



COUNTERPOINT

A Periodic Newsletter On Soviet Active Measures

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SERVICE A of the FIRST CHIEF DIRECTORATE of the KGB

The term Active Measures is explained in the introductory letter to the first number of COUNTERPOINT. It is important to distinguish between the two distinct categories of such Soviet measures, i.e. between

- a) Overt Active Measures, and
- b) Covert Active Measures.

The responsibility for the planning and directing of *covert* Active Measures lies with Service A of the First Chief Directorate of the KGB. Service A closely cooperates with the International Department/International Information Department of the CPSU via the Secretariat of the Politburo, where all important measures are cleared and where specific executive responsibility is allocated.

Service A directs and supports operations carried out overseas by the so-called PR Lines of the KGB Residencies overseas. Service A has been allocated more and more staff since the late 70s and early 80s and now constitutes a large section of the First Chief Directorate (FCD), employing some 200 officers and supporting staff, including keen young intellectual officers who see in this work a chance of rapid recognition and promotion. It is the one field where the Kremlin (the Instantsyia) can see real results.

The current head of the Service is Vladimir Petrovich Ivanov, a former KGB operator under TASS cover in Vienna. He has several area and functional Deputies. The Service now occupies more than half of the third floor of the FCD building at Yasenevo near Moscow.

Techniques regularly employed by the minions of Service A overseas include:

covert manipulation of the media of foreign countries both capitalist and 'Socialist';

the widespread use of so-called 'Agents of Influence' in all walks of the target country's life;

the selective use of forged documents and of faked photo-montages and tapes;

the systematic spreading of rumours and of material calculated to cause doubts and uncertainty;

the systematic harassment of target individuals, institutions and organizations;

the transmission of false intelligence through 'double agents' to other hostile intelligence services.

The larger part of the evidence of these activities has recently come from the Third World where Soviets find that they can "still get away with it". ▲

ACTIVE MEASURES SCENARIO

The following scenario shows how Active Measures are used in support of a foreign policy objective:

The Soviet Union has become interested in the little island republic of Ruritania. The island's economy, built upon fishing and tourism, has recently received a boost. Ruritania has been granted a World Bank loan to upgrade its fine natural harbour to accommodate deep-draught ocean-going ships. Because of Ruritania's unique location, the Soviets would like to have access to its new port facilities. The matter is brought to the attention of the Politburo who decide that a priority effort should be made to persuade Ruritania to change its pro-Western stance.

The decision having been made, the Central Committee's International and International Information Departments and the KGB will plan the influence campaign. Although a multitude of disparate elements will be involved, these three departments will make sure that the campaign is on target and well coordinated.

Each element in the field will receive its marching orders tailored to its individual capabilities and without reference to the total effort involved. For example, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will notify its diplomatic staff that there is a plan to influence the Ruritanian government to allow use of the new port. Although the diplomats can probably guess that the KGB officers among them will receive their own orders on this topic, they do not receive any official notice of the KGB plans for the operation.

■ The campaign begins:

The Commercial Attaché approaches Ruritanian Ministry of Transport officials with veiled hints of Soviet aid if the port should be opened to Soviet ships.

A KGB officer meets his agent in the

Ministry of Trade to tell him to start advertising the advantages of allowing the Soviets access to the port.

An International Department official stops the Vice-Chairman of the Ruritanian-Soviet Friendship Society after a meeting to ask him to extol the advantages of Soviet trade relations whenever and wherever possible.

The TASS correspondent prepares an article, first in a series, on the long-standing friendly cooperation of the Ruritanian and Soviet peoples.

An undercover KGB officer asks a member of the staff of the *New Ruritanian Worker* to write an article denouncing US plans to use the new port for warships armed with nuclear weapons.

A KGB officer notes that there has been a rash of poisonings due to the ingestion of diseased fish. This fact is passed to an independent journalist who is in fact, an agent of the KGB.

■ The campaign builds up:

The Ruritanian Ministry of Trade, which has already supported Soviet port access for financial reasons, are constantly wined, dined and applauded by Soviet diplomats for their perceptive stand.

The Ruritanian-Soviet Friendship-Society holds a series of lectures, accompanied by a free buffet, to extol the virtues of non-alignment and an open trade policy.

