

SUBE LA FIEBRE

**BERAZADI:
OTRA VEZ, TIROS
EN LA NUCA**



**Entrevista
a fondo**

Translated by radioliberty.org using
google translator

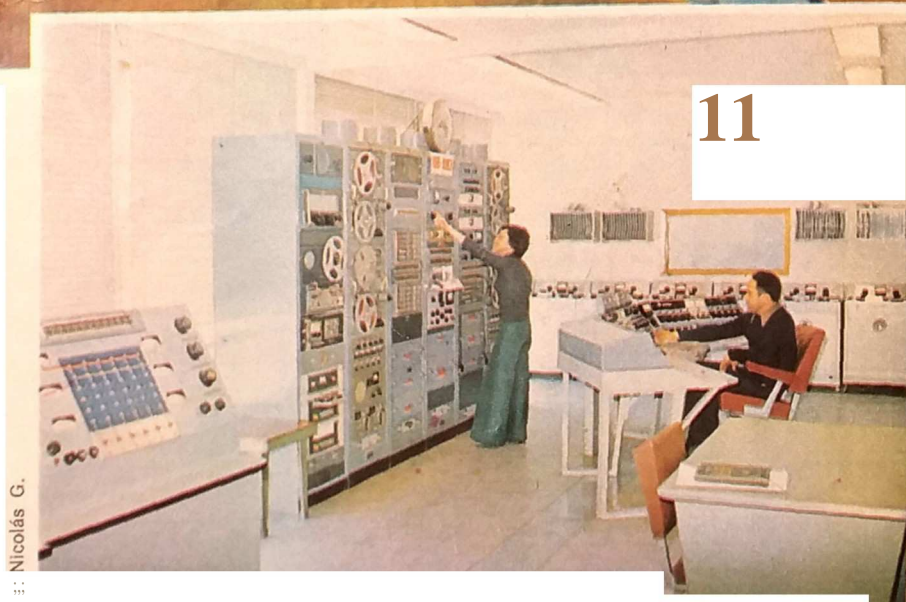
**TODOSOBRE LA FUGA
DE SEGOVIA**

RADIO LIBERTY, ¿EMISORA DE LA CIA?

SOCIEDAD



11



de Nicolás G.

It is not heard in Spain
Aimed specifically at Eastern Europe,
emissions cannot be captured
in Spain. Some senior officials of the station have
told the Gazette: You see "Cias" everywhere.

For many years, dozens of journalists tried, but they
crashed against the wall of silence that, more
impregnable than its extensive metal gates always
guarded, surrounds the Pals station. Now, just a few
days ago, a series of political and diplomatic
circumstances have relaxed the guard of its
custodians and two journalists have entered the
facilities of "Radio Liberty" for the first time. This is
your testimony.

la!kl... : _ _ _ _ _

Every night, when they gather in the shelter of the hearth after a long day of work. Thousands of men and women, from Berlin to the Urals, they scan the dial of the confident receiver. In search of a distant voice. Remote and doubtful, coming and going at intervals as moved by the capricious tide of heaven. They are looking for a station that is installed in a remote corner of the planet, in Baix Empordà, next to the Serra de les Gabarres and in front of an open and beautiful beach. But they do not know both these toponyms and their location. They just know, or they intuit, that their words reach them from a far: from the countries of the sun.

Leaving Pals behind, the medieval set of golden and noble stones. The highway that leads to the coast through pine trees enters the incipient urbanizations, announced vociferously by a thousand billboards. and before glimpse the blue line of the sea. At a turn in the road, the red and white towers that support the antennas suddenly appear. Then you can make out, among the undergrowth and the trees, the white buildings. But just a few meters high woven-wire fences rise up to bar the way.

You skirt the fence and reach the front door. It can be read on a stone wall: "Ministry of Information and Tourism. Radio Liberty".

