

Summary

The dissertation is focused on development and importance of the Czechoslovak desk of the Radio Free Europe in period between 1950 and 1994. This broadcasting have gained in time of strong censorship significant and till now unresearched importance.

In February 1948 the Communist party took power in the Czechoslovakia. After that Czech and Slovak democratic politicians had left country to the West. They wanted to break the isolation of people living behind the Iron Curtain and promote restoration of democracy in their homeland. In 1949 was in the USA established the National Committee for Free Europe as formally independent citizens association. As its most known activity had become the Radio Free Europe (RFE).

This radio station had become an important tool for political struggle between two blocks in time of the Cold War. The basic question is what real position RFE broadcasting have reached in this struggle.

The establishing of foreign broadcasting to the Czechoslovakia was very difficult task. RFE started its activity as exiles platform for purpose of liberation the Czechoslovakia from rule of the Communist Party regime. The programming position of the RFE was in reality influenced by American politicians and was depending on changing global political conditions as well. The unique position of the RFE consisted in formal independence and distance on government political guidances. Opposite example is the Voice of America. The exiles at beginning took part important positions in the desk and significant personalities of Czech and Slovak culture and political life as well. At first place is necessary mention names of Ferdinand Peroutka, Pavel Tigrid, Jan Čep or Julius Firt. The refugees, who had joined their lives with work in such kind of radio station had refused assimilation abroad and stayed in touch with their homeland. This dissertation is focused comparing between the RFE and others foreign broadcasting stations as well.

In time of closed borders in fifties also several leaflets campaigns took place. Such campaigns, coordinated with broadcasting of the RFE, represent the most active attempt to stimulate citizens resistance against the Communist regime.

As very important I regarding issue of broadcasting reception in target area as well. Question of reception and reaction are significant from official political side and from citizens and also subsequent response in whole thinkable spectrum.

The RFE broadcasting impact alone could not achieve collapse of totalitarian regime. But in long-term perspective was importance of the daily RFE broadcasting significant. This statement is valid particularly for the last period of regime existence.

Indirect proof of the RFE influence in the Czechoslovakia was strong and deeply negative reaction of political and government authorities. The Radio Free Europe represented for the Czechoslovak authorities the symbol of evil exile and enemy subversion. This classification was actual after opening of its broadcasting to the Czechoslovakia in May 1951 and this attitude had not changed till end of regime in 1989. This fact has effected permanent effort of the Communist regime and its security apparatus to put to broadcasting of the RFE silence.

Persecution had touched not only the site of broadcasting in Munich but also the RFE listeners in the Czechoslovakia. Communist regime very carefully controlled and penalized contacts between the RFE and its listeners by mail and telephone. Since beginning of fifties the Czechoslovakia developed huge jamming net to calm foreign broadcasting, especially the RFE. In the Czechoslovakia was the RFE broadcasting jammed till end of 1988. Similar way went also regimes propagandistic campaigns.

After the Velvet revolution the RFE had to find new area of activities in interest support changes in the East and Central Europe and later in duty to support of freedom of expression for people in many other countries in the World. Research in archives of former Czechoslovak State security service is allowing express the conclusion, that the Czechoslovak communist regime, in spite of making an enormous effort and using a variety tools, failed in effort to reach any considerable success in its fight against the Radio Free Europe.