

April 14, 1967

**Gosteleradio Memo to CPSU Central Committee,
'Ideological Subversion on the Airwaves of Foreign
Radio Stations Broadcasting in the Russian
language'**

Citation:

"Gosteleradio Memo to CPSU Central Committee, 'Ideological Subversion on the Airwaves of Foreign Radio Stations Broadcasting in the Russian language'", April 14, 1967, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Archives of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Obtained by Michael Nelson. Translated by Volodymyr Valkov. <https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/121515>

Summary:

This memo from N. Mesyatsev, Chairman, Broadcast and Television Committee, Council of Ministers, analyzes Western radio "propaganda" and credits Western broadcasts with being "an effective tool of ideological intervention." The document notes that the broadcasts pay attention to Soviet dissidents, and mentions their use of humor and Western music.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

Secret
Copy No.1
12149
300 A/3
CPsu CC

Enclosed is a brief note on the areas of major focus of the propaganda conducted by foreign radio stations in Russian.

At present, the total volume of broadcasting of the ten major enemy radio stations, relaying in Russian, consists of around 60 hours per day. These radio stations cover practically the entire territory of the Soviet Union. Broadcasting is mostly conducted on short waves.

Radio stations of the USA, GDR, France, Japan and others run their programs only on short waves.

AttaCHment: 6 pages of text, mb.264-sch, copy no. 4,
secret; copy no. 5 - add to a deed

[signed] N. Mesyatsev

14 April 1967
No. 317C
Note
Material is for information purposes only.
Used by the directorate for work.

[signed] P. Moskovsky
Deputy Secretary of the Propaganda Directorate of the CPSU CC

27 April 1967
[signed] T. Kuprikov

Deputy Secretary of the Directorate [Stamped: Not for Publication]

Secret
Copy No. 4

Ideological Subversion on the Airwaves of Foreign Radio Stations Broadcasting in the Russian language

At present, as acknowledged by the bourgeois ideologists, Western radio ProPaganda is the most formidable and effective tool of ideological intervention of imperialism in the USSR. The purpose of such penetration is to convince the Soviet people to question the expediency and attainment of goals put forth by the CPSU and the Soviet government, to discredit the internal and foreign policy of the USSR in the eyes of the listeners, and to disrepute the theory and practice of Communism.

A wide array of propagandist means is used to influence Soviet listeners, ranging from materials containing all kinds of fabrications about the life of the Soviet people, and gross slander on public and state order in the USSR, which are aimed at under-informed listeners, to discussions and lectures, whose authors pretend to be "scholarly" critics of communism addressing the Soviet intelligentsia, students, and religious believers in the USSR. Programs that incessantly advertise the so-called Western way of life-particularly bourgeois culture and the high level of economic development in capitalistic countries-serve the same purpose. Anti-Soviet jokes are also part of this game. Airtime is filled with music that is considered unsuitable for Soviet entertainment.

Programs distort internal affairs of the USSR and emphasize materials that cast aspersions on public and state order of the Soviet Union, which is usually characterized as "totalitarian." Our one-party system comes under the fiercest attack. Listeners are being told that the USSR lacks elementary democratic freedoms, such as freedom of speech, press, assembly, freedom of religion, freedom of movement, genuine representation of elective bodies, etc.

In support of their fabrications, radio stations have recently broadcast the following programs:

About the publication in Italy of *Into the Whirlwind* by Yevgenia Ginzburg, a teacher from Moscow, who describes the Stalinist purges (Voice of America); about the trial of a young poet from Moscow, V. Tolstov, "for his participation in demonstrations against reactionary measures by the government with regard to the soviet intelligentsia" (BBC); about *The White Book of Sinyavsky and Daniel*, compiled by [Aleksandr] Ginzburg (Italian radio); prohibition of exhibits by the painter M. Chagall (Deutsche Welle) and others. A lot was said about the "tragic fate" of Sinyavsky, Daniel, and Pasternak, as well as the "unconstitutional behavior of the Soviet government" in its treatment of the religious and legal rights of Jews and other believers living in the USSR. In such a way listeners are led to believe that the country's Constitution is being violated.

Particularly hostile attacks are directed against Party principles that constitute the basis of the Soviet state. The work of the CPSU in all spheres of public and state life of the USSR, is portrayed as "excessive," "conservative," hindering further development of democratization of socialist order and public interaction.

Radio stations dedicate a fair amount of material to the economic situation in the USSR. The Soviet planned economy is represented as "rigid" and "unprofitable." Listeners are led to believe that the economic reforms currently under way in the USSR have a "fragmentary nature and therefore little effect," and that with the approval of a new Five-Year Plan "preference will be given to the defense industry, which will lower the standard of living of the population."

The Western practice of anti-Soviet radio propaganda circulates the inflammatory thesis about an alleged conflict in soviet society between "new forces, and the faceless, but nevertheless almighty bureaucracy, entrenched in the administration and leadership of the CPSU" (Voice of America).

Radio stations strive to depict the foreign Policy of the USSR as "expansionist," as a manifestation of "Soviet imperialism." Thus, Deutsche Welle has been insisting that the Soviet leadership "is entertaining the notion of nuclear war and its resulting advantages."

