

## **The Decline of Censorship: The Impact of the Show "Vzglyad" On Social Life**

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### **Abstract:**

The warm reception of the Vzglyad program by the Soviet people, its role in social life, the decline of censorship, and the subsequent practical actions that led to the collapse of the Soviet state are analyzed. The role of the press in today's world politics will also be covered.

**Keywords:** Voice of America, TASS, Pravda, Censorship, Central Committee of the CPSU, Disclosure, Vzglyad, Communist, Cold War, Reconstruction, Radio Liberty, Iron Curtain, European Union.

USSR foreign policy changed significantly after Gorbachev's first official speech, in which he expressed hope that he would "come to necessary negotiations<sup>1</sup> for the United States and the Soviet Union" and that "the United States supported the USSR and the idea of reconstruction."<sup>2</sup> The American media took it up as a hot topic and immediately announced their support for Soviet reform<sup>3</sup>. Instead of condemning the USSR as before, the Western mass media began to support "Reconstruction" and developed a constructive attitude towards it. This led to the resumption of VOA broadcasts throughout the Soviet Union, which had been suspended. Gorbachev's first speech was the starting point for many of these early reforms. Although this speech seemed to indicate the freedom of the press, the Soviet power structures were not indifferent to such drastic changes in the policy of the USSR. One of his main tasks was to control the mass media under even stronger censorship. But in 1986, reports from another Soviet organization, TASS (State News Agency), largely rendered their censorship policy ineffective, as TASS also reported on national politics, including the rise of the Soviet Union's position in the international arena, in the daily media. We can see in the archives of the mass media of the Soviet Union that TASS reports began to undermine the censorship of the Soviet power structures.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Выступление Генерального секретаря СК КПСС товарища М.С. ГОРБАЧЕВА на Пленуме СК КПСС 11 марта 1985 года. ("Speech of the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee Comrade M. S. GORBACHEV at the Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee on March 11, 1985"). *Pravda*, March 12 1985, p.3. See also: Document No. 1: Transcript of Mikhail Gorbachev's Conference with CC CPSU Secretaries, March 15, 1985. [Source: Volkogonov Collection, Reel 17, Container 25. On file at the National Security Archive. Translated by Svetlana Savranskaya.]

<sup>2</sup> Yuqoridagi manba. P.3

<sup>3</sup> Intelligence Assessment, February 1987, Gorbachev's Domestic Challenge: The Looming Problems 111', 'SOV 87-10036X Intelligence Assessment, July 1987.

<sup>4</sup> ТАСС. Что задача «Сплошения Запада» возложена на «Голос Америки» (that the task of "rallying the West" is entrusted to the Voice of America). *Pravda* 1985 Jule 17. P, 4.

All mass media of government bodies were aimed at supporting the Soviet state, but Gorbachev's new political situation started an unexpected process in the Soviet media space. The competition between these services, with its contradictory statements, significantly contributed to the strengthening of the influence of the Western mass media in the USSR.

It can be seen as the beginning of a resistance to decades of censorship of information by the Soviet power structures. In June 1985, Pravda published an opinion on the "Reconstruction" of the Soviet power structures. Their point of view is clearly expressed and their powers are clearly described. This article on the topic "An important duty for the press" clearly indicated the tasks of the Soviet power structures:

newspapers, radio, television and all other mass media psychologically instilled restructuring into the public mind along with the Party's socio-economic science and technology development. It should be noted that ideological deviations are severely punished and everything is under strict control.<sup>5</sup> After such official comments of the Soviet power structures, the press remained silent for a while and tried to adapt to the situation.<sup>6</sup>

This situation remained unchanged until 1987. Censorship was not completely removed, but it was constantly trying to carry out its activities. That is why many people started tuning into radio stations such as "Voice of America" and "Ozodlik". Even as early as 1987, articles criticizing the reconstruction were published at the behest of the Soviet power structures.

For some time, the bureaucracy of the old system hindered the new political reforms that had begun to rebuild. But in 1988, "Oshkorlik" really overcame this obstacle, and many critical articles were published in the press.<sup>7</sup> The First Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU M.S. Gorbachev's speeches and directives strongly condemned allegations that the Soviet power structures had overstepped their authority to censor the press.

