

HPSCI Briefing, 20 September 1983

Moscow and its friends and allies are increasingly active throughout the world using both overt and covert means to enhance Soviet policies and to undermine those of the US.

On the overt side, Moscow capitalizes on a vast diplomatic, economic, and military presence:

- ° During the last decade, Moscow has rapidly become the world's second largest arms exporter. In 1980 and 81, it outsold all others mainly as a result of sales to radical Middle East clients. There are also now some 20,000 military advisors in the LDCs, twice the number 10 years ago.
- ° Over 100,000 civilian technicians from Warsaw Pact countries work in the LDCs, and the Soviets and East Europeans have established a network of more than 400 companies in Western and Third World countries.
- ° At least 120,000 LDC civilian and military students were being trained in Soviet Bloc and Cuban facilities last year.
- ° Radio Moscow now beams programs worldwide in more than 60 languages and is on the air nearly 1,200 hours each week.

On the covert side, Moscow has a vigorous program of "active measures" and other clandestine activities. This program is for the most part carried out by the KGB under the direction of the Central Committee of the CPSU. We estimate that some 25 percent of the 18,000 official Soviets abroad are KGB or other intelligence personnel.

To conduct their covert operations, the Soviets:

- support and guide the activities of more than 70 nonruling Communist parties;
- exploit ties to international and local front groups;
- penetrate and try to manipulate mass movements, leftist parties, and labor and student organizations;
- influence foreign media through controlled journalists, misleading articles, and forgeries;
- operate four clandestine radio stations that broadcast from the Soviet Union and East Germany;
- use agents of influence to manipulate private channels of communication and exploit unwitting contacts; and
- train and support insurgent and terrorist groups with significant help from Cuba and Libya.

Using such mechanisms, the Soviets and their allies have developed programs to undermine US interests in every region of the World.

Europe remains a major focus of US-Soviet competition. Moscow's primary current goal is to block or postpone US INF deployments. To this end:

- The Soviets have promoted and supported the European peace movement and encouraged West European and international opposition to US and NATO deployments.
- The Soviet-controlled World Peace Council and other international and local fronts have sponsored innumerable meetings and assemblies to discredit US plans.

- The Soviets have helped the Communist parties of Spain, Greece, and West Germany to organize demonstrations and step up propaganda efforts.
- Soviet diplomats and Novosti press personnel have conspired with local opponents of INF deployment.
- West Germany, Norway, Austria, and Belgium have been targets of Soviet forgeries and disinformation about US plans and intentions.

Moscow has also sought to weaken NATO by disseminating forged documents aimed to raise public anxiety about NATO activities and to demonstrate US interference in local politics. Indeed, in 1981 an attempt was made in Madrid to surface a forged letter from President Reagan to King Juan Carlos urging the King to join NATO and to crack down on internal opposition to Spain's entry into NATO.

Several other forgeries of suspected Soviet origin have appeared that seek to exploit sensitive US-European issues or defend Soviet positions.

- In May 1982 a forged US Commerce Department document, proposing measures to sever the gas pipeline contract between the USSR and a number of West European countries surfaced in Belgium.
- In July, an Italian newsweekly published two fabricated US Embassy Rome telegrams acknowledging that the effort to publicize a Bulgarian and KGB role in the papal assassination was a US disinformation campaign.
- A tape of an alleged conversation between President Reagan and Prime Minister Thatcher during the Falklands war was circulated in the Netherlands this spring. The tape, which portrays

Thatcher as blood-thirsty, appeared two weeks before the UK general elections.

Soviet fabrications have also played a major role in Moscow's effort to justify martial law in Poland and to imply a US role in Poland's unrest. For example:

- A forged State cable suggested that CIA funded Solidarity;
- A Madrid newsweekly published a fake memorandum that proposed a US destabilization policy in Poland; and,
- A forged letter from a US labor official suggested that the AFL-CIO was sending funds clandestinely to Solidarity.

In Latin America, Moscow supports leftist revolutions as part of its effort to undermine US interests. Cuba aids and abets Moscow's goals while pursuing its own aims. As elsewhere, the Soviets have used front groups, covert support to Communist and leftist parties, press placements, forgeries, and disinformation:

- The World Peace Council and its affiliates held several meetings last year in Central America to denounce US policy.
- Misleading press articles and a forged DoD press release were used to capitalize on anti-US feelings generated by the Falklands war.
- Media assets in Nicaragua charged that US policy in Latin America included assassination and the use of biological and chemical warfare.

Cuba provides arms, training, and financing for the Sandinistas and the insurgencies in Guatemala and El Salvador. Cuba also supports the M-19, and reportedly has offered similar backing to the FARC and ELN terrorists in Colombia. Havana has also infiltrated Cuban-trained terrorists into Chile and insurgents into Honduras.

