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SUBJECT : Speech on Soviet Active Measures

Attached is [redacted]'s draft of your speech to be given later this month on Soviet Active Measures. The text has been reviewed in SOVA and has been approved and coordinated with the DO.

*Speech*  
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*Open prop.  
for given  
fronts  
attacks on other govts  
friendship societies  
agents of influence  
clandestine broadcasting  
targets / sales  
conclusion.*

Chief, Foreign Activities Branch  
Third World Activities Division  
Office of Soviet Analysis

*24 May  
USSR Travel Study  
Program  
Holsum Bakery, Inc.*

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16 May 1986

### SOVIET ACTIVE MEASURES AND DISINFORMATION

Two years ago, on the eve of the Olympic Games in Los Angeles, the national Olympics committees of 20 African and Asian countries received leaflets threatening violence if their athletes participated in the Games. The leaflets were signed "Ku Klux Klan." You probably remember that incident. And you'll remember that Attorney General William French Smith announced that the leaflets were forgeries by the Soviet political police, the KGB. They were part of a campaign by Moscow to justify its decision not to have Soviet athletes go to Los Angeles. They were also an effort to discourage others from going.

Those leaflets were examples of a wide-ranging, expensive Soviet effort to influence other countries. Putting out forgeries is one method of trying to get across a message without having the audience know who's sending the message. If you know that the Kremlin wants you to believe something, you'll probably have your guard up. You'll be a bit more skeptical than you might be if the message seems to come from some neutral or unidentified source. So the Soviets make extensive use of indirect, covert ways of trying to influence others. Moscow has a name for such secret methods: aktivnyye meropriyatiya. We translate it, "active

measures," and we've picked up their term to identify a whole range of ways that the Soviets use to hide attempts to exert their influence, to build up support for Kremlin policies, and to attack our policies.

Those ways of Soviet active measures involve the spreading of disinformation--that is, information that deliberately gives only part of the story, that distorts the subject for a purpose. One of the techniques of active measures is Moscow's control of front organizations, like the World Peace Council. Such organizations use a public front of seeming neutrality and objectivity to attack Western attitudes but turn a blind eye to Soviet similarities--and to human rights violations and other Soviet deviations from world norms. Active measures also include several other things that I'll get to in a minute. But first, let me outline the broader Soviet information and propaganda framework into which active measures fit--the information and propaganda that is publicly attributed to the USSR, as distinct from active measures that are done secretly to conceal the Soviet role.

An essential element of the Soviet political system is the control of information. Since knowledge is power, the leaders of any Communist country seek to keep information restricted to those who need to know. Only that information which serves a proper purpose from the leadership's viewpoint is supposed to be circulated. This causes problems for trying to run a modern industrial country. You can't exercise tight control of all typewriters, photocopying machines and computer printers for fear of the

wrong political ideas' being circulated and at the same time expect the right economic and technical ideas to spread to the places where they're needed for an efficient, productive economy. The worst recent example of the possible results is, of course, the slowness in getting out warnings on the nuclear accident at Chernobyl until after a lot of people had gotten doses of radiation--not only in the USSR but also in neighboring countries.

Except for cases like Chernobyl, the Soviets try to insure that only the right information gets out. The limited number of foreigners living in the Soviet Union have limited access to information. Ordinary Soviets are not supposed to talk to the diplomats, businessmen and journalists who live there. Tourists seldom have meaningful conversations with anyone besides those who are officially assigned to deal with them--and who are skilled at seeming to be candid while giving only a keyhole view of reality. Few dissidents are still able to voice the problems of the Soviet people.

The information that reaches the outside world is, therefore, shaped by the Soviets themselves to a large extent. The USSR spends perhaps 3 or 4 billion dollars a year on propaganda. That is the largest governmental information program in the world, by far. It includes TASS, which you hear quoted as being a news agency, except that it isn't like The Associated Press or United Press International, which go out and dig up news. TASS is a subdivision of the Soviet government. There's another Soviet press agency named Novosti that is in theory non-governmental. That doesn't make any difference, however, since Novosti's controlled from the same Communist

Party apparatus that controls the government. The party apparatus also directs the Soviet press. You're not going to find Pravda or Izvestiya publishing exposes on Soviet atrocities in Afghanistan or overspending in Moscow's military program.