TASS brings to the attention of the entire world, via their wire service, the news (reported in a reputable journal) that the United States has conducted tests of biological weapons in the ocean near Ruritania. This testing has led to the deaths of hundreds by contaminating their food supply.

A *New Times* correspondent informs the Prime Minister that the magazine would like to do a feature on him in his role as a future leader of the non-aligned

movement.

The *New Ruritanian Worker* announces that a demonstration will be held to condemn efforts to turn Ruritania into a US military base. The sponsors of the demonstration are The Ruritanians for Peace and Social Justice and The Island Christian Association.

New Tomorrow, the theoretical journal of the Ruritanian Communist Party, prints a purported US Embassy document that outlines US plans for a naval base in Ruritania. The US promptly declares the 'document' a forgery, pointing out any number of errors in the format and language.

A Member of Parliament submits the question, "How long will the Government deny that the World Bank loan was made on condition that we lease facilities for a US naval base?"

■ The campaign bears fruit:

The Prime Minister declares in a *New Times* interview that the Ruritanian people have traditionally spurned alliances in favour of an independent view of world power relationships.

Doctors at the New Hospital in the capital deny that recent poisoning deaths were the result of biological warfare. In response to hundreds of queries, the doctors state that the deaths have been directly connected with the worldwide outbreak of Red Gull disease.

The Ministry of Trade presents its proposal to the Cabinet for unconditional trade relations with any and all countries.

The demonstration against US militarism and imperialism is small but noisy. A leading Ruritanian religious figure gives the demonstration stature by appearing and making a few general remarks.

The Ministry of Transport unveils its plans for the new port facilities, including cranes of Soviet manufacture available to them below market cost.

The Cabinet with an eye to the next election, fears the image of toady to the US and softens the government's pro-Western stand. Privately, however, they are quick to assure the US Ambassador that their feelings are unchanged.

■ The result:

A news item by "World Wire Service": "The Prime Minister of Ruritania announced today that the new port facilities will be made available to ships under the Soviet flag. At a luncheon at the Ruritanian-Soviet Friendship Society the Prime Minister reiterated his nation's open door policy."

A pro-Western country has become 'non-aligned'. ▲

TRUTH - MADE TO MEASURE

This actual case-history (in six chapters) illustrates how Soviet or Soviet-inspired media manipulate Western news-items.

Chapter I

The *New York Times* (August 3, 1982) reports that Brazil plans to use defoliants to clear vegetation for a dam:

"Brazil is considering the use of 'toxic defoliants' to clear a wide swath of the Amazon jungle for a large hydroelectric project, and the country's environmental chief is warning that the move could create a disastrous precedent. Protest is directed at officials overseeing the construction of the mammoth Tucuruí Dam, on one of the Amazon tributaries, that requires flooding an 834-square-mile area, creating a body of water nearly twice the size of Lake Champlain. The vegetation must be stripped in the affected tract to prevent decomposition of underwater plant from corroding the facility's turbines."

Chapter 2

United Press International (December 15, 1983) reports that because of the negligent use of the defoliant between 17 and 42 people died:

"At least 17 people died in a remote Amazon region after contractors working for a government utility used a defoliant similar to Agent Orange used by US forces in Vietnam. An official of the Para State Agriculture Department, Avellino do Vale, said, 'We have evidence that as many as 42 people may have died from the effects of Tordon-155 poisoning.'"

Chapter 3

Reuters (October 5, 1984) mentions the activities of a Brazilian lawyer who provides fuel for the eventual Active Measures operation:

"A Brazilian lawyer has arrived in Kenya to seek United Nations support to stop an Amazonian dam project which, she says, could mean death by poison for thousands of people living there. Sonia Regina de Brito Pereira met the head of the Nairobi-based United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), in an eleventh hour attempt to stop the flooding of land at Turcui (*sic*) in Para State."

