

February 16, 1968

**Memorandum to the CPSU CC from N. Mesyatsev,
Chairman, Broadcast and Television Committee,
Council of Ministers, USSR**

Citation:

"Memorandum to the CPSU CC from N. Mesyatsev, Chairman, Broadcast and Television Committee, Council of Ministers, USSR", February 16, 1968, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Archives of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Obtained by Michael Nelson and translated by Volodymyr Valkov.
<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/121516>

Summary:

This document discusses Western radio programming aimed at the intelligentsia and dissidents, and cites the use of samizdat by Western broadcasters.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

Secret

Copy No. 1

300 A/3

04297

CPSU CC

The amount of materials in the Western radio programs directed at creating an impression among Soviet people that socialist countries have "had a wave of demonstrations by intelligentsia protesting against violations of the rule of law and encroachment on liberties proclaimed in the constitution" has significantly increased lately. According to the Voice of America, "calls for freedom of expression have become a universal concern in Communist countries."

Foreign radio stations continue to maintain that "the conflict between the progressive intelligentsia and the dogmatists of the Party apparatus on the issue of freedom of speech has intensified" in the USSR. In a more concentrated fashion than before, radio propagandists lead listeners to believe that the "violence of Stalinism could return." The BBC and Deutsche Welle claim that "several letters have appeared in the USSR warning of a possible repression against liberal circles of soviet intelligentsia to enforce compulsory observance of the Party agenda."

The Voice of America broadcast long excerpts from a publication in the foreign press entitled "Appeal to Soviet Intelligentsia by P. Yakir, Y. Kima, and I. Gabania," which ends with the following words: "Your every moment of silence is another step toward a trial of Daniel and Ginzburg. Little by little, your silent acquiescence might lead to another 1937." Its programs also mention a "letter from a young Ukrainian journalist, Chernovol."

As stated in the programs, "all these protests stem from violations of the rule of law" in the case of [Aleksandr] Ginzburg et al., and in the case of Bukovsky. The Voice of America broadcast that the majority of Soviet people consider these convicts to be "persons who dared to preserve their dignity, who dared to think and disagree."

As in the past, such programs name Solzhenitsyn, Yevtushenko and Voznesensky, who are described as "the fearless champions of freedom of creative humanity and honesty in art."

Developing this idea, radio stations speculate about the "threat of terror by security services that are preparing an attempt to subdue writers' resistance" (BBC).

The Voice of America pays even closer attention in its programs to evidence that, by publishing works in the West and disseminating them by means of "samizdat," it is possible to "convey genuine facts, ideas, and art to our contemporaries."

At the same time, by informing Soviet listeners of "even harsher protests by the intelligentsia in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia," radio stations are trying to impose the following conclusion: "Cultural repression in the USSR and other Eastern European countries stems not from a shift to orthodox Marxism, but from the general policy direction of the Party and state apparatus in those countries" (Voice of America).

Chairman,
Broadcast and Television Committee,
Council of Ministers, USSR

[signed]
N. Mesyatsev

Dossier No. 128e
16.II.68

Propaganda Directorate of the CPSU CC has considered the memorandum. The material is used for work purposes.

Secretary of the Propaganda directorate of the CPSU CC

[signed] Moskovsky

28.V.1968 9 Deputy Secretary of the Propaganda

29 May 1968 Directorate of the CPSU CC

[signed] Kuprikov

300 A/