After the 1987 "Oshkorlik" speech, official criticism of the Soviet power structures increased and changes were made to the censorship practices of several Soviet television programs. The USSR daily media began broadcasting new and more liberal programs that were carefully analyzed by the Western media. For example, regular TV shows such as "Vzglyad (Looking)" after "Oshkorlik" became a noteworthy "innovation".

One of the reasons for this was that the questions on the show focused on the annual reports of the Soviet power structures that provided information to the government. Although some of the answers of the ex-Soviet security forces officer were unclear, he personally gave an interview through the press. Such a critical style surprised many in the Soviet public. This surprise was especially noticeable among journalists.<sup>8</sup> After this openness, many critical articles were published on live television and in the Pravda newspaper: they mainly consisted of articles about the activities of the censored Soviet power structures.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Pravda maqlalariga qarang: 1986.12.06, p, 4, 1987.05.10. p, 4, 1987.04.11. p, 4, 1987.03.27. p, 4. Note: Because Perestroika was a big topic in the international arena, all of these articles criticized KGB censorship and attempted to disrupt it..

<sup>6</sup> Важная обязанность для прессы (Important duty for the press). Pravda, June 27, 1985, p. Note especially that "Пленума ЦК КПСС, относящая к партийному руководству прессой: Действенность печати, телевидение, радио существенно возраста, когда партии комитеты оказывают актив помочь и поддержку. К такому выводу пришло апрелоское постановление XXVII съезда КПСС, по священному пути Горбачева. (Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU, relating to the party leadership of the press: "The effectiveness of the press, television, and radio increases significantly when the party committees provide them with active assistance and support. This is the conclusion reached by the April resolution of the 27<sup>th</sup>

Congress of the CPSU, dedicated to the path of Gorbachev.)".

<sup>7</sup> To start Glasnost era (1987) press started freedom of speech and activated all daily life.

<sup>8</sup> TACC: КГБ и гласность (KGB and Glasnost). Pravda, P 4. 1989 May 19

<sup>9</sup> Andrei G. Ritcher, Ideology of perestroika and the Soviet Mass Media.N.17. 2001,pp.105-110.

This new spark led to the rapid liberalization of the media after 1987, which was politically freer than before, or after 1991.<sup>10</sup>

"Vzglyad" represents this change. According to statistics, the number of viewers of "Vzglyad" on television in a week exceeds the number of viewers of all news by several times.<sup>11</sup> This was another evidence of the great influence of the free press on the psyche of Soviet citizens. As it is based on American shows, the format of "Vzglyad" was liked by many. This was considered a huge change for the Soviet public, which had been stuck with the same type of news program for years. Observing the changes brought about by Gorbachev's reforms led to an increased interest in Western culture and a deeper understanding of the shortcomings of the existing Soviet system.<sup>12</sup>

"Vzglyad" is one of the most popular TV programs of the Central Television Network of the USSR, along with the program of the same name of the First Channel "Pervyy", programs that broke down the (conservative) communist views that had hardened in society.<sup>13</sup> Many Soviet people looked forward to these programs every week, even the younger generation watched them with interest. It was a surprise to the public that "Vzglyad" gathered around itself a team of journalists who previously gained the attention of the public with their critical articles.<sup>14</sup>

Just like that, "Vzglyad" supported the activities of these journalists and suddenly there was an opportunity for them to gather and create for a common goal. This brought the USSR into the era of free press. These journalists were young and brave, and the most important thing was to be brave enough to go against the will of the censorship and regime of the Soviet power structures. The first show of "Vzglyad" was broadcast in 1987 and received many positive comments from the public.<sup>15</sup>

Everyone was aware of the censorship of the Soviet power structures and thought that all broadcast information was under control, but then they began to operate without fear of censorship as a real practical result of "openness". All "Vzglyad" programs attracted everyone with their broadcasts in a new format. For example: near the market, outside the city, highway, bus station, supermarkets, shops and different formats for the everyday audience, it was interesting because of the differences in ordinary life and lifestyle and the coverage of everyone's life activities.