-Radio Liberty- This is the name of an enigma: two words that until very recently they just announced quietly. and for moments we supposed that the old sphinx was not going to grant us the gift of her smile. We spent almost 24 hours hanging around the door without noticing any other sign of life than the faint tremor of the plastic shutters of the gatehouse of the guard room behind which someone was watching us. -sorry. Can't get in. Yes, many like you come, but they are the orders. Then, perhaps seeing that neither the photographer nor I seemed resigned to abandoning our prey, he conceded: -If you want, go to the Delegation of the Ministry of Information and Tourism of Girona to see what they

say there. And we went to Girona. The official of the Delegation in Girona did not hide his astonishment. They had never had relationship with Radio Liberty, never had issued authorization and they lacked all power over the station, since it does not even depend on the Ministry. This confession contrasted with the sign on the door of the broadcasting station and, when we headed back to Pals ready for the last assault, we had less clear ideas than when we went the first time. Radio Liberty: registered in the international broadcasting register as a "private non-commercial station" is dedicated to transmitting programs to Eastern Europe twenty-four hours a day in several different languages: Russian, Belarusian, Ukrainian. Latvian, Estonian, Lithuanian, Turkestan and Tatar, with a daily program of one hundred and sixty-eight hours of broadcast. They are installed in Spanish territory but are financed by the United States, and their headquarters are in Germany. Senator Fulbright, who calls for its dismantling, publicly stated that it is an agency of the •Central Intelligence Agency• However, wow! the directors of the station deny it, and a note that appears on the bulletin board assures the workers that, contrary to information recently published in the press, Radio Libertad does not belong to the CIA.

a source of stress

The recent inauguration of a regular airline between Madrid and Moscow seems to point towards a relaxation in the policy of both countries, but however, there are political and diplomatic problems that make understanding difficult. One of them and not of little importance. It's Radio Liberty, which has become a kind of bone of contention around which the US is fighting and the USSR. With a station in Spain, which the Soviet Union considers hostile, a normal diplomatic relationship is not possible. but the United States does not seem ready to leave. although the Spanish government has shown its lack of enthusiasm when it comes to renewing Radio Liberty's contract, which expired on March 23. However, it is presumable to assume that Spain has yielded to US pressure because officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Mr. David Abshire

The transmitted texts are supplied, daily, to the Spanish Government.

have been sitting at the negotiating table since Monday the 29th. President of the United States Board for International Broadcasting. When on the 17th he met with the Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs. Mr. Areilza, belatedly, and the expiration date of the agreement was allowed to pass. everyone thought that the station was going to be, finally dismantled. Today, however, it would be very risky to advance forecasts. The thesis that this very summer Radio Liberty would disappear no longer seems to have any foundation.

the old neighborhood

Radio Liberty was born during the tension of the cold war and broadcast the first program from Pals on March 23, 1959. Its headquarters and newsroom are in Munich (Federal Germany) and its stations are located in Lampertheim (Germany), Pals (Spain) and until recently in Taiwan (nationalist China). They constantly receive information through the telephone line that is transmitted live -according to what the deputy director of the station reveals to us- at the same time that it is recorded to have a record of the broadcast news that is kept for six months and to supply the translated texts, daily to the Spanish Government. The leaders constantly insist to the Spanish employees, in the same way that they have done with us, that the programs are strictly informative and that they do not mix ideological opinions or incitements to any type of subversive action. The people of the Costa Brava however, they think differently perhaps out of instinct, or because of the insurmountable mystery that surrounds the facilities, or because of the leakages of the employed personnel, or simply because they say that they have been stripped of the longest and



most golden beach on the entire coastline, and this does not favor the climate of esteem that suits a good neighbor. The truth is that Americans, although they are very few in Pals, are not welcome in the region. They pay better than anyone, - an ex-employee of the station told me- but still the staff is always unhappy, because that is a sea of intrigues and the salaries are arbitrary and unequal. -It seems that on occasions labor conflicts

have arisen and the opinion of the Labor inspectors has been requested, but in the Delegation it was used to indicate that the company did not depend on the Spanish authorities or the North American Embassy, but on a certain Hispanic office - American over which the Ministry of Labor had no power. In neighboring towns there is a hilarious story that on one occasion, specifically in 1968, the super-secret station



Five emitters of 250 kilowatts. The center operates on shortwave. Four of the five stations can reach one megawatt of power. A reflective curtain makes broadcasts inaudible in Spain



The powerful issuing center is owned by the Spanish State. Radio Liberty rented it for twenty million pesetas a year.

