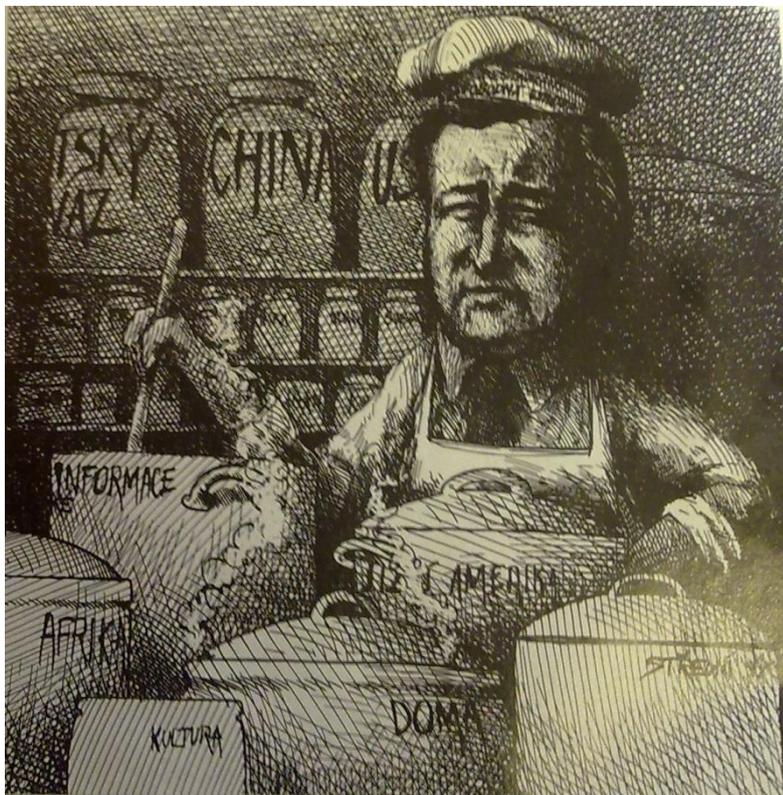
Každý má právo na  
svobodu přesvědčení  
a projevu;  
toto právo nepřipouští,  
aby někdo  
trpěl újmu pro své  
přesvědčení  
a zahrnuje právo  
vyhledávat, přijímat a  
rozsířovat informace a  
myšlenky jakýmkoliv  
prostředky a bez ohledu na  
hranice.

Všeobecná deklarace  
lidských práv  
Článek 19

**Appendix no.4: RFE's 1990 Czechoslovak listenership compared to other foreign broadcasters, BIB Annual Report 1991, pp. 34. (graph)**



**Appendix no.5: Pavel Pecháček, Director of CS BD pictured for the interview with magazine Svět v obrazech, 27.6.1991, Vol.XLVII, no.26. pp.6-8. (picture)**



**Appendix no.6: RFE/RL monthly Shortwaves, November 1989. (picture)**



**Appendix no.7: Bishop Jaroslav Škarvada, accompanied by Director of CS BD Pavel Pecháček, consecrated RFE/RL at the opening ceremony of its move to Prague on 8 September 1995. (foto Karel Neškudla, Pavel Pecháček's private archive)**