Chapter 4

Three weeks later the Soviets step in. The disinformation effort begins (TASS, October 27, 1984):

"Whole tribes of Brazilian Indians have fallen victim to another act of genocide by Washington, Vitaliy Kobysch, a publicist, has said in a televised speech. The organisers of secret tests of that weapon of mass destruction did everything to conceal the traces of the crime. The huge territory where the defoliants had been tested was submerged. But the horrible crime came to light. Experts who surveyed the area maintain that poisoned earth there resembles a zone of nuclear explosion and

that the consequences of that crime are impossible to foretell."

Chapter 5

The turn of *New Times* (Moscow, No. 45, 1984; more grand disregard for reality:

"On the pretext of clearing upwards of 2,400 square kilometres of jungle two types of chemicals, very much akin to dioxin, were tested along the banks of the Tocantins, a tributary of the Amazon that flows through Brazil. At least 7,000 people died in the area of Tukurui. Two Indian tribes were all but wiped out and incredible damage inflicted upon local flora and fauna. The Pentagon hoped to conceal all traces of its crimes, and on September 6 the contaminated sector was flooded."

Chapter 6

The World Peace Council (Helsinki) introduces a Japanese dimension (*Peace Courier*, November 1984):

"In 1981 a number of US, Japanese and Brazilian chemicals firms carried out a series of defoliation experiments in the Brazilian Amazon basin which resulted in the liquidation of entire villages and communities through the extermination of some 7,000 people."

KGB RENEWS KAL ACCUSATIONS

The current literary sensation in Moscow is a book entitled *The Crime of the President*. Attributed to a Japanese journalist, the book reiterates the thesis that Moscow has been trying to purvey to a sceptical world: that the South Korean airliner in which 269 people died was, in fact performing an espionage mission for the United States.

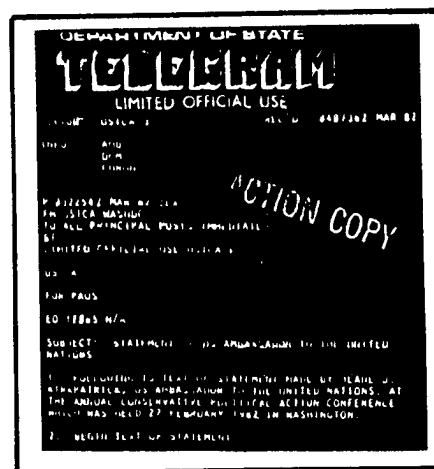
(The Akio Takahashi is named as the author of the book, translated and published by NOVOSTI News Agency. Curiously those well acquainted with the Japanese press have never heard of such a writer. Some time ago, however, Akio Yamada, a gentleman long suspected of being in the pay of the KGB, published an article in a Japanese magazine making precisely the same points about the KAL disaster as the Takahashi book, i.e. that US plotting rather than Soviet ruthlessness was responsible for the tragedy.)

Moscow's efforts to shift to others, notably the US, the responsibility for its own actions have met with little success. Two recent attempts have in fact backfired on the KGB.

1 Last summer, the British publication *Defence Attaché* carried a story suggesting that the airliner, shot down by Soviet fighter planes after it strayed off course over the North Pacific, has really been on an espionage mission for the US. It was widely believed that the authors, using the pseudonym P. Q. Mann, had used material originally supplied by the KGB. *Defence Attaché*, itself a victim of this disinformation, agreed in a London courtroom to pay libel damages to Korean Airlines after conceding that there was no basis for the allegation. On November 19th, Korean Airlines accepted their public apology.

2 Finally in the summer of 1984 Soviet media prominently featured, and the KGB replayed around the world, a report quoting a retired American diplomat as saying that the airliner had been blown up in mid-air by a delayed-action bomb after the failure of the espionage mission. The American, John Keppel, promptly denied making any such statement. He explained that he indeed believed the plane had blown up, but as the result of a kerosene fire in one of its wings set off by the rocket fired by the Soviet fighter. ▲

MOSCOW AND THE GANDHI ASSASSINATION



The illustration above purports to be a negative of an official US Department of State teletype. It first appeared in the Indian press on January 25, 1983, in the pro-Soviet journal *Patriot* (New Delhi). The teletype contains a speech supposedly given by US Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick in 1982 which outlined an aggressive, often vicious US policy towards Third World countries, including India. In reality Ambassador Kirkpatrick never made any such statement. The 'speech' is an out-and-out fabrication to which numerous technical and linguistic mistakes bear witness.

