

June 6, 1989

**Bulgarian Politburo Discussion on Radio Free Europe
Monitoring Reports (excerpt)**

Citation:

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Summary:

This extract from a Politburo discussion indicates the attention paid to monitoring Western broadcasts for the top Party elite and Party leader Zhivkov's impatience with the regime monitors' focus on RFE broadcasts.

Original Language:

Bulgarian

Contents:

Translation - English

[Excerpt]□□□□□□□□

Strictly confidential!

Stenographic record

Meeting

of tHe PolitBuro of tHe Central Committee
of tHe Bulgarian Communist PartY

6 June 1989

Todor Zhivkov:

Comrades,

I asked to meet in order to clarify some issues with regard to the situation in the country. I don't intend to draw a balance-sheet, since we have not spoken about that. We are going to go back to the revival process [i.e. campaign against ethnic Turks in Bulgaria], we will make an assessment in order to see what we need to do and so on.

What is the main thing? The main thing is that we rightly came up with this exposition in front of the Bulgarian television and radio. It created, on the whole, a patriotic, Bulgarian, national surge, which we haven't had in decades. That is one success.....

Petar Mladenov:

I think that the statement of comrade Zhivkov was one of the biggest moves since I have been engaged in politics and since I have been here.

Secondly, in terms of internal affairs, he de facto stopped certain negative processes which have been developing in Bulgaria. With regard to external affairs we went on the offensive. I have to tell you that Bulgaria is in no way isolated and its influence is in no way less than it was before. [...]

Yordan Yotov [CC secretary responsible for ideological issues]:

Why do I say that? Because we receive information every day. No one spares us the facts, but rather presents them as they are, sometimes exaggerated and so on. The main source of information for Bulgaria, which the comrades give us each day, is [Radio] Free Europe. I cannot understand why each day they [the department monitoring foreign radio broadcasts] have to shove us a stack of what Vladimir Kostov or Rumiana Uzunova has said. We have to understand that these are paid agents. Supply us other information. There are other radio stations. Let them gather information from the BBC. What does the Voice of America say? These are also enemy radio stations.

Todor Zhivkov:

Comrade Yotov, spare us this information, we don't have time.

Petar Mladenov:

That [flow of information], when it cannot be compared against everything that goes on in the world, deforms the mind and it appears as though the entire world is preoccupied with Bulgaria. That [information] is being transmitted in Bulgarian only. It is especially prepared for Bulgaria. It is not broadcast in German, English, [or] French. When I was in Paris, Le Monde wrote one sentence on Bulgaria.

I think that the information [prepared] for us should be a little bit different. Let those who deal with propaganda read everything, but we should be given more authentic information. There arises an untruthful notion of how Bulgaria is positioned [internationally]. These [radio monitoring] bulletins are read by many people and an incorrect idea is being created about how Bulgaria is being presented to the world.

Todor Zhivkov:

That which you give should be abbreviated. Are we going to live with Free Europe only?