Live, Radio Liberty. One hundred and sixty-eight hours of daily broadcast in Russian, Belarusian, Ukrainian, Latvian, Estonian, Lithuanian. Turkestan and Tatar. Live, Radio Liberty. One hundred and sixty-eight hours of daily broadcast in Russian, Belarusian, Ukrainian, Latvian, Estonian, Lithuanian. Turkestan and Tatar.

East that have. behind the carrier antenna itself, a reflective curtain in order to create a shadow area behind it that makes it inaudible in Spain. Likewise, the south of Italy is left out of its audience cone. The Mediterranean, Northern France, England and the Baltic States. The center operates on shortwave with five stations - Continental and General Electric - of 250 kilowatts. four of which can work coupled to reach one megawatt of power; and with a sixth 100-kilowatt Telefunken brand, which was the first to work. It has electric generators capable of producing enough energy to power the stations and a seawater treatment plant, as well as the necessary

services for its maintenance such as electronic workshops, mechanical workshops. carpentry, plumbing. electricity, masonry, infirmary, and a dining room where all the staff spend breakfast, lunch or dinner distributed in three shifts, one from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. another from 4 p.m. to 12 p.m. and a third from 0 a.m. to 8 a.m. Radio Liberty de Pals, which at the time of the cold war surpassed 200 employees, currently has, according to data provided by management, 151 workers of which only eight -Americans, Russians, Canadian, English and German - are not Spanish: In recent times there have been frictions

in the company because they tried to pressure the staff to fire them, although this extreme has been denied us by their leaders. Radio Liberty has a private police force that guards the entrance. closed by a sliding door; watches from observation towers and patrols with dogs along the high metal fences that surround its facilities, which can be illuminated by powerful floodlights. The supervisor are former members of the security service is a Surplus Inspector from the General Corps of Police and the chief and second chief are former members of

housed rival spies for some time. It was about a German translator - married to a Russian- who inspired suspicion because of her continuous travels. When the appropriate inquiries were made, it was found that the entries and exits were to the USSR. The employee was dismissed in a sudden way, but in the house the alarm spread, a stir was formed and the security measures were reinforced. Those responsible have denied the story, apparently very surprised when I have asked them. And they may be sincere, as when they deny hiding submarines, fueling helicopters, or storing missiles, as the townspeople

have assumed. In any case, the projectiles with which they harass their enemies are not exactly ballistic.

A profitable gift

The Radio Liberty facilities -1 Km of surf and foam- occupy three and a half hectares on Pals beach. According to authorized personnel of the house, the land was acquired from its owners for an amount from the United States and placed in the name of the Spanish State at the end of the 1950s. At the expense of the United States, its buildings were built and the stations and equipment were imported and installed, but everything was registered in the