This forgery was part of the Soviet propaganda groundwork which strove to 'prove' that there exists a longstanding US policy to destabilise India.

When Indira Gandhi was assassinated by two of her Sikh bodyguards on October 31 1984, the Kremlin immediately sought to exploit the tragedy by trying to implicate fictitious 'imperialist forces', i.e. the

United States. Although the identity of the assassins and their motives were never in doubt, the Soviet Active Measures network was quickly mobilised to disseminate the theme of US complicity. Analysis of media coverage alleging US complicity demonstrates conclusively the coordinated nature of the effort to blame the United States.

● *First, Moscow states the theme:* "So far it is not known who concretely instructed them and put the guns in their hands, but it is known where the terrorists received their ideological inspiration. The address is also known: the suburbs of Washington, Langley, CIA headquarters." (Moscow Radio in English, October 31, 1984)

● *Then old friends provide the chorus:* "Leftist circles are convinced that the assassination could not have taken place without deep-laid foreign inspiration, backed by agencies like the CIA." (Patriot November 1, 1984)

● *A slight variation on the theme:* "The Third World, the millions of the poor of the earth, received a fatal blow in the heart yesterday when murderous hands armed by the darkest circles of the international reaction gunned down Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi." (To Ethnos, Athens, November 1, 1984)

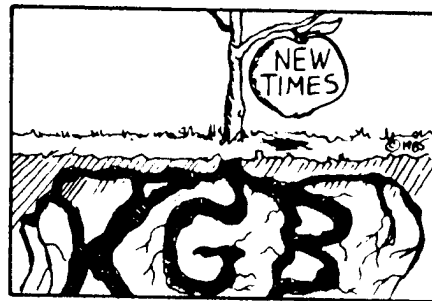
● *The audience is an integral part of every performance:* "An overwhelming majority of supreme court advocates declared today their 'conviction' that foreign powers were behind the murder of Mrs Indira Gandhi. Advocates belonging to the Congress openly blamed the CIA of the United States." (The Hindustan Times, November 1, 1984)

● *Moscow returns to the stage:* "There is no doubt that Washington is ready to pay any price to remove from power those political forces of India that are at the helm of government in the country today." (Svetskaya Rossiya, November 10, 1984)

● *Finale:* Only after official US protests did *Pravda* publish on November 24 a convoluted denial ("editorial article") of any Soviet charges of US involvement in the Gandhi assassination. ▲

NEW TIMES: A SOVIET 'FRONT LINE' PROPAGANDA ORGAN

The foreign affairs weekly, *New Times*, holds a special place among Soviet publications because of its numerous ties to Soviet intelligence and Active Measures.



All but two of its foreign correspondents are full-time career KGB intelligence officers running a variety of information collecting, disinformation, and influence operations. The two 'clean' correspondents, in New York and Bonn, are actually emissaries of the Central Committee's International Department (ID), a unit that plans and oversees Active Measures worldwide.

Editor-in-chief Mikhail Fyodorov, former TASS correspondent, is closely connected with both the ID and the KGB.

The three deputy editors have interesting backgrounds as well. Mr V. Chernyavsky is a former KGB senior officer,

once the KGB resident (chief) in Sweden. Mr B. Pishchik was once a KGB party committee secretary in Soviet Lithuania. Mr S. Golyakov, representative of the younger generation of *New Times* writers, spends most of his time in the ID and Central Committee Propaganda Department.

The KGB often uses the 'false flag' of *New Times* in recruiting foreign journalists. For example, in the 1970s in Japan and elsewhere, Soviet intelligence officers recruited several journalists by persuading them to cooperate with a 'special confidential bulletin published by *New Times* for reading by the Soviet leaders.' In fact, such a bulletin never existed.

New Times is one of very few Soviet publications that publish 'letters from foreign readers'. Such letters are seldom, in fact, from foreign readers but are generally invented by *New Times* staff writers as an excuse to criticise the West's political, economic and military actions.

