

Authors: Anton Vatcharadze, Head of the Memory and Disinformation Studies Direction at the Institute for Development of Freedom of Information (IDFI)

Irakli Veshaguridze, employee of the National Library of the Parliament of Georgia

Eka Kalandadze, junior researcher at memory and disinformation research department, IDFI

Edgar Brutian, analyst at memory and disinformation research department, IDFI

Sopho Gelava, head of the Investigative Media Laboratory of the University of Georgia (UG)

Editors: Nino Gozalishvili, analyst at memory and disinformation research department, IDFI
Levan Avalishvili, program director, co-founder of IDFI

Newspaper articles obtained and material processed:

Elita Khmelidze, University of Georgia (UG) and IDFI study program - Research on Disinformation and Propaganda: History, Theories and Means of Rebuttal - Graduate

Nana Ertelishvili, 3rd year student of the Faculty of Journalism

Goga Nizharadze, a graduate of the Faculty of Journalism and Political Sciences of UG

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Introduction

Russia is actively using its economic, financial, political, and informational leverage, and is waging information warfare and using propaganda to bring former Soviet and Eastern European countries back into its orbit. Due to long-term Soviet propaganda and its contemporary echoes, there is still nostalgia for a unified Soviet Union in some parts of society, as well as fear of European values, lifestyles, and society in general.

The present research aims to better understand the historical roots and development of anti-Western propaganda, which is reinforced by the modern Kremlin regime and propaganda. The main focus of this study is on the analysis of the anti-Western narrative created in the Georgian press of the 1970s. The topics discussed within the framework of the research include the economic, social, and cultural dimensions of the anti-Western discourse of the most important daily newspaper - "Communist", which waged a daily information war against the West; Increasing awareness of the long-term nature of anti-Western propaganda and its historical sources; and showing connections with contemporary Russian propaganda.

Throughout the study, the ten-year period of publication of the "Communist" newspaper (from 1970 to the middle of 1980) was analyzed using the tools of narrative and discourse analysis. The authors of the study made a basic observation of the narratives—which included references to Western examples, international news coverage, and comparisons—in the process of covering social, cultural, economic, and political issues.

The focus of the research on the 1970s is due to the fact that internationally important historical changes that were actively covered by the USSR took place in the mentioned period . Among them were the anti-war protests in America and the withdrawal of US troops from Vietnam; the overthrow of the Shah in Iran and the establishment of the Islamic Republic; War in the Middle East between Israel and Arab countries; The entry of Soviet troops into Afghanistan; and many others. The Soviet methodology of disinformation and propaganda, which, on the one hand, tried to demonize the West and, on the other hand, to strengthen its own regime, can be seen exactly in the coverage of these international news by the USSR. These narratives are still used in modern political discourse to generate and strengthen anti-Western sentiments.

An overview of the historical context

During the Cold War, especially in the 1960s and 1970s, the dissemination of propaganda narratives through the media became an actual tool of "soft power". Back then, due to the

competitive environment of the Cold War, the American and Soviet people had a strong interest in each other. They were interested in how people lived on the other side of the "Iron Curtain", what they felt, what they ate, and how they perceived those on the other side of the ocean. The American media tried to meet this demand with information that was obtained with difficulty. However, due to a number of factors (the communication policy of the Soviet Union, the stereotypes spread in the USA itself, etc.), it was still inaccurate, which contributed to the strengthening of stereotypes about Soviet citizens among the American people. The main reason for this is the informational vacuum created by the communist regime in the USSR.

