

1960**Radio Liberty Policy Position Statement: 'Captive Nations'****Citation:**

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Summary:

Radio Liberty outlines its view on the "Captive Nations" resolutions

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RADIO LIBERTY

Policy Position Statement

"CAPTIVE NATIONS"

(1960)

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1. Radio Liberty's position concerning any future political system for the peoples in the territory of the USSR is that these peoples must make that decision themselves through the process of self-determination when they have the opportunity to do so. Until they have this freedom to decide, Radio Liberty should not lend itself to the promotion of any effort by emigre factions to predetermine boundaries or the form of government which any of these peoples eventually may adopt.

2. The U.S. Congressional Joint Resolution of July 1959 which designated certain Soviet non-Russian nationalities as "Captive Nations" is interpreted by some nationality emigre organizations as a U.S. acknowledgment of the right of these national minorities to an independent status. This has led to difficulties between Radio Liberty and representatives of nationality emigre organizations who have attacked Radio Liberty for what they regard as its failure fully to exploit the Congressional Resolution in its broadcasts, particularly in those directed to the various non-Russian national groupings. Such attacks have been especially difficult for Radio Liberty to bear because, in adhering to its policy of non-predetermination, it had to sacrifice an opportunity to take advantage of a sensitive Soviet vulnerability as manifested in Khrushchev's violent reaction to the Resolution.

3. The introduction in March 1960 of new "Captive Nations" resolutions in both houses of Congress may raise the issue again. One group of these resolutions directs attention to "Captive Nations" without naming them. The other group specifically names nationality areas inside the Soviet Union as well as those nations of the Soviet bloc as "Captive Nations," as in the 1959 Resolution. If the first form of resolution is enacted, it will cause no problem for Radio Liberty. If the second is enacted and the radio does not mention the names of the nationalities, the nationality emigre organizations may be expected to renew their attacks on RL.

4. Nevertheless, Radio Liberty does not yield on its policy of following the non-predetermination line in its broadcasts to all the peoples of the USSR, Russian as well as the national minorities.

5. To meet possible contingencies resulting from the introduction of the 1960 resolutions, the following treatment is recommended:

a) Radio Liberty ignores the fact of the introduction of the resolution unless it is reported prominently by western or Soviet press or radio. In the latter event, Radio Liberty will cover the news briefly, without commenting thereon or identifying those Soviet national groupings which may be designated by name as "Captive Nations."

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b) If a "Captive Nations" resolution is enacted by Congress, the same procedure will be followed as in (a), with the exception that, if Radio Liberty deems it necessary to carry more than factual newscasts, for credibility, to protect itself from renewed charges that it has failed to exploit a Soviet vulnerability, or for other reasons, it may broadcast added news features or commentary which:

1) Quote selected excerpts from the resolution or resolutions which do not identify particular national groups;

2) Emphasize the concern felt by Congress and the American people for all peoples subjected against their will to Communist domination;

3) Point up the insistence of the Free World that such peoples be accorded the right of self-determination.

c) Scripts along the lines suggested in (b) above could, if desirable, make these points:

1) When a majority of the houses of Congress expresses itself in a joint resolution, this is a most significant expression of U. S. public opinion;

2) The "Captive Nations" resolution is one example of many in which the Congress has responded to the wishes of the American people. It reflects the opinion of vast numbers of Americans, many of whom are immigrants or descendants of immigrants from countries now subjugated by the dictatorial governments which are part of the international Communist system;

3) The American people share with the peoples of these subjugated countries their just aspirations for freedom and independence and they consider the imperialistic and aggressive policies of Soviet Communism to be a dangerous threat to world peace and to the security of the U.S.

4) At the same time, Radio Liberty does not espouse nor seek to promote the independence of constituent parts of the USSR specified in any such resolutions, because Radio Liberty cannot know and therefore will not attempt to predetermine the choice which the peoples concerned will have to make for themselves on the basis of free self-determination.