So Soviet authorities try to control and direct the voice with which they speak to the world. They run the world's largest overseas broadcast operation in more than 80 languages. They have cultural exchange agreements with 120 countries, sending out everything from ballet troupes to teachers to scientists who are looking for things of value to Soviet industry. More than 57,000 students from the Third World are studying in the USSR. Most of them are on full scholarships, because Moscow is trying to influence the future leaders of developing countries. The Soviets don't succeed with all the foreign students. A lot of them are alienated by attempts to hammer Marxism-Leninism into them, by the difficult living conditions, by the often violent racism that they encounter. But it's an important long-term investment for the Soviets to try to win over a significant number of foreign students. There are already a few cabinet ministers in Africa who went to school in Moscow some years ago.

A related Soviet investment is in magazines and books. In 1982 the USSR officially exported more than 70 million copies of books and pamphlets. Most of them were made available abroad for free or at very low cost. In a number of developing countries, Soviet textbooks in English, French, Spanish, Hindi and many other languages dominate the import market.

In some places they have the effect of discouraging local publishing. For a few rupees a poor student can get a technical book--with a subtle political message probably thrown into the purchase. The message isn't even subtle in political science, history and economics texts from Moscow.

These are public aspects of the Soviet propaganda effort. So are the kind of information activities that are conducted by Soviet diplomats and the glossy magazines circulated by the USSR. One of those magazines is Soviet Life. Its issue last February told how safe the Soviet nuclear power industry is. The example it gave was Chernobyl. At about the same time, a couple of small-circulation Soviet internal publications were warning of construction and maintenance shortcomings at Chernobyl.

When you hear something from an official representative of the USSR, or read it in Soviet Life, you probably know how to discount for bias. But what I want to discuss in some detail is the secret side of that propaganda effort, the active measures. They try to hide the bias in order to be more credible.

Like virtually everything else in the Soviet Union, active measures are ultimately determined by policies laid down by the Communist Party's political bureau, or politburo--the dozen men who run the country. They delegate details and implementation to the party's secretariat. In the case of active measures, that means primarily to the party secretariat's International Department that oversees dealings with the world outside the Soviet bloc. This department in turn works closely with the KGB. It is

the KGB that carries out many of the covert activities involved in active measures.

Let me return first to forgeries as one of the varied forms of active measures. The ideas for forgeries are dreamed up either in KGB headquarters or at a KGB residency overseas--an office in a Soviet embassy. The ideas are approved at some higher level, with the level depending on how sensitive and important the target is. Favorite forgeries are U.S. government documents. Over the years the KGB has developed considerable technical proficiency at fabricating them. Some forgeries are intended only for private circulation in order to influence policymakers, and some are aimed at the media. The Soviets calculate that if a forgery gets into the media, a denial will never really catch up with the first impression, a seed of suspicion will have been planted.

An example was a speech that Jeane Kirkpatrick was alleged to have made when she was ambassador to the United Nations. A forgery of a telegram from the U.S. Information Agency with the supposed speech text surfaced in India. Ambassador Kirkpatrick allegedly said the United States favored the "Balkanization" of India and also criticized the Indian government. But she never made such a speech. The U.S. Embassy in New Delhi said so, but the forgery stirred up anti-American feeling there. Also, it was reprinted in a number of other countries after TASS had picked up the stories about the false speech from the Indian press and circulated them.



That's one of the values to the Soviets of forgeries--once they start circulating, they can be kept going a long time with an artificially amplified echo effect. A Soviet embassy press officer who regularly wines and dines an editor from some poor Third World newspaper often doesn't have much trouble getting an interesting forgery reprinted on the apparent authority of the distant newspaper where it was first planted. And it's more than just wining and dining in some cases. The Soviets and their East European allies have a whole stable of subsidized newspapers in the Third World that can be counted on to publish canards when initial efforts fail to plant them in more respectable, independent papers.