The USSR, the world's first "propaganda state"¹, was based on two pillars - propaganda and repression, or, in Lenin's words - a balance between persuasion and coercion². Two types of propaganda were spread in the country - neutral ("common propaganda", which was also used by the West) and negative (brainwashing)³. The latter, due to the totalitarian nature of the regime, included almost all spheres of public life. The Soviet constitution, for its part, provided freedom of expression and free media exclusively for the purpose of spreading socialism. Accordingly, criticism of the socialist regime or the communist party was considered "anti-socialist activity" and was punished according to the criminal code⁴. There was even a doctrine for Soviet journalists, which gave the Communist Party the right to demand ideological purity from a journalist⁵. As media researcher Epp Lauk wrote - "the main function of the Soviet media was to be an ideological weapon in the hands of the party."⁶ All journalists should be guided by the party agenda; In addition, they had limited access to Western sources. On the other hand, the Soviet regime imposed strict restrictions on correspondents from the West. In such conditions, on the one hand, the Western people did not have information about the

¹ Peter Kenez, *The Birth of the Propaganda State : Soviet Methods of Mass Mobilization, 1917-1929* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1985), 4.

² Alex Inkeles, Raymond Bauer, *The Soviet Citizen : Daily Life in a Totalitarian Society* (Cambridge : Harvard University Press, 1959), 7 ; See also Alex Inkeles, *Public Opinion in Soviet Russia : a Study in Mass Persuasion*, vol. 1 (Harvard University Press, 1958).

³ RothEy, Kristin, and Larissa Zakharova. "Communications and Media in the USSR and Eastern Europe." *Cahiers Du Monde Russe* 56, no. 2-3 (April 17, 2015): 273-89. <https://doi.org/10.4000/monderusse.8182> .

⁴ Epp Lauk, Petr Šámal, and Teodora Shek Brnardić, "The Protean Nature of Communist Censorship: The Testimony of Collections," in *Handbook of COURAGE: Cultural Opposition and Its Heritage in Eastern Europe*, ed. Balázs Apor, Péter Apor and Sándor Horváth (2019), available: <http://cultural-opposition.eu/activities/handbook/>.

⁵ Jaromír Volek and Marína Urbániková, "Predictors of Mistrust: Towards Basic Characteristics of Czech Mistrusting News Media Audiences," *Observatorio (OBS*)* 12, no. 1 (2018): 01-18

⁶ Epp Lauk, "Estonian Journalists in Search of New Professional Identity," *Javnost-The Public* 3, no. 4 (1996): 95; see also: Peeter Vihalemm and Marju Lauristin, "Political Control and Ideological Canonisation. The Estonian Press during the Soviet Period," in *Vom Instrument der Partei zur Vierten Gewalt: die ostmitteleuropäische Presse als zeithistorische Quelle*, ed. Mühle, Eduard (Marburg: Verlag Herder-Institut, 1997): 103-109

Soviet people, and on the other hand, the latter did not have an accurate idea about how people live behind the "curtain".

Such total control over information made it easier for the Communist Party to maintain control of the country. The only source of information was the party elite, and they hence used technical and human resources to reinforce their favored narratives. It became more and more difficult for an ordinary citizen to draw the line between party narratives and reality.

Those at the head of the Soviet system understood the importance of propaganda well, so at the beginning of the Cold War, propaganda was even distinguished as a separate profession. If during Stalin's period propaganda courses were mostly attended by party members, during Khrushchev's time, since the 60s, non-party citizens were involved as well.⁷

Table 1. Distribution of Propaganda Personnel

Year	Propagandists	Location	CPSU Members	Students in Propaganda System	Party Members per Propagandist (ratio)	Students per Propagandist (ratio)
1964/65	1,100,000	USSR	11,022,369	36,000,000	9:1	30:1
1965/66	900,000	USSR	12,357,108	12,000,000	13:1	13:1
1967/68	1,000,000	USSR	13,180,000	14,500,000	13:1	14:1
1968/69	1,100,000	USSR	—	15,000,000	—	13:1
<i>Subnational Figures</i>						
1967/68	6,300	Armenia	200,605	—	31:1	—
1967/68	1,795	Georgia	209,196	—	116:1	—
1965/66	43,907	Uzbekistan	193,600	—	4:1	—
1967/68	75,000	Moscow	730,000	850,000	9:1	11:1
(March 1966)						

Figure 1: Distribution of propagandists in the Soviet Union and individual states⁸

In addition to the propaganda of the so-called "socialist values", the Soviet media also engaged in negative propaganda aimed at discrediting and demonizing the West. As mentioned in the

⁷ Mickiewicz, Ellen. "The Modernization of Party Propaganda in the USSR." *Slavic Review* 30, no. 2 (June 1971): 257–76. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2494240>.