Because on these broadcasts, the whole nation watched the real live broadcast with excitement, and the places shown seemed wonderful to everyone's attention.<sup>16</sup> All other Soviet shows were broadcast in one place and one format, and remained in the eyes of fans. Therefore, even the traditional Soviet mass media were surprised that it was possible to broadcast live on location and cover the lives of ordinary citizens or the products of newly opened shops.

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<sup>10</sup> Shane 1995, pp. 99-120

<sup>11</sup> Х.Прокофьев, Пермский секретарь Московского горкома КПСС (Perm Secretary of the Moscow City Committee of the CPSU ). Pravda 1990.03.17. p, 2 Note: Prokofev discussed criticize to KGB on CPSU congress.

<sup>12</sup> Shane 1995, pp. 52-61

<sup>13</sup> В.Листов, встреча с корреспондентом настоящего журналиста (sobranie korrepondent pravda journalist). kofeupny paradoks (coffee paradox). Pravda 1990, June 14. P, 6. Note: Listov analyzed Vzglyad viewers during the USSR.

<sup>14</sup> Andrei G. Ritcher, Ideology of perestroika and the Soviet Mass Media. N.17. 2001 year. Pages 60-72.->Ritcher 2001, pp. 60-72.

<sup>15</sup> Andrei G. Ritcher, Ideology of perestroika and the Soviet Mass Media. N.17. 2001 year. Pages 60-72.->

<sup>16</sup> Shane 1995. Pp, 74-95

Vzglyad journalists knew this and planned each publication carefully and secretly. This openness attracted the attention of the whole nation, including representatives of the Soviet power structures, who tried to outlaw the program (due to censorship).<sup>17</sup>

The counter-attack of the censorship of the Soviet power structures was primarily aimed at the timing of the program. For the first two years, from 1987 to 1989, Vzglyad was broadcast from 10:00 PM to 11:30<sup>18</sup> PM after the end of the Russian news program Vrevya (Time). Attempts to change the time slot to a more convenient time slot were routinely thwarted by Soviet authorities, particularly because of certain views or concerns that live broadcasts could not be controlled.

Every week on Friday from 23:00 to 01:05 several officials of the Communist Party and other famous people were invited to the studio "Vzglyad" and held live debates on certain topics, which were received with great interest by the audience.<sup>19</sup> The Communist Party admitted that it could not censor it for two reasons. Firstly, it was the inability of the employees of the former Soviet power structures to stop the live interviews on the spot, and secondly, it was impossible to keep the journalists of "Vzglyad" scared with the "Gulag" anymore. The main reason is that the Soviet power structures tried to protect the population of the USSR from foreign media over the years. Because, as a result of these broadcasts, there was an increase in the level of influence on the public through local broadcasts, and on the other hand, it was connected with a decrease in the attention of foreign media viewers. Although the live broadcast of the show deeply worried the Soviet power structures, participation in these proceedings was significantly reduced. As a result, the Soviet power structures could do nothing but constantly monitor the show. However, attempts to maintain control managed to shift the program's airtime slot to late night hours. According to several materials stored in the archive, the Soviet forces constantly arrested the members of the "Vzglyad" team, confiscated equipment such as recorders and cameras, as well as threatened and harassed their journalists. And the programs were not even allowed to be broadcast for some time.<sup>20</sup>

But the power structures did not take into account the power of the people. In fact, the materials of Vzglyad were seized by the Soviet power structures. Because in this case, a whole group of materials dedicated to the coverage of Stalin's policy (to change some facts with the Soviet power structures) was taken to Northern Siberia. A large crowd gathered at the studio to ask about the relations of "Vzglyad" journalists with the Soviet power structures. This showed that the public was not indifferent to the fate of the entire "Vzglyad" team, and this same solidarity was the reason for them to go to the streets.

For the first time, such a situation was proof that the mass media could influence the decision of the Soviet power structures and caused the people of the Union to come to the defense of journalists for the first time.<sup>21</sup> As a result of this demand of the people, the Soviet power structures were forced to release the journalists of "Vzglyad". They were worried about these protests because it clearly showed that people's political views were turning against them. However, the Soviet power structures secretly managed to keep TASS and a number of other mass media relatively under control and to maintain the willpower to do what they were told.