Some forgeries have long lives. A doctored U.S. military planning document that shows supposed U.S. nuclear targets in Western Europe first surfaced in Norway in 1967. It has cropped up more than 20 times since then despite our best efforts to drive a wooden stake through its heart. Some years ago the KGB concocted out of whole cloth a U.S. Army manual about "destabilization techniques" in non-Communist countries. It has been used by the KGB to stir up suspicion about American intentions in countries where we have military advisers or our troops are stationed. Since 1975 the manual has surfaced every once in a while from Spain to Turkey to the Philippines.

Other examples range from a forged telegram from the U.S. ambassador in Nigeria, which ordered the assassination of a Nigerian presidential candidate, to a fake State Department letter alluding to a possible

military coup if we didn't like the results of elections in Greece. And it's not just official documents that are forged. A private company in New Orleans that supplies aviation personnel for projects overseas was a KGB target. A forged letter from it to the South African Air Force made it sound as if the U.S. Government was secretly involved in helping South Africa against its neighbors. The letter was planted among some of those sensitive neighbors.

There's another category of active measures that's closely related to forgeries. It's the spreading of false rumors intended to damage Western interests. A classic case was the Soviet attempt to discredit us in the Moslem world after the seizure in 1979 of the Grand Mosque in Mecca by a group of fanatics. The KGB circulated a rumor that the United States was responsible. Another example was the numerous untrue rumor versions of U.S. espionage involvement with the Korean Air Lines Flight 007 that the Soviets shot down in 1983.

Let me turn now to public organizations that the Soviets use to demonstrate, lobby, publicize and otherwise spread messages under supposedly neutral auspices.

The World Peace Council is the best known Soviet front. It was founded by the Soviets in Paris in 1949. Now it has its headquarters in Helsinki, a neutral city, and it's headed in name by someone from a neutral country, India--although he's a leader of the Indian Communist Party. But in fact it's run from the International Department of the Soviet Communist Party's

secretariat. There are more than 140 national groups under its umbrella, including some non-Communist ones. The key qualification for membership is supporting whatever position is currently advocated by the Kremlin.

Organizations and individuals participating in World Peace Council campaigns and assemblies have been blocked from registering views that differ from official Soviet positions. Some Western groups have tried to maintain contact with the unofficial, persecuted groups in the Soviet bloc who advocate balanced approaches to peace problems, but Soviet officials will have none of this.

The World Peace Council claims that national peace groups and special donations provide its money. But when it applied for the right to address a United Nations organization, it was told it would have to disclose its sources of funds and submit to independent auditing. Rather than do that, the Council withdrew its application.

The World Peace Council's agenda for 1986 reflects Soviet disarmament initiatives. It supports and encourages the disarmament movement in Western Europe without saying anything about Eastern Europe. It opposes the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative--"Star Wars"---and it seeks the withdrawal of American Pershing and cruise missiles from Western Europe without mentioning the SS-20s and other Soviet missiles that caused West European governments to want such U.S. protection. Anyone who suggests that the Soviets bear any responsibility for the arms race is castigated by Soviet or fellow-travelling spokesmen.

Right now the World Peace Council is having an increasingly difficult time in getting Western organizations to buy its one-sided line--partly because of the U.S. Government's public efforts to expose Soviet control of the Council. A Council affiliate has scheduled a big conference in Copenhagen next October, but a lot of nonpartisan groups have refused to take part because of the strong Soviet slant.

The Soviet Union also runs front organizations for churches and religious groups, scientists, lawyers, journalists, labor unions, solidarity with the Third World, and other purposes. Most of them are based in East European capitals like Prague to avoid a direct Moscow taint. They have such names as the Christian Peace Conference, the World Federation of Trade Unions, the Women's International Democratic Federation, and the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization.