⁸ Ellen Mickiewicz, *The Modernization of Party Propaganda in the USSR*, *Slavic Review*, Volume 30, Issue 2, June 1971, pp. 257 - 276.

"Four Theories of the Press"⁹, according to Soviet-Communist theory, the press served only the interests of the party and the purpose of "exposure" of the evils of capitalism and imperialism. To this end, all media activities had to be coordinated with the Novosti Press Agency (APN) (Агентство печати «Новости»), which was established in 1961 to spread propaganda abroad. It is worth noting that APN - the main media tool of Soviet propaganda, has not been dismantled and still exists today in a modified form as "RIA Novosti" ("РИА Новости» [RIA News]). The latter, in turn, is subject to the Federal State Unitary Company "International News Agency "Russia Today" (Федеральное государственное унитарное предприятия «Международное информационное агентство «Россия сегодня») - the main weapon of contemporary Russian propaganda abroad.

In 2013, by Putin's decree, the state-owned "RIA Novosti" was transformed into the media group Russia Today, which continued to operate as a media agency. It is the above-mentioned media group and "Sputnik" («Спутник»)¹⁰ and other media agencies of Russia Today that are nowadays the main source of Russian propaganda and disinformation campaigns outside the country's borders. All these media outlets are under the control of one umbrella company, established by the Kremlin. Accordingly, the state determines their editorial and other policies.

The Soviet Union, which was formally "united in diversity"—where all countries, according to the Soviet constitution, were supposed to have the right to self-determination—often criticized the pluralist political structures of the US and EU for being "unstable" and tried to show that there was a split in the Western system. What the Soviets called instability was actually diversity of opinion, healthy public discussions, and a democratic system of government. For example, in the USA, this manifested in ensuring the division of power, which is why there were frequent polemics and disagreements between the president and the Congress, which is common in a democracy; while in the European Union, the division of power between the European Commission and the European Council provided the USSR an excuse for "criticism".

The USSR had a one-party system where any dissenting opinion that contradicted the Communist Party's agenda was suppressed. In this light, the system tried to discredit the West and appeal to the strength of its own regime. Interestingly, manipulation of the same issues continues in modern Russia—the largest disinformation campaigns in this regard took place

⁹ B. K. "Four Theories of the Press: The Authoritarian, Libertarian, Social Responsibility, and Soviet Communist Concepts of What the Press Should Be and Do." *International Affairs* 33, no. 4 (October 1957): 464–464. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2606845>.

¹⁰ During Russia's invasion of Ukraine, this media agency prematurely published the article "Russia's attack/arrival and the new world order" (Наступление России и нового мира) and discussed Russia's quick victory and the new world order.

during the 2016 US presidential elections and the 2019 European Parliament elections¹¹. The goal of modern Russia is to polarize Western society and reduce trust in government and democratic institutions in the West. Based on this, the European Commission called the Russian disinformation campaign the biggest threat to the EU and defined disinformation as follows: "verifiably false or misleading information created and disseminated for the purpose of obtaining economic benefits or intentionally misleading the public."¹² It should be noted that the term disinformation was introduced in world dictionaries precisely to denote Soviet propaganda. Before the internationalization of the term disinformation, in English, the term misinformation referred to incorrect information that was spread with the purpose of intentionally deceiving people. However, disinformation took this campaign to a whole new level and reached a massive scale, which was later facilitated by the advent of digital reality and social media.¹³

The years of 1970-1975:

In regard to the Western world, the pages of the "Communist" discussed the following issues most actively: the USA and its influence on other states, the "aggressor militarist" NATO, the Vietnam War, Israeli militarism and Zionism, and the liberation of Palestine; In addition, the problems of the capitalist system, unemployment, oppression of blacks (referred to with the word "negroes"), socialist resistance and strikes, rising prices, fewer rights for women compared to men, and corruption were often touched upon in the newspaper; Antagonism between NATO countries, lack of rule of law (mostly under the headlines - "laws only on paper"), activities of neo-fascist and neo-Nazi groups, and certain other matters were also discussed when referring to the West on the pages of the "Communist" newspaper.

