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I. THE TEN MOST PROMINENT THEMES

Broadly speaking, there are only two themes in Soviet radio propaganda: "we are superior" and "they are inferior." The world scene is continually pictured as a gigantic struggle between good and evil, with all good on the side of the "democratic" (pro-Soviet) forces, and all evil on the side of the "anti-democratic" or "imperialist" forces, especially the United States.

It is often difficult to draw sharp lines between the various sorts of "good" and "evil" which are attributed respectively to the USSR and its enemies. If an attempt is made to do this, however, a much larger number of themes can be distinguished. The ten which have probably been most frequent in foreign broadcasts

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since 1 January 1948, arranged in an estimated order of frequency,^{1/} are as follows:

1. Our enemies are imperialistic.
2. They are undemocratic.
3. They are untruthful.
4. They are reactionary (opposing social justice).
5. They are uncooperative.
6. They are war-making.
7. They hurt the economy of other nations.
8. We (the USSR and the "democratic" forces in every other nation) are peaceful.
9. Our enemies are dismembering Germany.
10. We are democratic.

To represent the full meaning and the actual complexity of these themes, however, it is necessary to illustrate them in some detail.

1. Our enemies are imperialistic.

(The word "enemies" is to be understood as representing primarily the United States--or, strictly speaking, the "ruling" circles in the United States--and the "ruling" or "reactionary" circles in all other countries except the Soviet Union and the "new democracies" of eastern Europe. Britain is not singled out for denunciation nearly so often as the United States, though the term "Anglo-American imperialism" is often used, and the term "western powers"--usually implying Britain and sometimes France, in addition to the U.S.--is also frequent.)

In our sample, the U.S. was specifically denounced 220 times; the "western powers" or "Anglo-American circles," 111 times; "reactionaries" in other countries, 110 times; and Britain alone only 25 times. It should also be noted that in this tabulation the non-Soviet Left in Europe and elsewhere--Bevin, Blum, Schumacher, Saragat--is counted as "reactionary," since in the Soviet ideology it is as reactionary as Wall Street itself, and, if possible, even more dangerous.)

The Marshall Plan, like the Truman Doctrine, is a device to enslave Europe.

U.S. monopoly capitalism is insidiously taking control of the economies of all nations outside the Soviet sphere.

^{1/} The list is based on a statistical study of the themes represented in the introductions to the weekly SURVEY OF USSR RADIO BROADCASTS during the past ten weeks (29 April--7 July). Each of these introductions summarizes in 5-6 pages the content of Soviet radio propaganda during a given week. The order thus obtained was then slightly corrected on the basis of an impressionistic judgment of shifts of emphasis between the period January-April and the period May-July.

Since this sample was relatively small and by no means fully representative, the data should be taken as the best available estimate, rather than as completely accurate. (It has not yet been feasible to obtain a scientifically adequate sample of Soviet broadcasts, or to carry on statistical analysis of Soviet broadcasts as a regular procedure. It is hoped that this will be possible in the near future.)

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Anglo-American "oil imperialism" in the Middle East is the key to the problem of Palestine.

The U.S. has actively intervened in Greece and China. The "monarcho-fascist" Greek government is a mere puppet of its American masters.

Great Britain and France, especially the latter, have been reduced to the status of satellites.

"Reactionary" ruling groups everywhere are "subservient" to American interests. They are "betraying" the independence and sovereignty of their own nations.

American and Roman Catholic "interference" determined the outcome of the Italian election.

Pro-U.S. majorities in the U.N. are bought or dominated by the U.S.

The "unanimity principle" in the Security Council is essential, to protect the rights of small nations against U.S.-controlled majorities in the U.N.

The U.S. supports French, Dutch, and British imperialism in Indochina, Indonesia, and Malaya.