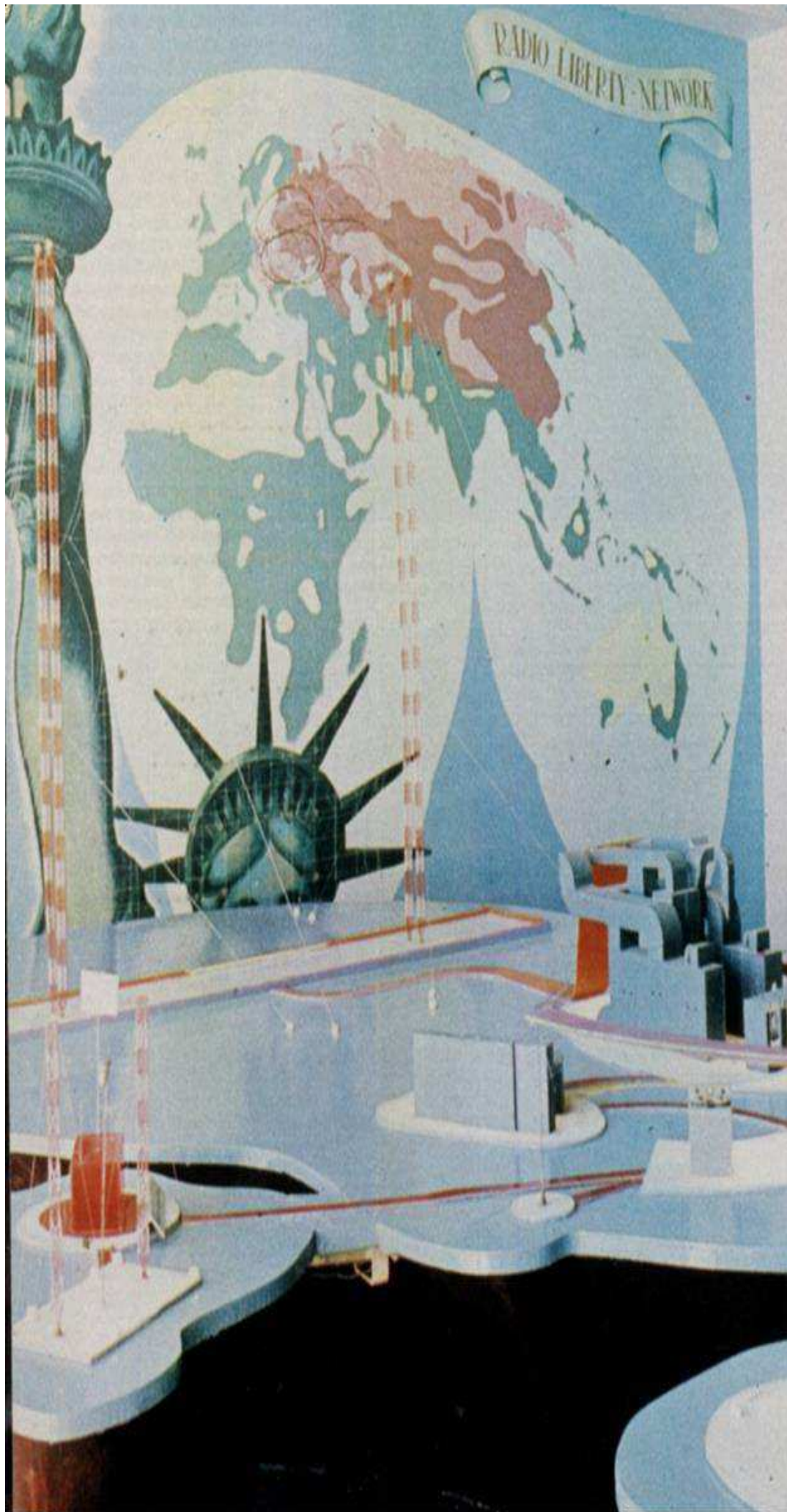
list of State patrimonial assets, with the exception of the furniture. The powerful broadcasting center, owned by the Spanish state, was leased by it to Radio Liberty for the annual amount of \$285,000, which is equivalent to about 20 million pesetas. In exchange for the investment and the rent mentioned, Radio Liberty only requested authorization to be able to broadcast programs destined for the USSR. But this activity does not seem so innocent to people in the area, especially those who have no connection with the company. I would like them to give me a reason - argued a resident of Palafrugell - that would make

Me understand why they put their broadcasters in Germany and Spain, and not in the North American national territory itself. To this question, those responsible for Pals respond with technical and meteorological arguments and point out the proximity of Europe to Europe.

A megawatt of news and propaganda

A forest of towers supports four sets of dual antennas. Stretched between them like spider webs. These are directional antennas. capable of lateral and vertical movement, oriented towards the





There is no mystery. Here, for example, have been Mr. Fraga Iribarne and, later, Mr. Sanchez Bella when he was a minister.

From Europe to Europe. Why do they have their stations in Germany and Spain and not in North American territory? ask the neighbors of Pals.

In Radio Ubcrtty they adduce technical arguments and the proximity

from <<Europe to Europe>>

former members of the Civil Guard. As for the staff, Radio Liberty, in Pals, is directed by Mr. Paul E. North, a former officer of the American occupation troops in Germany, who came to Spain as head of programs, to later be promoted to deputy director in the decade of the 60s and director for two years. The current deputy director, Mr. Antonio Reigosa Arias, is a Cuban exile of North American nationality and Galician descent who had previously worked in the offices that Radio Liberty has on Aribau street in Barcelona and who, after an absence from our country and a stay in the North American company of John Deere tractors, he returned to Rodio Liberty to reorganize the accounting department when the offices of this dependency were established in Pals, where he married a Catalan wife.

