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New School for Social Res
Totalitarian Communication
Studies

INTERVIEWS: JM

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Dr. Ernst Kris

Tuesday, July 8th, 1941

This visit to the Study of Totalitarian Communication in Wartime showed the project admirably established in a roomy apartment at 15 East 10th Street. RF fellows and staff members were working in two good sized rooms. Kris reports considerable enthusiasm on their part involving a good deal of weekend and overtime work. In short, there was every appearance that the morale and level of interest in the work is high.

JM and Kris had an extended but entirely informal talk on how the work of the project is to get absorption in other research - JM having been tipped off by Estorick that Kris is much concerned over this question. JM made it clear that he was speaking not as an officer of the Foundation but as a friend of the project. He and Kris discussed the possibility of getting out at an early date some brief but useful bulletins which would as it were skim off the experience of Kris himself and of the project in a way that would make it useful for others, notably the staff of the FCC Listening Post. JM said he thought that Kris perhaps under-estimated the value of information at his disposal, as for example the characteristics of various broadcasts from the German stations or from German occupied countries, or the relative importance of various times in the daily schedule of broadcasting. Kris began to draw up a list of such topics which he might introduce into the discussion scheduled by Lasswell in Washington on Friday, July 11th. If there is any indication of interest at that meeting, a few such bulletins could quickly be prepared for private circulation.

The main lines of present investigation are a detailed study of the principal German news broadcasts, a study of the so-called freedom stations, a study of the German communiques, and various other special topics regarded by Kris as having special significance. By September 15th Kris expects to have brought his study of the German news broadcasts up to date.

The rest of this discussion was devoted to such general topics as the desirable distinction between trend and process research, and policy in giving help to other agencies.

Jm

JM:EA