Libya supports Soviet interests in the region as a way of striking at the United States close to home. In the past year, Libya has provided some financial support to liberation movements in the Caribbean, and leftist parties in Chile, Guatemala, and Venezuela. Qadhafi himself met with Salvadoran insurgents last September and offered more equipment and explosives from Libyan stockpiles.

In the Middle East, Soviet activities have been aimed primarily at depicting the US and its ties to Israel as indicative of US hostility to the Arab world. The Soviets have also sought to further distance Iran from the US and have tried to manipulate the fundamentalist Muslim and Zionist movements. Libya's activities--including direct involvement with terrorist groups--are not necessarily directed by the USSR but serve Moscow's interests by promoting regional instability.

Last year's Israeli invasion of Lebanon provides a prime example of a Soviet active measures campaign in force:

- Moscow's Arabic-language radio argued that the invasion had been planned long in advance by "US imperialism and its Zionist clique." To bolster these allegations, a forged DoD document was used to suggest that the US approved of the Israeli invasion in advance.
- The World Peace Council held a special meeting in Geneva calling for an international commission of inquiry.
- Palestinian Solidarity committees, with Communist elements taking the lead, sprang up in many countries, followed by a spate of demonstrations led by Communist fronts.

In South Asia, the Soviets have concentrated on justifying their intervention in Afghanistan, countering US and Pakistani support for Afghan insurgents, and stemming what Moscow sees as India's drift away from the USSR:

- Disinformation and international fronts have been employed to influence world opinion in favor of Soviet Afghan policies.
- Although hard evidence is lacking, Pakistani officials believe that the Soviets have helped aggravate differences among Afghan resistance leaders, supplied weapons to Pakistani border tribes, and promoted domestic opposition to President Zia.
- Prompted by Moscow, India's leftist media have attempted to cast suspicion on US policies toward India and the Third World. Early this year several papers ran a story based on a Soviet forgery that purported to be a speech by Ambassador Kirkpatrick. The speech presented a distorted view of US policies in the Third World designed to offend regional sensitivities.

Soviet active measures in sub-Saharan Africa have for the most part been aimed at discrediting US policy concerning both Black Africa and South Africa. Recently, forgeries have become particularly prevalent. In Ghana and Nigeria forged documents were used to implicate US Ambassadors Smith and Pickering in assassination plots. In southern Africa, a disinformation campaign supported by forgeries was used to allege US military collusion with South Africa. In addition, the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, Cuba, and Libya provide support to radical regimes and insurgent and dissident groups in Africa, all of which contribute to undermining Western influence in the region.

In East Asia, Soviet activities are directed primarily at undermining US-Japanese relations. Testimony before this Committee last year by former KGB [redacted] showed the ^{STAT}Soviets have made extensive use of fronts and influential assets in Japan's political and media circles. During the last year we have seen a sustained Soviet effort against US-Japanese military cooperation:

- The Soviets have used radio broadcasts and interviews with Japanese newspapers to threaten the redeployment of European SS-20s to Asian targets as part of a US-Soviet INF settlement.
- The Tokyo press reported early this year that Moscow sent a letter to Japan's socialist parties urging them to oppose the deployment of US nuclear weapons in Japan.

In Southeast Asia, the major thrust of Soviet active measures has been defensive, aimed at diverting attention from Communist use of chemical and biological warfare in the region.

In sum, Moscow's covert activities worldwide undermine US interests and frustrate and complicate US foreign policy. The Soviet active measures program has grown in intensity and has become more bold. Their campaign to implicate US Ambassadors and other high officials in assassination plots is one reflection of this trend.

The technical quality of some forgeries has also improved, and the phony Thatcher-Reagan tape may mark the beginning of a new technique in future disinformation campaigns. Moscow's continuing commitment to active measures indicates that Soviet policymakers believe them to be effective. Western Europe, the Middle East, and Latin America have been and will probably continue to be prime areas of Soviet attention:

- In Western Europe, Moscow continues to monitor and tries to stimulate and redirect elements of the region's various peace movements. Bloc efforts will undoubtedly intensify as US INF deployments draw close.
- In the Middle East, the Soviets and their allies will likely continue to play the "spoiler" role by trying to discredit US peace initiatives and fueling anti-American sentiment.
- In Latin America, Moscow is optimistic about the prospects for increased success from active measures. A Soviet official reportedly said last year that the situation in Latin America was especially promising and that the time had come to take the offensive. Cuba too will continue in its efforts to undermine US interests by trying to spread revolution.