(With the exception of Indonesia and Indochina--which are given very little stress except in broadcasts beamed to Asia--the type of "imperialism" which is attacked is rather different from the old colonial form of imperialism. Scarcely any attention, for instance, is given to French possessions in Africa; and the official withdrawal of Europeans and Americans from the Philippines, Cuba, India, Burma, Iraq, Syria, Egypt and Palestine is unimportant and irrelevant from the standpoint of current Soviet ideology, because it is superficial and represents no withdrawal of actual control. The current Soviet ideology pictures present-day Anglo-American imperialism as something less open and official, more insidious, and--necessarily--more difficult to disprove. It presumably operates partly by direct or indirect ownership of economic enterprises, newspapers, etc., and partly by economic and military support to "reactionary" governments against their own "people." Its existence is "proved" especially by such things as the support given by a majority of U.N. delegates to the "flagrant" American intervention in Greece.)

2. They are undemocratic

The word "democratic," in the current Soviet ideology, has class connotations which are scarcely distinguishable from those of the word "progressive." It implies social justice far more than it implies parliamentary majorities or civil liberties. Its opposite is "reactionary"; "the forces of reaction" are often said to be opposing "the forces of democracy." In other words, the presumed interests of the working class are, by definition, "democratic." And, since this is true, the meaning of this major theme is closely allied to the meaning of the fourth major theme: "Our enemies are reactionary; they oppose social justice." It should therefore be noted that if the frequencies of the two themes are combined, they constitute a composite which is much more frequent than even the "imperialism" theme which has been placed at the head of the list.

The "people" everywhere--even in the United States--oppose Anglo-American imperialism and the "reactionary" governments which support it.

The "people" lost the election in Italy, though they "held their ground" against the forces of reaction.

The U.S. everywhere allies itself with "reactionary" or "fascist" elements: Nazis, German monopolists and industrialists, Franco, Salazar, Greek "monarcho-fascists," the Kuomintang, the Zaibatsu, Syngman Rhee, etc.

Elections in Italy, Korea, and elsewhere, and even in the U.S. itself, are not free from coercion and intimidation.

In many countries there is persecution of "democratic elements" (i.e., Communists and their allies). This reached a climax in the "mass executions" in Greece.

Negroes are denied their rights in the U.S.

The Mundt-Nixon bill is fascist

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3. They are untruthful.

The Marshall Plan, like the Truman Doctrine, is a deceitful device to enslave Europe.

American claims to be democratic are sheer hypocrisy.

American claims to be peace-loving are sheer hypocrisy. U.S. armaments for "defence" are actually for purposes of aggression.

The Voice of America lies, slanders, etc.

The western powers are breaking promises made at Potsdam.

Congressional proposals for eliminating the veto or for regional pacts are in violation of the U.N. Charter.

The claims of "right-wing socialists" (Bevin, Blum, Schumacher, Saragat) to be real socialists are sheer window-dressing. The same is true of U.S. labor leaders, who are serving the interests of Wall Street in their efforts to destroy the unity of the World Federation of Trade Unions.

The State Department went back on its own proposal to start a general discussion of questions in dispute.

The cut in ERP shows the "reliability" of American "promises."

Any assertions that the USSR is aggressive are "slander," in the best Goebbels tradition.

(For the sake of contrast, the pattern is often varied by asserting that someone has "frankly admitted" or has been "forced to admit" the truth underlying all these hypocritical pretensions. For instance, when Marshall claimed that ERP would in the long run benefit the United States, he was said to have "admitted" the "selfish" aims of the Plan.)

4. They are reactionary (opposing social justice).

As indicated above, this theme is very closely allied with "they are undemocratic." Both imply class-consciousness; both assume that the "toiling masses," who constitute the vast majority in every capitalist nation, are now oppressed by the owning minority, the "reactionaries" or "monopolists." Since the toiling masses are at the same time the majority, everything which serves their interests is also democratic. And, as indicated above, it should be noted that these two themes in combination are more prominent than any other single theme. In other words, the essential class appeal of the Marxian ideology is very much in evidence.