And there's the World Federation of Democratic Youth, which supported the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the shooting down of that Korean airliner. The youth organization is part of Moscow's effort to influence future leaders. Last year the Soviets staged the 12th World Youth Festival in Moscow and claimed that 20,000 persons attended. The authorities cleaned up Moscow the way they'd done for the 1980 Olympics. They stocked it with more consumer goods than you'll find when you get there, and in general they tried to put their best foot forward. Then they kept a tight rein on proceedings, so that questions about Afghanistan were not translated, for instance, or the public address systems broke down when

questions were asked about Soviet military programs. And the Soviets violated prior assurances that delegations would be able to bring in and distribute their own literature.

Another facet of active measures was the Soviet effort to make their youth festival look like the only truly valid gathering of the world's young people. Four months earlier an International Youth Conference was held in Jamaica as a non-Communist forum to recognize the United Nations' International Youth Year. It made the Soviets furious. After all, they thought they had cornered the youth market for statements supportive of Kremlin policies.

The Soviets started almost a year before the Jamaica conference to run it down. They spread rumors about lawlessness and disease in Jamaica; they invented stories that the Israelis were responsible for Arab delegates; they exaggerated the U.S. role in helping raise money; and they tried other tricks to cut attendance. Moscow Radio carried an anti-conference message in 28 languages, and Havana picked it up and rebroadcast it in Spanish and English. The Soviets tailored special articles for Third World newspapers and got them published in places like Ghana and Morocco. And the conference had hardly ended when Pravda was proclaiming it a "flop"--a line picked up by East European newspapers and later dutifully echoed by leftist periodicals from Latin America to India.

In addition to the front organizations that they control directly, the Soviets try to penetrate international groups that started off with

genuinely neutral and objective purposes. Moscow wants to steer such groups so that they become unwitting helpers--so that they seem to be honest sources of propaganda messages crafted by the USSR, with greater credibility than the obviously controlled fronts. The Soviets have worked hard to influence groups whose individual Western members do not recognize that they are up against a concerted, well-organized campaign of subversion.

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[If asked for specifics: The Soviets have tried to steer such groups as the World Council of Churches, the Generals for Peace in Western Europe, the U.N. Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, and the Non-Aligned Movement (where Cuba plays the lead role for the USSR). We do not say that these are Soviet fronts, but Moscow has tried to capture them for its own purposes.]

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The Soviet fronts are supplemented by friendship societies. They play a mid-way role between public propaganda and active measures. Some of their activities involve encouraging normal relations between people; some are more secretive. The friendship societies are particularly useful for Moscow for spotting people in foreign countries who are favorably inclined toward the USSR and can be used in covert ways to influence others.

There are other forms of active measures. One of them is clandestine broadcasting--running a station that pretends to be somewhere it isn't, or

speaking for someone other than the true sponsors. The so-called "National Voice of Iran" is really based in the southern USSR. During the hostage crisis in Tehran six years ago, official Soviet statements supported the American hostages' claims to diplomatic immunity, but the "National Voice of Iran" urged that our diplomats not be released. Moscow also uses such covert broadcasting to criticize Beijing's policies under the guise of an internal Chinese station.

Harder to pin down is economic manipulation by the Soviets. A Soviet ambassador in a West European country has warned a local businessman that his trade with the USSR would suffer if he provided technical assistance to China. That is another form of active measures. The Soviets have also tried--not always successfully--to manipulate prices of things they buy or sell by putting out rumors about market conditions. That, too, is active measures, but you might also see a little capitalism creeping into Marxism.

Yet another type of active measures involves the use of what are known as "agents of influence." They are people who spread rumors or disinformation or carefully selected facts without revealing to their audience that they are serving a Soviet purpose. Moscow tailors its message specifically for the person it is trying to influence--a politician, industrial boss, newspaper editor or broadcaster. Sometimes the tailoring is for the target's needs and requirements for information, sometimes for his vulnerabilities.