One of the journalists of "Vzglyad" newspaper Anatoly Lysenko recalls that "in 1989, TASS ordered that all broadcast materials be under "Glavlit" (Glavnoe upravlenie po delam literatury i

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<sup>17</sup> Ю.Тапасов, Первый взгляд (First Vzglyad). Pravda 1987.12.27. p, 6. Note: he discussed how Vzglyad affected people

<sup>18</sup> Shane 1995, pp. 44-52.

<sup>19</sup> Shane 1995, pp. 120-145.

<sup>20</sup> Телепрограмма ОРТ. «Правда», стр. 4, 13 февраля 1988 г.

<sup>21</sup> TV program ORT. Pravda, No.174, June 23, 1990, page(s):8.

izdatelstva - General Directorate of Literature and Publishing) and in the "Vzglyad" studio opened a new censorship room, as in all publishing houses"<sup>22</sup>.

In the archives of "Pravda", we can see that the "Voice of America" broadcasts about the threats to the "Vzglyad" team by the Soviet power structures have increased greatly. We can learn about this from the performances announced on the air several years later. Special programs called "Vzglyad yertolada" were broadcast to cover these situations. It was aired through documentaries about the situations before and after the persecution of journalists.

In doing so, although none of these journalists were arrested, they revealed the censorship of the Soviet power structures in a certain consistency. According to the archives, their censorship was permanent, but its influence was fading. Most importantly, journalists who served despite many restrictions received great respect. We can learn from Pravda archives that Vzglyad could not act as they wanted at that time, because they had more freedom after the collapse of the Soviet Union<sup>23</sup>.

As a result, we can determine that the censorship of the Soviet power structures did not completely disappear and that Vzglyad could not work as they wanted at that time. But we cannot claim that the Soviet power structures were able to effectively censor them. On the contrary, Vzglyad and Soviet power structures were able to influence each other to a certain extent.

They refrained from arresting the journalists, possibly due to public pressure, following VOA's claims that Soviet forces were harassing Vzglyad journalists. By constantly covering the internal problems of the USSR, the Western press was able to change the opinion of the general public. Therefore, it was a great achievement for "Voice of America" to turn the opinion of the Soviet public against the Soviet state.

Live shows in the evening have led to a decrease in censorship. In a sense, the weakening of the Soviet power structures served to disable the safety net that could be mobilized in favor of the West.<sup>24</sup>

After the first year of Vzglyad broadcasting, new formats were created in the TV shows, adding to the show's existing success. Some examples are "Before and after Vzglyad", "600 seconds", "Pressing the brakes", etc. We observe the changes of the Soviet media after Vzglyad. Ivan Kononov, co-creator of the popular TV show "The 12th Floor", and he also created the plot for "Vzglyad".<sup>25</sup>

Also, shows about the adventures of Andrey Razin (producer-manager at the Ministry of Culture from 1987 to 1990) attracted public attention.<sup>26</sup> Soviet newspapers such as "Pravda", "Izvestia", "Ogonyok" also reported on the modern format of television and how it affects people's lifestyles.

We can observe the facts about the political opinion during the communist regime.<sup>27</sup> Censorship also failed to stop the process, as Soviet media reforms were well covered on VOA's hotly

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<sup>22</sup> See in detail Evgeny Dodolev. The Musketeers of Perestroika. 30 years later. University Lomonosov. Moscow 2017

<sup>23</sup> Anniversary of the "Vzglyad" program that changed the country:30 facts about the legendary program. Komsomolskaya Pravda.2011.

<sup>24</sup> 185) Anniversary of the "Vzglyad" program that changed the country:30 facts about the legendary program. Komsomolskaya Pravda. 2011.

<sup>25</sup> Alan Cassels. Ideology and international relations in the modern world. Total war and propaganda 206. First published 1996 by Routledge 11 New Fetter Lane, London EC4P 4EE

<sup>26</sup> Wim P. van Meurs. The Bessarabian question in Communist historiography. Nationalist and communist political and History-Writing. East European Monographs Distributed by Columbia University Press, New York 1994

<sup>27</sup> Ada W. Finifter and Ellen Mickiewicz, Redefining the Political System of the USSR: Mass Support for Political

debated radio broadcasts. The image of censorship, weakened by Gorbachev's 1987 "Openness" program, had a beneficial effect on Soviet foreign policy.