A historical twist

Radio Liberty's head of program coordination is an American of German origin named Joseph Karl Steckermeier, who lives in a small town very close to Palamós, near Mr. Reigosa.

Radio Liberty is a private, non-commercial station. Its altruistic mission is, so its leaders assure it, to preach the truth behind the iron curtain (news only, of course). But the most realistic AND pragmatic wonder where the money comes from.

According to Mr. Fubright, the money came from the CIA. But the official version is that Radio Liberty depended on Radio Liberty Committee Inc. that was nurtured by disinterested private contributions from the American people: nonetheless. When the senator exposed that these selfless contributions came from the CIA before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the US Congress intervened and suspended all funding in 1971. But the Station did no dissapear

and became dependent on the State Department until 1973 despite the fact that, according to Mr. Reigosa, Radio Liberty is not a spokesperson for the US Government. Then, the presidential commission by Milton Eisenhower advised to continue favoring the flow of free information towards the countries of the East, and Congress approved the creation, in 1973, of the Board for International Broadcasting, an institution on which Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe depend.

This story on the one hand, and on the other the date of termination of the agreement on the station, have caused the news to surface And the entire national press, -and also the outside press- has started to speculate about the future and dust off the stories apparently archived.

At the same time, it seemed that the Government of Spain was not well disposed to renew commitments that were somewhat compromising, given the prospect of a new historical stage. Alarm grew at the BIB and Radio Liberty's head of Public Relations traveled to Madrid from Munich recently to tell journalists that there were many false and inaccurate stories about the station in Spanish newspapers. Mr. Redlich said that he had come to Spain to help provide correct information about Radio Liberty's mission, and to people who may be interested in it, and assured that no information had been given before because no one asked for it: Whatever that this avalanche on Radio Liberty has only appeared on In recent weeks, it has been at this moment that it has been considered necessary to rectify the distorted history. And some wonder who will be capable, at this point, of distorting the distorted.

The external face of the emitting complex of Pals has not changed despite the words. The electrically operated sliding door remains closed and is only opened briefly to let in or out, after a series of quick telephone consultations. A policeman with a special uniform and a large plate that reads Radio Liberty takes a note of the license plate when leaving as well as when entering, and before accessing it one has to get out of the car, enter the guard room and fill out some forms in which there are to specify the date, the name and surnames, the usual address of the visitor, his profession, his nationality and the company in which he provides his services; the number of the 'National Identity Document, the date and place of issue and the person you wish to visit. Dogs, guns, binoculars and searchlights on the towers. A relaxed atmosphere capable of relaxing the most tense mood.

Once inside, the white one-story buildings, the lawns, the gardens, the palm trees and once again the sea seem to foster understanding. Before touring the facilities, we had coffee with Mr. Reigosa in his office. A tall, cautious man with equal teeth and a studied smile whose gaze does not reflect any feeling. The conversation is a fencing limited to data and strictly technical references but, unlike what happens in other North American agencies and institutions, there are no brochures or any written documentation here to support oral information. "You see, this is a station like any other," he says, studying me. We smile. "Do you want more coffee? "No thank you very much". You're welcome, there would be no more. I cautiously try to resume the conversation, but Reigosa's guard is invulnerable. I don't know what idea you have of this station. They have surrounded her with an incomprehensible climate of mystery when there is none. Here we have celebrated last year the festival of broadcasting, the day of San Gabriel, with colleagues from the stations of Gerona, and many Spaniards have also visited our facilities. The mere fact that this constitutes news is already something abnormal. "It seems to me that we do not understand each other. Here, for example, have been Mr. Fraga Iribarne and, later, Mr. Sánchez Bella when he was minister".