As for the geographical area, the newspaper covered almost all regions and countries of the world, including Europe, South America, Asian countries, Africa, the USA, the so-called "hotspots" - the Middle East, Indochina, etc. It is worth noting that the "Communist" newspaper would add important hints to various news columns and reports regarding the developments on

¹¹ Carnegie Europe. "Russia's Long-Term Campaign of Disinformation in Europe." Accessed December 13, 2022. <https://carnegieeurope.eu/strategiceurope/81322> .

¹² "Tackling Online Disinformation | Shaping Europe's Digital Future." Accessed December 13, 2022. <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/online-disinformation> .

¹³ Carnegie Europe. "Russia's Long-Term Campaign of Disinformation in Europe." Accessed December 13, 2022. <https://carnegieeurope.eu/strategiceurope/81322> .

the continents of America, Europe, Asia, and Africa, which in a preferential role portrayed the aspirations of the USA on the international stage.

Over 1970-1975, the main topic of discussion about the West in the "Communist" newspaper was the Vietnam War, which was mentioned in almost every issue. The focus was mainly on the following few topics: military news and the front line, the involvement of other Western countries in the conflict, widespread drug addiction and brutality in the American military, war crimes, for which only a small number of people are brought to court, with most of them being acquitted. In the issues of 1970-1971, a lot of attention was paid to the "Tragedy of Songmi" (the tragedy of March 16, 1968, when several hundred civilians were shot). In the issue of January 16, a photograph of the Songmi victims was printed on the papers of the "Communist".

In the same years, there was talk about trials in the American military, the trials of private soldiers, and high-ranking officers that were relieved of their punishment. In the issue of January 8 (1971), "Communist" stated that the American military authorities dropped all charges against four officers. The newspaper concluded that the US government is protecting criminals, thus violating the promise to "punish them in an exemplary manner".

In 1970–1972, "Communist" was actively covering the US-Israel relationship, often referring to Jews as fascists and Zionists and focusing on the oppression of Arabs. The newspaper devoted many caricatures to this issue. The article "Incident in the Olympic Village" of September 7, 1972 (No. 210 (15764)) of "Communist" stands out with its anti-Semitic attitude.

It should be noted that one of the tragic events¹⁴ of the 1970s, which resulted in the death of 11 representatives of the Israeli delegation and a West German policeman, is briefly and superficially discussed in a small column and is called "An Incident in the Olympic Village". The population of the Western world was practically watching the 20-hour terror that was organized during the Olympic Games live, which the "Communist" newspaper covered only superficially.

¹⁴ For more, visit: <https://www.britannica.com/event/Munich-Massacre>



Figure 1: "Communist", September 7, 1972

In 1970-1972, one of the main topics was unemployment, inflation, and price increases in the West. One of the articles in the 1970 January 10th issue, about the US economy, begins in the following way: *"Amid inflation and material/financial concerns, the new 1970s began for millions of Americans."* For credibility, the newspaper would cite various numbers, the conclusion of the Department of Labor stating that the degree of unemployment was rising, and assessments from various American newspapers. Even on the eve of 1971, the newspaper "congratulates" society on the decline of the Western economy in its January 1-2 issues. As a source of this, the newspaper refers to the assessment of the French newspaper "Vi Francese" ("specialized in financial-economic problems"), according to which England had been gripped by inflation, while the number of unemployed had been increasing in the USA and West Germany.



Figure 2: "Communist", November 17, 1970; Figure 3: "Communist", June 3, 1970

The article discusses the process of outflow of US citizens to work in other countries (23,000 to Canada, 3,500 - to Australia). The main reasons stated for this migration are inflation, unemployment, crime, and violence. A February 13, 1971 news story headlined "Cities Emptying" talked about the shrinking white population of the nation's major cities for reasons such as not being willing to live next to the black community ("Negroes" in the language of the newspaper). Other countries of the West also fall under the "Communist" radar, as it referred to the banking machinations in West Germany, and mentioning that in England "almost half of the workers' family budget was spent on apartment rent and utility bills." (Communist, July 1, 1972.)

