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NOTES FROM THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE PRESS

A.V. 121

Ukrainian

May 6, 1950

* "Voice of America" Ukrainian Program Again Attacked By Separatists
As Instrument Of Russian Imperialism

Disappointment among Ukrainian emigres over the contents of the Ukrainian-language program of the "Voice of America" again found expression in a number of open letters and articles as well as resolutions adopted by DP groups. The protests are still based on the same general contention that these broadcasts will not satisfy Ukrainian aspirations as long as they are limited to the fight against Soviet totalitarianism and do not stress the issue of an independent Ukrainian state. In their present form, it is said, the broadcasts serve the interests of the non-Soviet variety of Russian imperialism, as represented by Kerensky, the Menshevik leader Abramovitch. As a matter of fact, some protests even suggest that the Ukrainian program is made up by the Russians for their own purposes and transmitted in the Ukrainian language for the same reason that Stalin uses this language in his propaganda.

An outstanding example of this reasoning is contained in an "Open Letter to the Directors of the 'Voice of America'," signed

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by Ivan Bagryany, a Ukrainian writer who spent a considerable amount of time in Soviet prisons before the war and is now one of the editors of the Ukrainian-language DP weekly, Ukrainian News, published in Neu-Ulm, Germany. The letter was printed in the March 30th issue of this weekly and was reprinted in the Jersey City Svoboda of April 20th as well as in the Philadelphia Catholic America.

Claiming a special right in criticizing the program because his works are used in these broadcasts, Bagryany writes that the transmissions, in their present form, are "the mouthpiece of Russian imperialism, which, in ideas, is in contact with Stalin." He maintains that they are so far from the "sentiments, aspirations and level of the political development of the Ukrainian people" that they smack of "the voice of Russian imperialism."

Bagryany lists a number of features of the program, considered particularly odious, such as: using the "Historical Calendar," one of the program's features, for purposes of popularizing Peter the Great and Russian writers and leaders. He takes exception to the inclusion of Ukrainians in the term, "peoples of Russia," through which the "Voice of America" strengthens Russia as a prison of nations. From this he draws the following conclusion:

"One can't help come to the conclusion that there must be someone who directs the 'Voice of America' behind the back of American factors....It is generally known that the entire Eastern European division of the 'Voice of America' is under the control of the Russians."

Bagryany further identifies these Russians as "progressive circles among Russian emigres in the U. S." He mentions among their leaders Alexander ~~Kerensky~~ and Raphael ~~Abramovitch~~, and states

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that with relation to the Ukrainian problem there is no difference between them and Stalin. He quotes from Abramovitch's "Socialisticheski Viestnik" and from Kerensky's statements to prove that they credit Stalin for "not dismembering Russia" and for "not cutting up the living body of Russia." The significance of the Ukrainian program, under the supervision of such elements, is defined as follows:

"This is the mouthpiece, not of America, not of Western democracy; it is the mouthpiece of Russian imperialism and Stalin's ideological comrades."

In conclusion, the writer says that the easiest way out would be to discontinue the Ukrainian transmissions, as demanded by some Ukrainian circles. However, he adds, this would only benefit bolshevism and Mr. Abramovitch. He advises that the protests be continued until the program becomes Ukrainian in form and content.

The Jersey City Svoboda of April 20th and the weekly Narodna Volya, Scranton, of April 13th, published a resolution adopted at a mass meeting in New York, held on April 2nd by the Democratic Alliance of Ukrainians Formerly Oppressed by the Soviets (DOBRUS). The resolution states that the Ukrainian-language program is "under Russian management, which is concerned not so much with the interests of America and the Ukraine as with the political interests of one Russian emigre group." And it continues:

"We affirm that placing the Ukrainian program under the control of people who are hostile to the Ukrainian cause, contradicts the goodwill of America to help the Ukrainian people in their liberation efforts and can create distrust among millions of Ukrainians toward America."

In conclusion, the resolution demands that the management of the Ukrainian program include representatives of the oppressed Ukrainian people at whom the broadcasts are directed.

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The weekly Ukrainian Independist, organ of the Bandera faction of the Ukrainian nationalist movement, published in Regensburg, Germany, carried in its March 12th issue a letter to the editor, stating that "a Muscovite wolf in Ukrainian clothing" speaks to Ukrainians over the "Voice of America." The writer of the letter reaches the conclusion that it would be better to discontinue a program which "profanes the Ukrainian language and Ukrainian individuality."

The semi-weekly Catholic America, Philadelphia, of April 18th published an open letter in defense of the Ukrainian program, submitted, as the paper says; "by circles close to the management of the Ukrainian program." The letter admits many defects of the program, but insists that it is improving. It points out that the language and the contents are designed to suit the Soviet auditors. The writer warns that indiscriminating criticism of the program can only bring harm, and constructive suggestions which could be used to improve the program are invited.

In an acid comment from America's editor, it is stated that an improvement can hardly be expected under present conditions. In this connection, it says:

"The directors of the Ukrainian 'Voice of America' have a narrow party attitude and are conciliatory to the Muscovites. For this reason they were hired, because the State Department's attitude is identical, that is, Muscovophile."

The paper sees no harm in directing strong criticism against the program, but on the contrary considers it helpful. It says:

"This is not a favor on the part of the gentlemen in the State Department, but their duty in the name of the well-being of the United States and democracy. If they are blind, their eyes should be opened."