On the other hand, it should be especially noted that most of the older Marxian words and slogans -- Communism, revolution, dictatorship of the proletariat, class consciousness, class conflict, expropriation of the bourgeoisie -- have gone by the board. They continue to a considerable extent in Soviet Home Service broadcasts, but have virtually disappeared from broadcasts to other countries.

The "class" appeal of present-day Soviet propaganda does not differentiate it in any way from the vaguely "liberal" or "progressive" views of many middle-class persons in western Europe or America. Even land reform and nationalization of industry, though both have been explicitly favored in a number of contexts, have not been at all prominent as compared with such vague terms as "progressive," "reactionary," "monopolist" -- used as a noun, with no specific proposals for combatting monopoly -- etc. Such vague labels as these constitute by far the larger part of the value-judgments which have been here classified as representing the theme of "social justice."

The U.S. supports "reaction" everywhere.

"Reaction" everywhere opposes trade union rights, inflation-control, limitation of excessive profits, land reform, nationalization of industry, etc.

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The standard of living of the ordinary citizen in America, in view of inflation etc., is nothing like the rosy picture of it which is printed by the Voice of America.

5. They are uncooperative.

In this group there are not only direct accusations of uncooperativeness, such as the alleged refusal to conduct negotiations at the time of the Smith-Molotov exchange, but also a number of related themes which bear upon war and peace without clearly accusing anyone of "warmaking" or "warmongering." For example, charges of "militarism" and of hostility to the USSR are also included.

The U.S. refuses to carry on peaceful negotiation with the USSR.

The U.S. is undermining the basic principles of the United Nations.

Germany and Japan are being transformed into arsenals.

The Western Union is a military alliance directed against the Soviet Union.

A virulent anti-Soviet propaganda campaign, resembling that of Goebbels, is underway.

Marshall broke up the Foreign Ministers Conference in December.

The U.S. and Britain have sabotaged the kind of Four-Power cooperation agreed upon at Potsdam.

The U.S. is establishing military bases throughout the world.

Military men, working for Wall Street masters, are in control in Washington.

The U.S. is re-arming needlessly.

(Note: Specific facts about U.S. re-armament are avoided, and the topic itself has not been stressed since Truman's speech in March. There is also extremely little on the atomic bomb.)

6. They are war-making.

This theme was extremely prominent during the weeks after Vishinsky's "warmonger" speech before the Assembly of the United Nations in September. Since then, the concentrated attention given to it has definitely subsided, though the term "instigators of a new war" is now part of Moscow's regular stock of epithets, and is likely to be found in almost any context.

Financial circles which profit from war are in control of the U.S. Government.

Hence, the U.S. Government officially condones warmongers.

The Western Union is for purposes of aggression against the USSR and the "new democracies."

Western imperialism is responsible for war in Palestine.

(Each of the charges of militarism and uncooperativeness, mentioned above under "they are uncooperative," may or may not be linked with charges of outright desire for war.)

Although the "falsifiers of history" have tried to make the facts appear otherwise, World War II was the product of collaboration between Hitler and the Governments of France and Britain. They "unleashed" the war, though they tried to direct Hitler's aggression against the Soviet Union instead of against themselves.

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7. They hurt the economy of other nations.

The Marshall Plan involves burdensome economic conditions.

The U.S. and Britain try to eliminate economic competition on the continent of Europe.

Economic conditions in western Germany, southern Korea, and Japan are disastrous.

U.S. insistence on reduction of tariffs in western Europe simply means freedom for U.S. monopolies to take control.

Trade with eastern Europe (which is strongly encouraged by the USSR) has been discouraged by U.S. influence on the countries of western Europe.

It is unwise for western Europe to tie itself to an economy like that of the U.S., which is headed for collapse. (Note: this theme, which was heard occasionally in 1947, seems to have almost disappeared in 1948. Predictions of imminent crisis in the U.S. have also virtually disappeared since the stock market drop, and stabilization, in February.)

