

**December 16, 1968**  
**KGB report to Central Committee on Radio Liberty**  
**Policy guidelines**

**Citation:**

"KGB report to Central Committee on Radio Liberty Policy guidelines", December 16, 1968, 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://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/121517>

**Summary:**

The KGB informs the Central Committee of RL policy guidelines concerning programs dealing with the USSR. While the first paragraph indicates "Free Europe," the content of the note makes clear that Radio Liberty is meant. The original memorandum on which the note was based [a copy could not be located in the RFE/RL archives for comparison] was probably taken from Radio Liberty headquarters in Munich.

**Original Language:**

Russian

**Contents:**

Translation - English

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USSR  
Committee for State Security  
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CPSU CC

Recommendations prepared by the US special services for the radio station Free Europe [sic] in December 1968 provide the following guidance regarding programs focusing on foreign and domestic policies of the USSR.

Programs that deal with foreign policy should consistently underline that the development of the modern international situation was profoundly influenced by the entry of troops from the five Warsaw Pact countries into Czechoslovakia, bringing to naught the softening in relations between the East and the West that has been achieved with great difficulty in the last few years, and threatening the future of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The programs should make it clear that the policy of the Soviet leadership to violently suppress the slightest signs of independence creates a threat of military intervention in Romania, Yugoslavia, Albania and other countries, which could have a pernicious effect on the entire world. In addition, it is necessary to persuade listeners that NATO members are already implementing measures to consolidate their military and defense capabilities in order to be able to repel possible Soviet aggression. The radio station should underline that all aspects of Soviet foreign policy are secondary in comparison with the issue of Czechoslovakia. Despite the constructive role played by the Soviet Union in putting a stop to American bombing of the democratic republic of Vietnam, the USA and other Western countries will not be able to resume normal relations with the Soviet Union until the Czechoslovak question is satisfactorily resolved.

It is also necessary to make clear that events in Czechoslovakia have negatively affected many Communist countries. The majority of Communist Parties, including the French and Italian, have expressed the view that the Soviet Union is making a mistake by suppressing liberal reforms, which are absolutely necessary for communist governments to be viable in the twentieth century.

With respect to this, it should be underlined that the Soviet Union is facing formidable resistance from the people of Czechoslovakia and seems unable to come up with a solution to its policy in Czechoslovakia.

It should be pointed out that in recent years the international community has considered the USSR to be a country that "truly strives to ease international tension," but events in Czechoslovakia have done enormous damage to the prestige of the Soviet Union.

The principle thesis of the programs dealing with the domestic policies of the Soviet Union should be that there is an increasing demand for the rule of law and freedom of information in the Soviet Union, and that it is closely linked with events in

Czechoslovakia.

The programs should underline that the struggle of the Soviet intelligentsia for the rule of law and freedom of information exemplified in a number of overt protests is a sign of hope that the Politburo and Central Committee of the CPSU have not yet made a final decision regarding the process of liberalization both in the USSR and Czechoslovakia. Nevertheless, the plenary session of the CC CPSU in April has shown that the Soviet leadership does not intend to make any concessions, but is instead preparing an ideological counter-attack.

The programs should promote the liberalization movement in the Soviet Union as a sentiment that is shared not only by a thin layer of Soviet intelligentsia, but also by the masses.

The efforts of the soviet leadership to resolve ideological problems at a plenary session in April have not produced desirable results. This is evident in the fact that academician saKHaroV's "reflections on Progress, Peaceful Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom" appeared two months after the plenum. His views are shared by many of his colleagues.

It is worth noting that the Soviet leadership, being dissatisfied with the views prevailing among youth and students, decided to implement certain changes in the operation of the Komsomol by adopting policies to intensify ideological teachings. Nevertheless, the Soviet leadership is facing difficulties in adopting such policies due to information that is coming from abroad, depriving it of its main ideological weapon-monopoly of information.

It is necessary to emphasize that the Soviet people's increased demand for respect of the rule of law and the Soviet constitution is linked with the renewed protests by Crimean Tatars and other nationalities speaking out against the infringement of their rights.

In addition to the factual data on the economy of the USSR and the improved well-being of the Soviet people, programs about the economic situation in the Soviet Union should stress that in general the economic development of the Soviet Union is moving at a slower pace than in 1966-1967. Besides the "inversion of bureaucracy," the unstable standards, the poor supply system, and the limited rights of businessmen that hamper economic reforms, the events in Czechoslovakia have disturbed transportation and reduced commodity turnover within the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON).

Programs regarding agriculture should point out that, despite some improvement, such important concerns as organizing the third All-Union Congress of farmers and adopting a new statute for agricultural cooperatives are not being addressed. It should be noted that there is presently a tendency toward reducing appropriations for agriculture, which could have unfavorable consequences.

Programs regarding the standard of living of the Soviet people should underline that material needs are being poorly met, despite high consumer solvency and demand. A sharp increase in the number of deposits in savings banks provides good evidence.

The Soviet economy and general well-being of the Soviet people could have been in much better shape if the Soviet leadership had not implemented policies that aggravated the international situation, and if it had rejected the arms race that is consuming enormous resources at the expense of industry and agriculture.

Recommendations provide the following guidance to national editorial boards:

russian eDitorial board. Along with reporting on the most significant events of domestic and foreign policy of the USSR, [it should] launch a new series called "Genuine History of the Personality Cult." Special episodes should be dedicated to STALIN'S birthday and BERIA'S execution. [It should] produce two episodes for the program "The Right to Know"-on such topics as freedom of information, censorship, etc., and "Eye-witnesses and Documents," dedicated to witness testimonies and documents relating to events in the USSR. [It should] renew the press review entitled "Books and Authors" to acquaint listeners with new releases in the West about Soviet Union and its problems.

ukrainian eDitorial board. Launch a new series about Ivan Dziuba, Kiev-based author, and the Sakharov letter. Produce programs about "Stalin's methods in our time in Ukraine," especially about Party control of literature. Continue series about human rights and the history of Ukraine.

belarus eDitorial board. Continue series "Economic Challenges of Belarus," "Belarus Today" and "Contemporary Belarus Literature and Culture." Moreover, produce a special program dedicated to problems of the BSSR.

arMenian eDitorial board. Continue programs about political and public life in Armenia, its problems in the areas of economy, science, culture, arts, and literature. Several programs should be dedicated to the 48th anniversary of Soviet Armenia.

Deputy Chairman of the Committee for State Security, USSR Council of Ministers

[signed] n. Zakharov

NOTE No. 35958

Propaganda directorate CC CPSU has been informed.

Deputy Secretary of the Directorate

CPSU CC  
[signed] A. Dmytruk

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29.I.1969

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