From the balcony of the office, austere and clean as if uninhabited, you can see the trees, the lawn and the birds that fly without safe conduct. "It's just a broadcast center. Everything that is broadcast comes to us by line from the Munich headquarters; absolutely everything, even the news from Spain. Nothing is made here. You are free to believe me or not. "And the Russian, Ukrainian, or Latvian announcers?" I inquire. Our official language is practically Russian. It is natural that here we can communicate with our newsroom in Russian."

There is no writing, there are no announcers and there are no scripts. I wanted to order one but it was not possible. So I expressed my desire to take transcribed, translated or not, the information broadcast during the time that our conversation had lasted, but it seems that it was not possible to meet my request because the translation takes time, and it is transmitted simultaneously in several languages. It has been said that Radio Liberty may be dismantled this summer. Can it be true? The deputy director looked at me for a long time: Radio Liberty is a Spanish state station. Therefore I suppose that

It should be your Government that, in any case, could answer your question. Do you think anyone would be sorry to see them go? We maintain excellent neighborhood relations with everyone and I feel Catalan, you can believe it. On the other hand, every summer we carry out rescues here on the beach, out of sheer humanity; You will understand that our mission is not that. Senator Fulbright, however, if he had wanted to know that you were going to pack your bags. Do you know why? I imagine you know the answer: the senator assumed that we depended on the CIA.

My interlocutor looks at me attentively. And isn't that right? I startle him. None of us here are in a position to know. Our salaries come from Radio Liberty's head office in Munich. That's it. But everyone usually knows who they work for... Let's go -he answers-, what you want to ask me is if I, for example, am from the CIA. It is not like this? I'm confused for a moment: I didn't mean to ask the question so rudely. Well, I have to answer that question no. Would you be able to answer me in another way? Of course not. Mr. Reigosa's gaze, always scrutinizing, has turned icy. Then he makes an effort and smiles: All his colleagues have the same obsession. I don't know why, but you don't see anything other than "Cias" he You see: hobbies that sometimes get into one's head...We both struggle to relax, but we can't trust each other. We tell jokes about spies and he suggests that I settle in Pals to keep an eye on them. For what reason did they not allow access to journalists if there is nothing to hide? The deputy director, relieved, replies to me an already known lesson: Radio Liberty is not a means of propaganda, it does not advocate revolution or subversive actions, nor does it, of course, interfere in the politics of any foreign power. Why was no information given? I ignore it. But I think that right now we are joyfully celebrating, you and I, that we can communicate openly. When there is no information there is speculation and rumors circulate. It has been said for a long time that we kept submarines, that this was a helicopter base, and that we stored missiles. Now you can look around and see for yourself.

We toured the facilities, they kindly showed us the dependencies, the control rooms, the generators and the imposing transformer.

When I ask if the existence of Radio Liberty does not mean violating

"the Helsinki agreements" on foreign interference in the politics of third parties, my companion decides that we visit the director.

The director of Radio Liberty, Mr. Paul North, is a blond man with a friendly countenance and a bit shy. His office is spacious and on both sides of his chair there are two flags: one is Spanish and the other is North American. Mr. North states that the Helsinki agreements place the greatest emphasis on the right that all the peoples of the world have to free information and that, in this sense, Radio Liberty not only does not violate the agreements but also enforces them by broadcasting, through the countries of the East, the news of the Western world, as well as the information and comments of the great newspapers of the West. Do you just report, or do you also include your own opinion? Us replies Mr. North, "not at all." Radio Liberty does not support any editorial line. It simply broadcasts news, broadcasts cultural programs and broadcasts religious programs." Don't you think that religion can sometimes be brandished as a political weapon? I don't think so; religion belongs to another sphere of realities. I seem to notice in the director the the self-conscious and elusive look of a subordinate, who smiles a little bewildered. Leaving the office, we continue our conversation with the deputy director. Don't worry. I'm not in any hurry. Hasty employees pass by, pretending not to look. I get the impression of being together to the master. As I say goodbye, with so many unknowns still and without having managed to relax your guard, I regret not knowing how to ask more penetratingly. Oh! don't blame yourself for your questions," Reigosa tells me, conciliatory; surely it's my fault: It's not easy for me to respond." He smiled broadly, but his eyes didn't match. From the steps of the lawn-flanked gate he waved goodbye to our car.

Dario Vidal