8. We are peaceful.

The fact that the first seven themes are all denunciations of the alleged enemies of the USSR, and that boasting about the USSR and the "new democracies" occupies a relatively subordinate part in Soviet propaganda beamed to foreign audiences, is in itself of some interest. The Soviet radio apparently operates on the assumption that "the best defense is offense."

In the Smith-Molotov exchange, the USSR reaffirmed its consistent stand as the chief bulwark of peace in the present-day world.

The USSR was the chief opponent of Hitler, striving continuously for peace throughout all phases of European history since 1917.

The Red Army is a bulwark of peace.

Unlike the western powers, the USSR favors measures for preventing renewed German or Japanese aggression.

9. Our enemies are dismembering Germany (and Korea).

A puppet west-German state is being set up in Trizonia; a puppet state is being set up in Seoul.

Unwillingness to cooperate in Four-Power control of Germany means the splitting, not only of Germany but of all Europe.

The break-down of the London Foreign Ministers' Conference in December was planned in advance, with the deliberate intention of using it as a pretext for going ahead with the dismemberment of Germany.

The German People's Congress for Unity and a Just Peace, and the recent "people's initiative," represent a great upsurge of popular protest against the western policy of dismemberment.

(This campaign has been given very great emphasis in broadcasts to Germany and Korea, and especially in broadcasts by the Soviet-controlled German and Korean radios. It has been soft-pedalled to an extreme degree in broadcasts to France.)

(In the case of Germany, there is also a paradoxical emphasis on the contention that the western powers are "building up" Germany, to the point where it will again endanger France and other countries. The paradox inherent in the simultaneous assertions that Germany is being "dismembered" and "built up" is never explicitly discussed or clearly resolved.)

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10. We are Democratic.

The significant thing about this theme is that it rarely appears in references to the Soviet Union itself. The question of civil liberties in the Soviet Union, for instance, is typically ignored. There are few attempts to maintain that they exist in the USSR--though the argument does appear, in such forms as a comparison between universal voting in the Soviet Union and the disfranchisement of the Negro in parts of the United States, or the assertion that the Soviet press is free because it represents all the people, while in the west it represents only a ruling minority. In the main, however, assertions of democracy on the Soviet side of the world-conflict refer either to the "new democracies" of eastern Europe or to the "democratic forces"--i.e., pro-Soviet forces--within the non-Soviet nations.

Usually, too, the assertion appears simply in the labels that are applied--"new democracies" or "democratic forces"--rather than in any attempt to demonstrate that these groups are in fact democratic. The Soviet radio speaks as if the democratic character of these groups were so completely obvious as to be beyond any need for argument.

The world is now divided into two camps--the camp of imperialism and the camp of democracy. One is headed by the U.S., the other by the USSR.

The "new democracies" are making progress toward "true democracy."

The democratic forces throughout the world--in China, in Greece, in eastern Europe, and even in the United States--have gained in strength during the past three years.

It should be noted, finally, that the above list of ten most frequent themes does not include what is said about affairs inside the Soviet Union. This limitation was necessary, since by far the larger part of such material appears in Home Service broadcasts, and the available sample of Home Service broadcasts was not comparable with the foreign broadcasts. Broadly, however, it can be said that comments on world affairs to the home audience are similar to those contained in broadcasts beamed to foreign audiences. The home broadcasts differ chiefly in that they contain an enormous emphasis on Soviet economic achievements, and on exhortations to economic effort. "The fulfillment of the post-war Five-Year Plan in four years," and similar slogans, are conspicuous in them, and not in foreign broadcasts. There is also a very strong emphasis on the cultural and scientific achievements of the USSR and of pre-Soviet Russia, Russian priorities in major inventions and discoveries, etc.

