

Communist capital. He will emerge from this experience much better able, on return to his own country, to advise and enlighten his own Government.

These observations are, I believe, shared by most people who have served in a "Curtain" country. We bring back some of the "Curtain" with us: there is a veil through which we find it difficult to transmit exactly the atmosphere, the "feel" and hence a complete picture of Transcurtainia to those who, no matter how percipient, have not passed through the same ordeal. Conversely, there is an immediate spiritual entente between those — even total strangers meeting for the first time — who have served at a "Curtain" post. We are all aware of the formidable "semantic barrier" which separates us from adequate intellectual intercourse with the few Eastern European Communists (without any Western intellectual training) who are willing to discuss problems freely. There are also one or two semantic hurdles which must be taken by those who have served in Transcurtainia in their efforts to present an accurate picture to their compatriots who have not. It seems to me to follow, therefore, that we need more interpreters of the "Curtain" whose combined efforts will throw increased light on the "Dark Side of the Moon".

(2) The Department has under active consideration a proposal to set up a psychological warfare organisation. There is a great scarcity of Canadians who have some familiarity with the psychology of any of the Slav nations on whom we intend to "wage war" by these means. This scarcity would become a deficiency of some gravity in the case of war. It seems therefore clear that here is another purpose for which we urgently need men whose training can only be completed by some experience behind the "Curtain". ("Refugee experts" are not a satisfactory substitute, in fact they are undesirable for several reasons: security; inability to present a genuine Canadian attitude; lack of appeal in their country of origin ranging from amused scorn to strong revulsion).

(3) In spite of all restrictions, all curbs on personal contacts, those who serve in Transcurtainia absorb a great deal of useful — not exactly information — but rather comprehension. It is a process which might be called "spiritual osmosis", a trans-membranous seepage of "feel" and "intuition" into the brain. All this may smack somewhat of the mystic, but I bring it back to the practical by adding that an indispensable instrument in this process is some knowledge of a Slav language — not perfection or fluency, but just some familiarity. I am quite sure the "osmosis" I speak of works far better with a tincture of linguistic catalyst.

(4) In your notes you also mentioned that officers going to Eastern Europe should have some previous experience abroad, a good knowledge of Communism and an analytical approach to which I can only add: amen!

(5) I would like however, to repeat some of my views on why reporting from Eastern Europe is not voluminous, but has a peculiar value. The "Curtain" missions have less information to work on. A "monolithic" instead of a diversified press; few personal contacts; excessive supervision by the local security organisations; rigid laws against espionage in which the terms "economic" and "military" are interpreted to cover the entire life of the country — all combine to put relatively little local material on an FSO's desk. But the very secrecy, the Byzantine atmosphere of intrigue under the facade of the monolithic state, make it a far more essen-