

Is Listening to RIAS Forbidden?

"Church and Radio," West German, February 13, 1950: "Despite contrary reports recently circulated in the West German press, we learn from Soviet Zone church authorities that no prohibition on listening to Western stations exists...,but having listened to West German or West Berlin stations plays a role when there are other charges against a man."

"Der Tag," West Berlin, February 12, 1950: "Kurt Frank of Roehmild, Thuringia, was sentenced by the Meiningen Criminal Court to four months in prison and a fine of 300 East Marks for having listened to West German radio stations."

"Saechsische Zeitung," Dresden, September 13, 1950: The paper reported that Frau Christa Wagner of Dresden had been sentenced to 18 months penal servitude for writing to RIAS. Although the Soviet Zone constitution guarantees secrecy of the mails, her letter had not reached RIAS, but was opened by the People's Police. (The case was reported in detail in the New York "Herald Tribune" of October, 3, 1950.)

"Die Welt," Hamburg, January 9, 1953: "The district court of Schwerin sentenced a farmer to seven years of hard labor for having repeated news which he had heard over RIAS He had stated that a 'Hero of Work' had fled to the West The verdict read 'libel and agitation against democratic organizations.'"

Despite the Risks, People Listen

(The newspapers quoted are all Communist-controlled.)

"Altenburger Nachrichten," May 31, 1950: "A cafe not far from Lunzenau offers its guests RIAS's reports on the FDJ rally. This is really too much."

"Maerkische Volksstimme", April 7, 1950: "People put up with it when radio dealer Kupiak daily and publicly lets RIAS shrill out its provocations."