On occasion, opinions of a famous person in a certain subject regarding the West were printed in the newspaper. In the column of February 6, 1970 (No. 30 (14975)) there was a brief information about the trip of the artist Irakli Toidze to the cities of the USA together with the directors Eldar Shengelaia and Giorgi Danelia. Toidze spoke about the USA in a positive context, although among the sketches he brought to the editorial office for publication in the newspaper were: "Shoeshine on Broadway" and "I Left My Eyes in Vietnam". The newspaper would have likely not printed Toidze's paintings - "Huggenheim Gallery" and "Ancient Catholic Church in San Francisco" if the two other propaganda sketches were not provided as well.



"Communist", February 6, 1970, No. 30 (14975)

In 1970-1972, "Communist" actively reviewed the political life of the USA, criticized the two-party system, and considered the electoral system there to be flawed. The newspaper actively referred to or used the critical views of then-contemporary and past era prestigious figures. On June 13, 1971 (No. 134 (15385)), the letter "Sham Democracy in Action" was published, in which Theodore Dreiser was quoted as saying: *"Of all the sham privileges possessed by the modern American laborer, the largest sham is his right to vote."* The paper continued: *"Since then nothing has changed in the bourgeois electoral system of America and other countries of the capitalist world."*

"The Communist" also covered the Watergate scandal¹⁵ and referred to it as an example of the shortcomings of American democracy. The article of October 31, 1972 (#256 (15810)), titled "Methods of the Election Campaign", stated that, instead of thinking about the problems of the country, the parties were busy accusing each other, resorting to fake letters, surveillance, sabotage. Democrats kept reminding the republicans about the Watergate affair.

In 1970-72, Angela Davis¹⁶ was one of the most discussed topics in the "Communist" newspaper. Her first mention was on November 19, 1970 (a month after her arrest) (#271 (15216)). Only the arrest of Angela Davis was described here, while the December 13 issue of the same year (No. 291 (15236)) talks about the details of the charges. To strengthen

¹⁵ Watergate scandal was a US political scandal during the presidency of Richard Nixon, which ended with the arrest of several of Nixon's closest advisers and the resignation of the president on August 9, 1974.

¹⁶ Angela Davis (b. 1944) - American activist. Member of the US Communist Party in 1969-1991. In 1970-1972, she was imprisoned for almost 2 years on charges of terrorism. However, she was finally acquitted and released.

impressions, the article was accompanied by an illustration from the Neues Deutschland newspaper.

During the 18-month period of imprisonment of Angela Davis, more than two dozen articles were dedicated to her in the pages of "Communist" - including a poem by the Georgian poet Teimuraz Jangulashvili (January 28, 1971, No. 23 (15274)) and a letter printed at the request of the students of Kutaisi Vocational Technical School No. 37.

In the mentioned years, several articles were devoted to the anti-Soviet radio stations "Free Europe" and "Freedom", which were also broadcasted in the socialist camp. Apparently, this topic was considered so important that, unlike most of the material on foreign affairs, the newspaper devoted analytical articles to it. For example, in the article published in the issue of July 8, 1971 (No. 155 (15406)), "Ether saboteurs. Crisis of Bourgeois Ideology" by G. Vachnadze (senior scientist-collaborator of the Institute of Sociology) described in detail the locations of the radio stations, the number of employees (including people who emigrated from Eastern Europe). The article also mentioned the issue of financing: *"In 1969, both radio stations received 34 million dollars from the USA. It is also said that this money is unofficially supplied to the media by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)."* The February 24, 1972 issue (#46 (15600)) discussed the government's attempt to get Congress to make radio funding official, and the August 24 issue reported that Nixon had signed a bill giving radio stations \$38.5 million.