Policy of the USSR towards the socialist countries is also grossly distorted. Among the qualities ascribed to [Soviet policy] is the aspiration to gain "hegemony" in the

Council for mutual economic assistance (COMECON) and in the leadership of the Warsaw Pact, a desire to "shape the foreign policy of Eastern European countries-particularly with respect to the German question-in Soviet interests."

Recently, the upcoming 50th anniversary of soViet rule has marked an increase in the volume of messages and commentaries demonstrating acute anti-Soviet tendencies. A number of programs containing conversations and interviews with various eye-witnesses of events that took place in February and October 1917 in Russia (with A.F. Kerensky, P. Sorokin and others), and also statements by the bourgeois press grossly distort the role played by V.I. Lenin and the Bolshevik Party in the February Revolution as well as during the days of October 1917. In particular, they claim that although the February revolution was a "spontaneous and disorganized revolt of the people," it was the only "true" revolution. As concerns the October revolution, according to Deutsche Welle, it was "inspired by the Bolsheviks, who exploited the weaknesses of democracy and forced Russia to follow the Bolshevik path."

Alongside critical commentaries, the events of 1917 are being misrepresented, and increasingly more materials about "Stalin's purges" in the 1930s and "insufficient de-Stalinization in the soviet union" are beginning to appear (Deutsche Welle).

Radio stations often use sensational materials. As a pretext to making another propagandist racket, for instance, they reported on S. Alliluyeva's life abroad. It was noted, in particular, that S. Alliluyeva's decision to "stay in the West would come as a hard blow to the prestige of the CPSU, especially at the time of the 50th anniversary of the October revolution."

Another example: occasionally information is reported about the collapse of a Soviet spy network in one country or another.

The permanent theme of broadcasts by Western radio stations continues to insist on the "loss by the CPSU" of a leading position in the World Communist movement. Anti-Soviet propaganda by the People's Republic of Korea is widely used for this purpose.

The radio stations direct their efforts at discrediting and distorting the theory and practice of Communism. Thus, bourgeois ideologists accuse Communists of a "genetic" inability to rule justly and democratically for the benefit of the people, by distorting the teachings of Marxism-Leninism on the matters of socialist state and the equality of nations. The consequence of such a situation in the country, according to the BBC, is that "the Soviet people have been governed by terror and deception for almost 30 years."

The radio programs keep insisting that the teachings of marxism-leninism "have become outdated and converted into a dogma." In addition, they call for a revision and reassessment of Marxism, which supposedly is falsely interpreted in the USSR and socialist countries.

The programs intensely propagate various theories about a gradual rebirth of the socio-political and economic structure of socialist countries, about the emergence of a new class in those countries, i.e. an "elite of scholars and specialists," to whom power is drifting.

Side by side with anti-Communist propaganda, apologetics of "the advantages of the Western political system and economic principles of the free market" play a sizeable role in programs of Western radio stations too. Striving to present temporary difficulties in the agricultural production of the USSR as "genetically implied" in a socialist economy, Voice of America, for example, provided such a summary:

"Communism is incompatible with effective production. The experience of the USSR proves that the well-being of the state, from a material point of view, is first and foremost determined by political institutions and the mindset upon which they are founded."

The programs of radio stations are filled with materials portraying the "high standard of living" of people in capitalist countries, who are supposedly fully enjoying the "civil and spiritual liberties of Western-style democracy."

Anti-Soviet propaganda from the capitalist states has a lot in common with propaganda from Chinese radio stations.

Like Western stations, almost every program on Beijing radio contains slander on the activities of the CPSU and soviet government in areas of international and domestic politics. More often than not, such materials abound in overt profanity.

As concerns the internal affairs of the USSR, the radio station claims that "democracy does not exist, terror is apparent, and the government apparatus has been bureaucratized" in the country. One of the programs made the following statement: "By hastening the restoration of capitalism inside the country, a revisionist soviet group has encouraged the penetration of the monopolistic capital of the USA into the USSR, subjecting working people to exploitation by foreign capitalists."

The latest programs lead listeners to believe in the "profound contradictions between views of the Soviet people and the goals of the revisionist leadership." On multiple occasions the following appeal was made: "There will be a day when soviet people will rise up in revolt against the ruling group of revisionists."

Beijing radio strives to present Maoism as the sole plausible scientific theory, while accusing the Soviet Union of "perverting and undermining Marxist-Leninist teachings." Many programs claim that the center of world communist movement has supposedly moved to Beijing.

The foreign policy of the Soviet Union is characterized as a "system of acts directed at collusion with imperialism and international opposition." Program after program states that "the actions of the Soviet leadership bear witness to its aspiration to undermine and suffocate the Vietnamese people's struggle for freedom." To substantiate their claims, radio propagandists in Beijing often resort to citing the bourgeois press regarding the fact that "Moscow has recently undertaken measures to inspire peaceful negotiations with Vietnam."

The programs underscore the following: "the fault for straining and aggravating Sino-Soviet relations lies with the Soviet Union."

The aforementioned leads to the conclusion that in conducting their ideological subversion on the airwaves, propagandists exploit themes and concerns that the Soviet press cannot discuss.