

year and in the end had to be forced through against the open resistance of the workers.

The station began its campaign against the contracts early in March, 1951. The Communists expected to push through all contracts by June 30. When that date came, 25,000 contracts were still unsigned, and some of them were barely completed before Christmas. Meantime, the Soviet Zone regime was forced to change its tactics again and again, and to engage in open debate with the American radio station in Free Berlin.

RIAS first analyzed the contracts factually, in early morning broadcasts for workers and in evening broadcasts for the general population, pointing out all the specific disadvantages incorporated into them. Then it asked over and over who and what would benefit from the increased exploitation of the individual Soviet German worker. Then the answer was hammered home: ultimately and primarily, the Soviet Union and its armament effort. At this point the station was in close contact with Soviet Zone workers and could begin giving practical, detailed advice on ways to combat the contracts without serious danger.

As resistance appeared, RIAS publicized all examples of it heavily, to encourage factory staffs which had not yet been presented with contracts for their plants. The SED was forced to disown the methods of its own "trade union," the FDGB, and the terminal date for conclusion of the contracts was postponed from month to month.

A totalitarian regime is always able, in the end, to impose its will. The collective contracts were eventually imposed. But the important point is: they were imposed upon, not adopted by, the workers, as the Communists had hoped and planned. When the contracts for 1952 were drafted, the Communists issued a detailed guide to local functionaries charged with securing acceptance of the contracts. It offered specific instruction on how to prevent a second RIAS success in this field.

#### The World Youth Festival, 1951

During the month of August, 1951, the Communists staged the so-called World Youth Festival in East Berlin, with more than two million members of the Communist "Free German Youth" (FDJ) from all parts of the Soviet Zone

participating. In the course of the festival more than 1,500,000 youngsters, in spite of discouragement of all sorts, crossed the sectoral borders and more than 13,000 of them visited RIAS to tell of their needs and ask for advice and assistance. They were received and entertained in the largest RIAS studio and enthusiastically listened to popular RIAS programs and dance music of the West, forbidden in the Soviet Zone. The youngsters also had the opportunity to listen to, meet, and ask questions of Mr. John J. McCloy, US High Commissioner, Dr. Kurt Schumacher, Chairman of the SPD, Jakob Kaiser, Federal Minister for All-German Affairs, and many other political personalities.

A 17-year-old FDJ member best summed up the feelings of the visitors in stating "Here in this radio station we are really human beings. Here we can say what we think and not what has been hammered into us in our zone!"

Example of Minor Campaign Indicating Effectiveness  
of RIAS Youth Broadcasts

In February, 1952, the Central Council of the FDJ became aware of a growing apathy and lethargy in the ranks of its followers caused by an overconcentration on political indoctrination and training. In order to stimulate FDJ members and instil them with new spirit, the Central Council called for criticism and self-criticism and, after purges of some functionaries, proceeded to announce publicly the new slogan of "joyful youth activities" with programs of sports, games and dancing. Notwithstanding this announcement, political indoctrination continued to take up the major part of the FDJ programs.

RIAS then picked up the slogan of "joyful youth activities" in five broadcasts directed to Soviet Zone youth, suggesting that only such chairmen be elected locally as would implement programs of sports, games and dancing.

"If the Central Council (of the FDJ) in its criticism talks of ever decreasing basic units, it confirms the possibilities which you have been able to realize following the Youth Festival. And if the council now publicly demands the introduction of the 'joyful youth activities'