FOR THE RECORD: The official publisher of *New Times* is the newspaper *Trud* (Labour) which represents the All-Union Council of Trade Unions. Actually, *New Times* has nothing to do with the trade unions and only uses them as a cover, a smoke screen, that allows the real publisher, the International Department, to claim that *New Times* does not represent the Kremlin's official viewpoint. The magazine was founded in 1943 for intelligence purposes. During World War II and in the late 1940s *New Times* was a conduit for instructions to communist parties in non-socialist countries. Since then it has been used extensively by the KGB's external intelligence units as a cover for their officers. In the late 1960s, a secret Politburo directive designated *New Times* as a 'frontline propaganda organ' charged with influencing foreign public opinion in

ways most beneficial to the Kremlin. As such, *New Times* routinely takes the lead in Soviet disinformation campaigns. ▲

[*This is the first in a series of reports on Soviet 'front line' Active Measures organs. Future articles will look at Literaturnaya Gazeta, NOVOSTI, PROGRESS Publishing House, and other such conduits for Soviet disinformation.*]

BOOK NOTES

As the arena of Active Measures is largely the open press, we will be reviewing new books and articles on Active Measures as they appear. The following are some of the standard texts on the subject.

The Deception Game by Ladislav Bittman. (New York, Ballantine Books, 1981) One of the first books published on the topic, this is an uneven but fascinating account of Active Measures as conducted by the Czechs. Mr Bittman's account of the Black Lake Operation Neptune is admirably instructive on the use of forgery in an Active Measures campaign.

★

Dezinformatsiya: Active Measures in Soviet Strategy by Richard H. Shultz and Roy Godson. (Washington, Oxford: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1984) Although sometimes slow, this is a clear exposition of the Soviet Active Measures threat, particularly against the United States and NATO. Chapter IV on Soviet covert political techniques is especially good. Includes a short but excellent glossary of terms.

★

KGB: The Secret Work of Soviet Secret Agents by John Barron. (New York,

Bantam Books, 1974) As well as a good general primer on the KGB, the book includes a useful chapter on Active Measures. There are a number of examples of Active Measures campaigns (referred to in this book as disinformation) which cover the history of Soviet power. In the chatty Reader's Digest style, it is certainly the most readable of the books on the subject.

★

KGB Today: The Hidden Hand by John Barron. (New York: Reader's Digest Press, 1983) This book should be read as a supplement to Barron's earlier book on the KGB. There are some strong chapters on Active Measures, especially in the first half of the book.

★

Soviet Active Measures; Hearings before the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, House of Representatives, July 13 and 14, 1982. (Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office, 1982) A good reference work on Active Measures; the hearings include exhaustive, and exhausting, reports on all aspects of the subject. Not a fun reading experience but an informative one.

★

Campaigns against Western Defence: NATO's Adversaries and Critics by Sir Clive Rose. (London, Macmillan, 1985) This scholarly book, written by the former UK Ambassador to NATO, examines the pressures and influences which have been applied in order to erode public support for NATO policy. One cause of such erosion has been the exploitation by Soviet and Communist propaganda of the desire

for peace and of the fear of nuclear weapons. Another has been the failure of some Western governments to perceive the dangers. The term 'adversaries' was deliberately selected to denote those whose efforts have been directed, under CPSU/KGB control, to undermining the security and stability of the West. In addition to discussing the 'critics', the role of 'dupes', of whom there are many thousands, is clinically exposed, based on hard information from the East.

★

Soviet Active Measures: The Propaganda War by David Rees. (London, The Institute for the Study of Conflict, Conflict Studies Number 169). An excellent introduction, clear language and short. It stresses the inability or unwillingness of the West to appreciate the scale or the implications of this highly developed Soviet weapon. Rees cites two veteran communists:

"We must penetrate every conceivable milieu, get hold of artists and professors, make use of theatres and cinemas, and spread abroad the doctrine that Russia is prepared to sacrifice everything to keep the world at peace."

Willi Münzenberg, *Comintern propaganda chief before World War II*

"One sympathizer is generally worth more than a dozen militant Communists. A writer of reputation, or a retired general, is worth more than 500 poor devils who don't know any better than to get themselves beaten up by the police."

Georgi Dimitrov, *Chairman of the Seventh Comintern Congress, 1935*

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