A French journalist was convicted in 1980 of having acted as a Soviet agent of influence for 21 years. He had subtly pushed the Soviet line in articles published in a number of important newspapers and in a private newsletter circulated to members of parliament and others. A KGB officer who defected in Japan disclosed that Japanese agents of influence were used by the Soviets to plant stories about troubles in China, to play a major role behind the scenes in opposition politics, and do other things. The defector, Stanislav Levchenko, said that the KGB office in Tokyo had five persons including himself who worked full time on active measures. Incidentally, Levchenko's cover story was that he was a correspondent for the Soviet news magazine New Times. This was a convenient job because it gave him plenty of time and freedom of movement to cultivate people who would serve Soviet purposes. He said the magazine had been founded by the KGB as an active measures tool.

In Denmark, an agent of influence used Soviet money to advertise Danish artists' support for a Scandinavian zone free of nuclear weapons. He also arranged for the printing of material provided by the Soviet embassy that attacked the British prime minister.

Let me conclude with a brief discussion of the general purposes for which the Soviets have used both open propaganda and secret active measures in recent years. I've already mentioned one: trying to run down the Jamaica youth conference and build up their own controlled youth meeting.



You can probably guess what most of the other main purposes have been if you think back over what the big East-West news stories have been for the past few years. Wherever there've been big propaganda campaigns, speeches by Soviet leaders and lots of articles in Pravda denouncing a Western position, they've also used active measures. Nicaragua is an obvious example. Ever since the Somoza government fell in 1979, Moscow has been deploying its front organizations in support of the Sandinistas. It's been trying to build up the Sandinistas' international acceptability and to defend them from charges of having betrayed the revolution by steering it into Communist totalitarianism. The Soviets have also been trying to build up support abroad for the insurgents in El Salvador with active measures as well as overt propaganda.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and the continued attempt to subjugate that country, have been a major test for active measures. Moscow has deployed its full range of techniques. Agents of influence whisper suggestions of a settlement into Western officials' ears--if only the West would get the Afghan resistance to lie down. Front organizations claim that the Soviet Army really was invited in by grateful Afghan people. False rumors about foreign involvement in Afghanistan, and other things.

But perhaps the biggest effort for the Soviet Communist Party and KGB active measures specialists has been on the most important issue in Moscow. That is protecting the control that the Soviet leadership exercises over a vast, multinational empire. The Soviet leaders believe that protecting

their control requires making the USSR ever stronger while trying to discourage the West from wanting to maintain adequate defenses against Soviet power. The most intensive efforts have been saved for arms control proposals and related military matters.

The NATO decision in the late 1970s to deploy intermediate-range missiles in Western Europe as a counter to new Soviet SS-20s and other weapons was opposed by every instrument at Moscow's disposal. The World Peace Council not only denounced it but also worked hard to get various national peace fronts in the Council to come out on their own in opposition. New organizations were created just to give the appearance of more broad-based opposition. Agents of influence whispered about American intentions to abandon Europe, or to turn it into a nuclear battlefield. Forgeries were planted to heighten concern about U.S. military policy.

And in the end it all failed. The Pershings and cruise missiles are being deployed. Now the Soviets are working hard against the Strategic Defense Initiative. And they've moved on to new arms controls plans that they can support with active measures. Every time you hear another variant of a disarmament proposal from Moscow, you can be sure that the various Soviet front organizations and agents of influence and other active measures elements are getting their orders to back up the public propaganda in favor of it with indirect ways of trying to influence the West to favor the proposal.

Right now, however, the people in Moscow who think up disinformation and forgeries and peace front messages and such probably have their hands full. They're probably trying to find some way to get across the idea--without having it appear to originate in the USSR--that the accident at Chernobyl wasn't as bad as it seemed. We have already heard the public Soviet media denounce the Western press for exaggerating it--at a time when Moscow was not yet conceding that many people had been evacuated and a number had died. You can be pretty sure that various kinds of active measures are also being developed. Chernobyl is a stiff test for the Soviet system for trying to influence others through active measures that are supposed to keep Moscow's hand hidden.

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