

Confidential

18th September, 1950.

OUT FILE

Your letter P 2/57/50 of 24th August.

It is a pity that you are not able to receive the L.P.S. currently and use it to supplement the news items in your bulletin, but we think it will prove quite possible to find ways of getting over the technical difficulties you mention. The short-wave hellschreiber L.P.S. service only started on the 21st August, so you can hardly have had time when you wrote to assess its possibilities. With regard to points (a) and (b) in your first paragraph, the G.P.O. have never had any difficulty with this kind of radio communication with Belgrade, and there seems to be no prima facie reason why the Belgrade area should be regarded as especially poor for radio reception. In any case, I hope that you will find the short-wave transmissions an improvement. The fluctuating current troubles can be overcome by the use of a constant-voltage transformer and we propose to supply you with one of these.

English-speaking operators are not necessary either for Morse or for the hellschreiber. Morse is an international code, and very few of the L.P.S. operators at overseas missions speak English. A hellschreiber operator is only required to tune in the machine for the transmission and switch it off afterwards. The tape is then typed out. Other posts in Eastern Europe have been able to find local operators, and it must surely be possible to find some one to fill the bill in Yugoslavia.

I gather from your letter that you are not altogether convinced of the usefulness of L.P.S. No doubt your customers are eager for as much straight news as you can give them, but although the very fact that they get it from you may be of some value, it is clearly better from our point of view that the news should be amplified by some explanation of the British attitude to current events. This is what L.P.S. is meant for; and surely the time has now come in Yugoslavia when we can discreetly put across our point of view? Although, as you say, some of the L.P.S. material is more or less timeless, it does provide (notably in Transmission 5) a great deal of topical comment which could be used to expand the news items in your bulletin, but which is only useful if received currently.

I think that the time has come to build up your bulletin both in content and in distribution. A brief "factual" news service is not enough; and we should also like to see more copies distributed in Serbo-Croat and not only in English. Most of our Information Offices in Eastern Europe have now been closed down either by local action or on economy grounds, but in Hungary, where only a token information staff remains, up to 9,000 copies of an L.P.S. bulletin in Hungarian are still being distributed daily, and in Czechoslovakia at the time when the Information Office was closed down earlier this year, over 4,000 copies of their bulletin went out daily. It seems to us a pity that in a country as full of potentialities as Yugoslavia now is, this important activity remains comparatively undeveloped.

(P.L. Carter)

L.G. Durrell, Esq.,
Information Officer,
British Embassy,
Belgrade