

February 27, 1951
**[Memorandum] Russian-Language Broadcasts by
Fund to Soviet Personnel in Eastern European
Satellite Countries**

Citation:

"[Memorandum] Russian-Language Broadcasts by Fund to Soviet Personnel in Eastern European Satellite Countries", February 27, 1951, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Released by the Central Intelligence Agency on October 16, 2019 in response to Mandatory Declassification Review request EOM-2018-00930. Contributed by A. Ross Johnson. <https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/290896>

Summary:

A Free Europe Committee memorandum discusses possible Russian-language broadcasts to Soviet military forces in Eastern Europe. Includes attachment titled "Specific Proposals for Fund Russian Language Broadcasts to Soviet Personnel in Eastern European Satellite Countries".

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Blavatnik Family Foundation

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

STRICTLY PRIVATE

February 27, 1951

RUSSIAN-LANGUAGE BROADCASTS BY FUND TO SOVIET PERSONNEL
IN EASTERN EUROPEAN SATELLITE COUNTRIESI. Situation

A. Numbers. The Fund does not have available any accurate estimates of the numbers of Soviet personnel within the Eastern European satellite countries, but newspaper reports have placed them anywhere from 500,000 to 1,000,000. The great majority of these, of course, are Red Army troops, but particularly in Rumania and Bulgaria, there are large numbers of at least ostensible civilians. By far the greatest concentration is in the Soviet Zone of Germany, where there are reported to be around 30 divisions. In any case, the potential audience for such broadcasts could be safely estimated to be at least 500,000, and probably much more.

B. Importance. This audience is much more important than the numbers indicate. First, as privileged "occupiers" they have a much higher percentage than normal of radio receiving sets. Secondly, this Soviet personnel, far from being a "separate" group within the countries concerned, is actually a normal concomitant of a Soviet satellite state. Without them the satellite regimes would not be able to continue. Finally, this Soviet personnel is far more vulnerable to Western penetration than any within the USSR itself. Like any other foreign occupying troops, they must be continually conscious of the hostility of the native population. Furthermore, although great progress has been made toward Sovietizing the satellites, many remnants of the "West" still remain. Finally, the relatively high percentage of defections from Soviet personnel in this area (decreased recently largely because very little has been done for them after they defected) demonstrates dramatically how vulnerable they are.

C. Present status of radio broadcasting. As far as the Fund is aware, there are now no broadcasts specifically directed to this personnel. What foreign broadcasts they hear are presumably thus directed primarily to the USSR proper.

0142 Jul 78-02727R

Box 5 Folder 8

II. Why Fund Should Broadcast

A. The above discussion indicates the importance of broadcasting to this group as such. The Fund would be able to broadcast to them much more freely than the Voice of America could. Furthermore, broadcasts to them could not be the same for the whole area; there should be a common core with specific additions for each country. This could be easily done, by coordination with the Fund's present broadcasting operations.

B. Such proposed Fund broadcasts would be keyed to "logical self-interest"; this Soviet personnel would be told that they are surrounded by a population becoming steadily more hostile, and are in a situation where the final victory of the West is becoming ever more inevitable. They should therefore get on the right side of the native population while the going is good and thus to some extent work their way home while they can.

C. The character of these broadcasts would be much different from present Fund radio operations. These broadcasts would be entirely "editorial," and the exile motif as such would not be used.

STRICTLY PRIVATE

February 27, 1951

**SPECIFIC PROPOSALS FOR FUND RUSSIAN LANGUAGE BROADCASTS TO SOVIET
PERSONNEL IN EASTERN EUROPEAN SATELLITE COUNTRIES**

1. Type of Operation. As the previous more general memorandum has indicated, such a Fund operation would be purely "editorial"; the use of exiles as such does not enter into the picture. All Russian-language speakers will be anonymous. Furthermore, this would not just be another language desk in the Fund's radio operation; it would be operated as a special project under special supervision, with little or no contact with the exiles whom the Fund now employs.

2. Personnel. Such a Russian language desk should have a U.S. head (one with bi-lingual background) and a maximum of four or five other people. The latter should be largely recent Red Army defectors.

3. U. S. Supervisory Personnel. If a thoroughly competent U. S. head for this desk were obtained, little or no additional supervisory U. S. personnel would be necessary, since much of the general news broadcasts could be used here, and other scripts would originate from desk personnel.

4. Time. Thirty minutes daily at first, partly a uniform program for the whole area and partly a specific program for Soviet occupational personnel in each country.

5. Area Covered. The area now included in the Fund's operations plus, if so desired, Soviet personnel in Eastern Germany.

6. Beams. The Fund's present antennas should be sufficient, with the addition of a further one beamed northeast if broadcasts to Soviet personnel in Eastern Germany would also be included.

7. Information Gathering. The primary new source here is recent Soviet defectors now in Western Germany. The Fund's normal information channels could also be utilized. In this connection, as in general program content problems, closest coordination would be necessary with our friends' other operations in this field.

8. Location. Because of nearness of target, information sources, potential broadcasting personnel, and other similar operations, as much as possible of this operation should be in Munich.

9. Possible Jamming. The Fund realizes that the initiation of Russian language broadcasts on its part might lead to a large increase in Soviet jamming operations against this specific program and the Fund's programs in general. Beginning such Russian broadcasts involves a calculated risk; if major jamming occurs, it might be necessary to increase power, transmitters, beams, and wave lengths.