In 1970 "Communist" published information about ecology, more precisely, about the issue of how the US was polluting the ocean. In the issue of August 19, 1970 (No. 193 (15138)), under the column "The world is outraged", there was a response to the sinking of 22,500 missiles filled with nerve gas in 418 containers ("concrete coffins", as the "Communist" writes) in the Atlantic Ocean (Operation CHASE/ "Pursuit")¹⁷. The author says that the East Coast of the USA and Latin America would be affected after the rockets exploded¹⁸.

A caricature of a Danish caricaturist (fish with gas-helmet) and the Georgian A. Chavleishvili's sketch were dedicated to this news, ending with the words: *"The sea should not be poisoned, it should not be polluted, the sea should be clean, but the American imperialists, the slaves of the military-industrial complex, do not think so... they are sinking a dangerous and deadly cargo to the bottom of the sea... The waves hit the shore with a roar, and in this fight, in this noise, the voice of the sea can be heard, as if the sadness of the Atlantic Ocean has reached it, our dear, beloved Black Sea, as if the sound of the sunken "concrete coffins" stirs its heart, it worries and screams, and it is clearly heard in its wake. : Peace to peace!... - Wrath to the enemies of peace!..."*

¹⁷ For more see: <https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/demil/history.htm>

¹⁸ "CDC - Chemical Weapons Elimination - History of U.S. Chemical Weapons Elimination," December 12, 2018. <https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/demil/history.htm> .



"Communist", September 17, 1970, No. 217 (15162)

In these years, information in the field of culture was very scarce and served to present the West only in a negative light. For example, the issue of January 6, 1971 (No. 4 (15255)) talks about 17 valuable canvases stolen from a private person in France. The "Communist" of July 7, 1970 (No. 157 (15102)) said that socialist countries are ahead of capitalist countries in terms of economic development and cited only one example to illustrate this - 75,723 name books were issued in the USSR in 1968, 59,247 in the USA, and in England – 31 372.

The approach of the Soviet press - to focus on a negative event, and if it was followed by a positive continuation, to mention it only indirectly or to leave it without attention at all – should be highlighted. For instance, in the issue of August 6, 1972 (#183 (15737)), the "Communist" wrote: "Actress Jane Fonda gave an interview to Hanoi radio, in which she urged US pilots not to bomb Vietnam. In this regard, Congressman Fletcher Thompson demanded that Fonda be charged with treason." This case did not continue, and, as is known, the US Congress refused¹⁹ to summon Jane Fonda to the legislature due to lack of grounds, although the following issue of "Communist" did not write about it.²⁰

¹⁹ For more see:

<https://www.nytimes.com/1972/08/11/archives/house-committee-refuses-to-subpoena-jane-fonda.html>

²⁰ "House Committee Refuses To Subpoena Jane Fonda - The New York Times." Accessed December 13, 2022.

<https://www.nytimes.com/1972/08/11/archives/house-committee-refuses-to-subpoena-jane-fonda.html> .

In 1970–1972, the "Communist" reviewed the American education system, racism in schools, the peculiar way of life of youth, the increase in crimes, and drug addiction. In the issue of June 28, 1970 (No. 150 (15095)), under the title "America's Tragedy", an article talked about the growing violence among youth, the main cause of which was considered to be cinema and television. For example, they cited statistics for children between the ages of 6 and 15, according to which each child saw an average of 13,000 murders on screen, putting them at risk of replicating the crimes.

As "Communist" often wrote, students did not have a "peaceful life" either, especially those students who were punished for actively participating in anti-war demonstrations. The police used to beat them physically, sometimes resulting in death. On January 5, 1971, the "Communist" (No. 3 (15254)) wrote that 30 female students were expelled from a student dormitory because they participated in an anti-war protest.