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II. THE TEN MOST PROMINENT THEMES WITH REGARD TO THE UNITED STATES

A separate estimate of what is most often said specifically about the United States yields ten most frequent themes, the estimated order of which is as follows:

1. The U.S. (or its "ruling camp") is imperialistic.
2. It is untruthful.
3. It is undemocratic.
4. It is uncooperative.
5. It is warmaking.
6. It is reactionary (opposed to social justice).
7. It is hurting the economy of other nations.
8. The "democratic" forces in the U.S. (e.g., Wallace) are strong, or are gaining in strength.
9. American culture is decadent.
10. (Until February) An economic crisis is imminent in the U.S.

The differences between this list and the more general one previously presented are minor and not statistically significant. This is of course to be expected. America is the arch-enemy, and propaganda with regard to it therefore typifies Soviet radio propaganda in general.

Some new and interesting results are obtained, however, from a review of what the Soviet radio says about the internal situation in the U.S., as distinguished from American foreign policy. When the U.S. itself rather than the world is taken as the frame of reference, America no longer appears as a single entity, as it usually does in Soviet discussion of world affairs. In discussion of world affairs it is often said that "the U.S." -- not "Wall Street" -- is enslaving Europe, fostering reaction, refusing to cooperate with the USSR, etc.; the idea that "Wall Street" is the real culprit is implicit, but often not explicit. In discussing internal events, however, the idea of a constant "struggle" between two camps within the U.S. -- the "people" vs. Wall Street -- becomes both explicit and extremely prominent. It is in fact as all-embracing in this context as in the broader context of world politics.

In this context six themes are prominent. In estimated order of frequency, they are:

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1. The "democratic" forces (e.g. Wallace) are strong or are growing stronger, in spite of intense pressure from "reaction." (It is always assumed and sometimes stated that there is no difference between Democrats and Republicans, since both are "capitalist parties" and both are controlled by Wall Street.)
2. Civil liberties are restricted. The Thomas Committee and the F.B.I. are "turning America into a police state." Wallace supporters are persecuted.
3. The masses are exploited. Exploitation is shown by the Taft-Hartley law, inflation, housing problems, education and health problems, the "dropping" standard of living and the "decrease of real wages."
4. Militarism is conspicuous and "war-mongering" is condoned. (But Moscow does not discuss rearmament in specific detail.)
5. There is race prejudice and discrimination against Negroes.
6. American "bourgeois culture" is decadent.

III. MAJOR OMISSIONS

Topics omitted or soft-pedalled by the Soviet radio are perhaps as significant as topics especially stressed. The omissions are of special interest from the standpoint of counter-propaganda, since in many cases they presumably represent points on which the Soviet ideology is especially vulnerable.

Some outstanding omissions (absolute or relative) are:

1. The atomic bomb, and control of atomic energy.
2. The older, more revolutionary Marxian slogans. These persist in Home Service broadcasts, but are soft-pedalled in broadcasts beamed abroad.
3. Soviet demands for reparations from Germany, Austria and Japan.
4. All conflicts which cannot be easily fitted into the pattern of the worldwide conflict between Soviet and non-Soviet. The following are either soft-pedalled or denied:

Jews vs. Arabs
India vs. Pakistan
Democrats vs. Republicans
Labor Party vs. Conservatives
Blum vs. DeGaulle

5. Many other conflicts in which vigorous taking of sides might make enemies unnecessarily.

Polish-German frontier (seldom mentioned, though present boundary is treated as a closed issue when mentioned at all)
Trieste
Other border disputes (Yugoslav Carinthia, Greeks vs. Bulgars, Kurds and Ardahan, Iranian Azerbaijan).
French and Italian colonial claims in Africa.
French and Dutch claims in Indochina and Indonesia (soft-pedalled in broadcasts to Europe)
(New, if any, attacks on religion, monarchy, nationalism, or even private property as such)

6. Specific military facts or ideas (e.g., military strategy, Soviet military strength, or specific data on U.S. rearmament, such as the 70-group air force.)

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