Wide coverage of everyday issues was a positive result of "Openness". However, the increase in information and the ability to compare one's life with the lives of people in the United States or Europe has led to a decrease in public trust in government. Directly against the Communist regime, these new TV programs began to air, showing how any problem could be solved in a democratic society.<sup>28</sup>

As a result, several creators of these shows were imprisoned. Surprisingly, the *Vzglyad* journalists were not harmed, as their programs were the focus of public and foreign media attention. However, Soviet power structures were able to censor journalists from other shows that were relatively unpopular, especially with the Western media.<sup>29</sup> That is why *Vzglyad* is distinguished by its enormous social influence.<sup>30</sup>

According to the request of the Russian service correspondent of "Voice of America", the European who gave an interview about the feelings of longing between the "Ossies" and "Vessi" during the times when Germany was divided the well-known scientist Claudia Weber says that such feelings are stronger now. People remember the times when the Berlin Wall divided them.

As the reason for this, he said the consequences of the new liberalization in the world, the globalization processes that have been going on for several decades, the growing threat of terrorism and international security. Today, looking back, you miss the past, we knew what was written in it and what was bad. The "Cold War" period, as we know it now, was a time free of danger. Everything was clear, clear, the boundaries were solid. In addition, it was a period of economic growth after the Second World War, when people had a high desire for creativity...

From the memories of eighty-four-year-old Krista Huebner: Hospital nurses went out to the balcony and saw a bunch of young people climbing over the wall. All his fat was cut off, his head was pompous, but he was not afraid of death. I myself once saw young people climbing on a high roof and jumping over the fence.

They were jumping over the metal grates of the West Berlin fire department. All of them were full of fat, and their heads were full of pomp. We looked after them, - remembers nurse Krista. - One day, the cover of the sewer pipe opened, and two people came out from underground and quickly crossed the street. .

"We could not protect all of them. We looked after those who saved their lives, but we could not save those who died."<sup>31</sup>

Analysis of this historical process led me to an interesting conclusion. In other words, the mass media that worked to build the USSR also contributed to its demise. The mass media, particularly *Pravda*, were captured by the early communists and used as a tool to instill public sympathy for them in the 1910s and 20s. In 1991, the country again buckled under the power of the mass media, as even *Pravda* opposed the Soviet Union.

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Change. The American Political Science Review, Dec. 1992, Vol. Dec. 1992. Published by: American Political Science Association

<sup>28</sup> The History Of The Soviet Bloc 1945–1991 A CHRONOLOGY. Part 5 1988–1991 Edited by Csaba BÉKÉS Research Chair, Center of Social Sciences, Institute for Political Science, Hungarian Academy of Sciences; Budapest 2017.

<sup>29</sup> John Miller, Mikhail Gorbachev and the End of Soviet Power. 1993 )Alexander Dallin, "Causes of the Collapse of the USSR," Post-Soviet Affairs. October-December 1992: 279-302, Archie Brown, The Gorbachev Factor. Oxford, 1996

<sup>30</sup> Anniversary of the "Vzglyad" program that changed the country: 30 facts about the legendary program. Komsomolskaya Pravda.2011

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.jstor.com/stable/j.ctt1c2crfj.18>

Natalya Aleksadrovna Tsvetkova (St. Petersburg National University) analyzed the historical processes of diplomatic relations between the USA and the USSR in her PhD thesis entitled "Public diplomacy as an ideological and political tool of US expansion in the world, 1914-2014". Relations between 1950 and 1970 are covered in detail in the first part of this dissertation. The second part covers the years 1970-1991. It covers events in chronological order. It also brings up some historical events from 1990 and 2014 for discussion.

He specifically touched on the misunderstanding of the historical processes of the 80s of the last century as follows: the influence of the US mass media on the USSR is simply a result of globalization. He frames this in terms of political socialism and cultural change, which brings a positive perspective on the influence of mass media in the United States. However, he saw the promotion of the American Dream in the Soviet Union as "soft power" [non-military attacks] political propaganda.

