

April 11, 1969

**Report to CPSU Central Committee on Visit of Czech
Delegation to Discuss Countering Enemy
Propaganda in Czechoslovakia**

Citation:

"Report to CPSU Central Committee on Visit of Czech Delegation to Discuss Countering Enemy Propaganda in Czechoslovakia", April 11, 1969, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Archives of the Central Committee of the CPSU. Obtained by Michael Nelson. Translated by Volodymyr Valkov.

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Summary:

This document indicates the continuing influence of German-language and other Western media in Czechoslovakia nine months after the Soviet invasion of August 1968. Czechoslovak officials criticized the heavy-handed Soviet broadcasts of Radio Vltava, and viewed other Soviet proposals to counter Western influence as counterproductive.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

[Excerpt]

Secret

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11 April 1969

To be returned to the CPSI CC (General Department) 300 a/3

CPSU CC

The Broadcast and Television Committee of the USSR Council of Ministers submits a report on a visit by the delegation from the Czechoslovak radio to the USSR headed by the acting Chief Director O. Zavodsky.

AttaCHment: 5 pages of text, not secret, addressee only.

Chairman of the Committee

[signed]

N. MesYatseV

9 April 1969

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22.IV.69, CPSU CC

Note on No. 12211

Material for information purposes only.

Propaganda Directorate of the CPSU CC has been informed.

Secretary of the Propaganda

Directorate of the CPSU CC

[Signed]□

/A. Dmytruk/□

21.4.69

[Stamped:]

Material is for information purposes only. Propaganda directorate of the CPSU CC has been informed.

Head of the sector

[signed] Guskov

15d/2 5 June 1969

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On a Visit to the USSR by the Delegation from Czechoslovak Radio Headed by the Acting Chief Director O. Zavodsky

In accordance with instructions to address questions of cooperation in areas of broadcasting and exchange of radio programs, and in order to further develop the Supplemental Protocol on cooperation in broadcasting in 1969, in response to the Broadcast and television Committee's invitation, a delegation from the Czechoslovak radio consisting of the acting Chief Director Odon Zavodsky (head of the delegation); Director of Radio Bratislava, Andrei Sarvash; Deputy Chief Director of the Czechoslovak Radio, Rostyslav Begal; Chairman of Party organizations of Czechoslovak radio, Vladimir Drikazsky; Chairman of Radio Bratislava, Ilius Farkasha; and Deputy Head of International Relations Department of Radio Bratislava, Lidya Riabina, visited the Soviet Union during March 11-15, 1969.

In the course of discussions, the Czechoslovak side stressed that the current political situation in the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic (CSSR) has not yet stabilized; an internal struggle is still underway and it is difficult to project how long it will last, and, therefore, certain questions would not be resolved during this conversation. In addition, the Czechoslovak side stated that it is necessary to discuss and, if it might be expedient, to review methods and content of cooperation, and specify the plan of action for 1969 so as to appeal to Czechoslovak listeners and enhance the influence of mass media on people in the CSSR with the aim of normalizing the situation in the country in a way consistent with agreements between the regulatory bodies of both countries. [...]

Article 3 of the Protocol, which provides for the exchange of program material concerning the 25th anniversary of the defeat of fascism, was also discussed. The Soviet side suggested that this paragraph should acknowledge active protest by both organizations against revanchism, neo-Nazism, and the politics of imperialism, and also coordinate radio programs exposing the anti-socialist policies of Mao Zedong.

The Czechoslovak side stated that such a detailed formulation of this article is impossible, for it deals with counter-propaganda that is too complicated under the present conditions in the CSSR. R. Begal, member of the delegation, defended this argument by saying that, supposedly, fighting Western influence, especially that of the FRG and Austria, is very difficult in the CSSR because the country's entire population speaks German and any protest against Western radio stations would attract even more listeners. The only realistic solution, Begal said, is to speed up the stream of information, and make it as operative as possible in order to reduce the influence of Western propaganda on the population of the CSSR. In this respect, R. Begal noted, the radio station Vltava, owing to its outdated broadcasting methods and poor debating style, strengthened the influence of Western, particularly Austrian, propaganda.

Our side pointed out that although the issue of putting together counter-propaganda is an internal affair of the Czechoslovak radio, there are, nevertheless, comprehensive problems in relation to which both radio organizations must act with one accord. It was also emphasized that it is necessary to work in this direction more actively, and rid the airtime of ideological garbage and unscrupulous politics that litter many programs of the Czechoslovak radio.

Andrei Sarvash stated that he agreed with the view of the Committee Chairman, comrade Mesyatsev N. N., on the question of counter-propaganda. He noted that the best kind of propaganda is offensive propaganda that is consistent with the spirit of the latest plenary sessions of the CC CPSU, and said that, under the current conditions in the CSSR, patriotic and internationalist propaganda is of increased importance.

Closing the discussion on article 3, parties agreed on the following wording: "soviet and Czechoslovak radio will exchange program material concerning the 25th anniversary of the defeat of fascism. Both sides will actively protest against revanchism, neo-nazism, and politics of imperialism in the world." [...]

The working Protocol provides for the exchange of material dedicated to the centennial of V.I. Lenin's birthday, national holidays of the USSR and CSSR, programs on public policy, politics, literature and drama, music recordings and other content intended for various social and age groups in the CSSR.

Describing members of the delegation, it should be noted that, first of all, the Director of the Bratislava Radio, A. Sarvash, the Chairman of Party organizations of the Prague Radio, V. Prikazsky, and Bratislava Radio [Chairman], Y. Farkash spoke very cordially and sincerely, and repeatedly expressed their satisfaction with the negotiations. V. Prikazsky stated that he would do everything he could to promote understanding of the concerns raised by the soviet side in the course of the discussions.

Head of the delegation O. Zavodsky was passive during the negotiations. Judging by the delegation's attitude toward him, he does not enjoy great authority with them.

Andrei Sarvash was more active and precise in his political persuasions and demonstrated a good understanding of our motivations.

Deputy Chief Director of the Czechoslovak Radio R. Begal demonstrated diligence in his remarks on the widening of cooperation between our organizations.

The delegation visited Leningrad and went sightseeing in the city, particularly to places associated with Lenin.

The talks were attended by committee members Karev N.N., Kuzakov K.S., Vartanova E.E., Editors-in-Chief Zakharov A.N. and Sarkisov K.A., Deputy Editor-in-Chief (program Mayak [Beacon]), Secretary of the Party committee of the Soviet radio Yegorychev V.A.