"Reconstruction" - on April 23, 1985, at the April Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU, M.S. Political course promoted by Gorbachev, slogan. ("openness - reconstruction - acceleration") - the concept of economic and social development of the country. Reforms implemented in the Soviet Union in 1985-1991.

It should be said that M. Gorbachev was well known in the West even before he became the first leader of the USSR. Historian Roy Medvedov notes that the author of the French émigré magazine "Soviet Union" spoke about Gorbachev in 1985 and wrote that he was "the unstoppable dream of the West." The reason is that Gorbachev traveled to England with his wife Raisa Maksimovna in 1984. Therefore, at that time, foreign newspapers wrote about Raisa Maksimov using a gold credit card in London. Anyway, it is true that the appointment of Gorbachev as the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU made the foreign mass media happy. "No wonder," writes historian Alexander Ostrovsky, "the British newspaper The Times affectionately called Gorbachev a "smiling bear." In addition, many periodicals interviewed Zdenek Mlynarje, a former student of Gorbachev, who confidently stated that Gorbachev's coming to power would fundamentally change the USSR.

Gorbachev himself repeatedly said that "those who organized the August 1991 coup d'état are responsible for the restructuring and collapse of the Soviet Union." Western mass media have been particularly active in spreading his views to both the left and the right. The reason is that Gorbachev is the one who opened the "iron curtain" between the West and the East, opened the way for the "Voice of America" to sound like a drum, and literally set Radio "Ozodlik" free in the territory of the USSR. .

Another important point is that Western academic literature was used more than Soviet archival data. Advance research avoids the need to review Russian archives for the period under review. In her research, Tsvetkova calls the crimes committed by the Soviet power structures over the years, as well as the activities of the Communist Party related to it, "structural connection".

In fact, rather than the USSR's ideological opposition to capitalism, he could find the factors that caused the Soviet Union's demise precisely in this systemic connection. In other words, the disintegration of the USSR was viewed as a historical process of relations within Russia, and the causes and consequences of this disintegration were completely ignored. With this argument in mind, I have tried to focus on his thesis on the role of the US media and its censorship by the Soviet power structures during the last decade of the Soviet Union. For this, I mainly used archival materials of Pravda, the daily propaganda of the Communist Party of the USSR. Svetkova also notes that "Voice of America" has regularly sent "Iron Curtain" propaganda to Eastern and Central European countries. However, the changes in social life, such as the changes in the worldview of the Soviet people as a result of the rise of the West, were ignored in the practical work carried out by "Voice of America" against the Soviet power structures and Soviet rule. Although internal revolutions have been identified as ideological upheavals, his dissertation emphasizes the role of the VOA and Western media in the process of cultural globalization. My

dissertation explored these themes in depth and showed how the Soviet power structures and VOA were connected to the Russian media landscape.

Radio was the only means of the Soviet people dealing with the outside world and looking behind the "iron curtain" during the Cold War years. Foreign radio broadcasts, called "the voice of the enemy" by Kremlin propagandists, became an integral part of the Soviet information space. In other words, even if the name was not spoken aloud, people's ears were always listening to it.

Access to the frequency of foreign radio waves and the desire to listen to them helped to create a whole generation of radio amateurs in the Soviet Union and to develop their knowledge and skills. Radio used to be seen as a household item, but now its career has increased. A special culture was formed: broadcasts of Radio Liberty, BBC, Deutsche Welle or Swedish Radio became a part of everyday life for many.

VOA broadcasts daily from four stations on 19m, two on 16m and one on 13m (as well as on 48.62m, 41.15m and 31.45m also used to broadcast).

However, after a year of broadcasting, VOA (like the "Voices" of other countries) became more complicated. By the mid-1950s, a vast radio jamming network, occupying several thousand transmitter stations, was called in to "jam" foreign broadcasts. Most radio stations from countries broadcasting behind the Iron Curtain have been targeted: from Radio Liberty/Free Europe (the most heavily jammed) to Deutsche Welle, Vatican Radio and, at various times, even socialist Beijing.

The Voice of America quickly became a source of foreign information, but it also had its own problems: radio amateurs pointed out that it could only pick up specific signals on certain wavelengths. For example, it was very difficult to hear him while standing in Moscow.

Nevertheless, "foreign voices" would be able to enter the socialist bloc by any means. Stopping the waves - as this process was called in the Soviet dictionary - was a constant concern of the leaders of the Soviet government, who were trying to find new ways to deal with this situation, for example, the Communist Party MK banned the operation of short-wave radio receivers in the country. stopped (Western radio broadcasts were broadcast on shortwave frequencies - one such radio station is "Radio Sweden").

Yegor Ligachev, the secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU, and Viktor Chebrikov, the chairman of the Soviet power structures, put forward a project to protect the territory of the country, where 100-130 million people live, by suppressing foreign radio waves. Although this measure was never implemented, but did not have an effect: even people who bought relatively expensive radios had shortwave equipment in the KV range.

The work of installing wave-receiving devices required a large amount of money (as early as 1954, the cost of building a wave-receiving station amounted to 1 billion rubles), and even then it was able to cover only some regions: the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the CPSU was presented in 1986. The report noted that the existing "wave detectors are able to cover only about a third of the country's territory. The operation of these devices did not achieve high efficiency during the years of the "Cold War".

One of the reasons for this was that the relations between the USSR and the country that spread the wave against it were sometimes softened and sometimes strained. For example, the airwaves were sometimes cleared of all kinds of harmful interference. This is especially noticeable during the process of "softening during the Khrushchev period", after which the situation became tense again and the activity of "silencing devices" increased during the entry of Soviet troops into Czechoslovakia. Also, the simultaneous opening and closing of the frequencies is due to the warm relations that took place in the 1970s, that is, the Helsinki Treaty of the USA and the USSR, the launch of the program related to the joint flight of the Soyuz and Apollo spacecraft, or

the visit of the US President Richard Nixon to Moscow. it is also clearly visible in the background of related events.

However, with the beginning of the war in Afghanistan and the growing criticism of the USSR's actions in the international arena, the broadcasting stations began to work again at full capacity. In the years of reconstruction, their intensity decreased again. On May 23, 1987, VOA's airwaves were cleared of interference, and over the next two years, most of the outside influences were phased out.

People who listened to the Russian broadcasts of "Voice of America" or directly participated in it expressed similar thoughts in their memories.

Changes in the broadcasting of Western radio stations, whose frequencies could previously be "closed", have also occurred in modern Russia. They were partly due to changes in information and technological reality - in particular, the development of the Internet, but the political reasons did not disappear.

Voice of America and Radio Liberty, which reached their peak in 2005, have come under pressure from the Russian government in the following years, which again decided to restrict broadcasting abroad. In 2014, the broadcast contract for VOA (which had reduced its radio presence to a minimum by 2008) was not renewed. "We are not going to cooperate," said Dmitry Kiselev, the director of the "Russia Segodnya" agency, in a letter to the management of the US Broadcasting Board of Directors (BBG).

As was the case during the Cold War, this decision was taken at a time of tension between the two countries: in 2014, Russia annexed Ukraine's Crimea, and Dmitry Kiselyov faced sanctions from the European Union. According to historical logic, a new stage of pressure on Western mass media has begun in Russia. In 2022, Russia began to carry out a special military operation on the territory of Ukraine, which made the gap in the middle even bigger.

At this point, summing up our opinions expressed above, I would like to emphasize that this oil is subject to the judgment of history. As part of the topic of our scientific research, we tried to interpret the contests, disagreements and conflicts between the two sides, how the debates in the political, economic and military spheres were covered in the pages of the foreign press, as an example of the mutual struggle of propaganda and counter-propaganda. It can be said that each side has its own truth. There is another rule, which we deeply understood during the 30-year period after the collapse of the USSR: the world cannot be left to the discretion of a single hegemonic state. If it obeys the will of one country, the balance will be disturbed. That is why it is necessary to keep both sides of the scale equal in order to ensure peace and tranquility on earth.

## BOOKS

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