In the issue of January 22, 1972 (No. 18 (15572)), an article was published about the introduction of a new type of weapon in the US military under the title "Dolphin-kamikaze or Pentagon trainers." It reads: *"For three decades, the American military has been trying to exploit the instincts and habits of many animals for militaristic purposes."* The article talks about the training of various animals and birds - seals, dolphins, seagulls, bats, and skunks - for military purposes. For example, a dolphin loaded with explosives had to detect an enemy submarine and detonate it. In order for the dolphin to distinguish between its own and the enemy's equipment, American submarines would have metal strips on the hull. As for the "Bat" project, instead of high-explosive bombs, the Americans would drop thousands of bats, which would have miniature incendiary bombs. The bats, released from the plane, would hide from the daylight and fly into the attics of buildings, and then set them on fire. The skunks were to be released into the Vietnamese tunnels, and the Vietnamese, disturbed by the smell, would come out of the tunnels and find themselves in the hands of the American military.



"Communist", January 22, 1972, No. 18 (15572)

The current political, economic and social situation in the world was discussed in "Communist" of 1973. The main topics were the details of the American-Vietnam war, as well as the involvement of the United States of America in the ongoing conflicts in the Middle East. Among

the published articles, we see topics such as racism, Zionism, biosecurity, epidemics, threats caused by NATO military exercises and the creation of bases, and demographic and economic problems raised in different countries.

In the January 7, 1973 issue (No. 6 (15864)), the article "Radio Espionage Center" discussed the steps taken by the intelligence of the United States of America, assessed as surveillance targeted at socialist countries. In the article, we read: *"The Pentagon is creating a new radio espionage centre in the British Isles. This facility, which was opened in Brody (west coast of England), is officially intended for "oceanographic research". But, according to the London newspaper "Daily Express", the "oceanographic research" is only a mask for American intelligence activities. In fact, the task of the centre will be to monitor the life of socialist countries and collect information about them. It is no coincidence that about 250 specialists of the US military and naval forces should arrive in Brody next week."*

On January 23, 1973 issue of "Communist" (No. 19 (15877)), in the article "They Cover Up", the Pentagon is exposed for covering up the crime: *"The Pentagon is still helping the bloodthirsty murderers who, while in the American punishment squad in 1968, killed the civilians of the Songm community in South Vietnam."*

In the issue of March 7, 1973 (No. 56 (15914)), in the article "Vietnam for Peace, Tel Aviv and Washington's "Mediation", in relation to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, the author of the article portrays the United States of America in the role of encouraging the aggressor: *"The United States of America encourages the aggressor and hopes to overthrow progressive Arab regimes through its Zionist ministry and to undermine Arab-Soviet friendship... It is time to put an end to this dangerous game. It is time to finally find out: Washington's Middle East policy will continue to encourage Israel's aggressive aspirations, which threaten the peace, or the United States of America complies with the November Security Council resolution, which was once voted for by the American representative."*



"Communist" newspaper, February 24, 1973, No. 47 (15905)

In the June 5, 1973 issue of the "Communist" (No. 130 (15988)), we find an article titled "Welcome". The article discusses how the Communist Party of the USA welcomed the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee L. I. Brezhnev's future visit to the USA: *"The American people want and need peace, friendship and cooperation with the USSR... Your visit will be a historic milestone on the way to the development of good relations between our countries, which is in line with the interests of progress, peace and prosperity of the peoples of all countries of the world."*

In the second half of 1973, in the "Communist" we already find discussion of the political situation in Chile and the analysis of the results of the military coup and subsequent processes, as well as the review of the "energy crisis" caused by the shortage of oil in the United States of America.



"Communist" newspaper, November 23, 1973, No. 273 (16131)

In "Communist" of 1974, the trend from previous years is maintained - mainly, the topics of interest include world socio-economic situation and manifestations of racism, as well as the progress of the fight against neo-fascism, the political situation in Chile, conflicts in the Middle East, the crisis situation in relation to various areas in Greece, Spain, England, Germany, etc. Especially the attention is focused on the United States of America. A January 5, 1974 (No. 4 (16166)) article "Difficult New Year", reads: *"Americans met the new year 1974 with the expectation that socio-economic problems will worsen, inflation and unemployment will increase. This is evidenced by the results of a public opinion poll conducted by the Gallup Institute... As the report notes, never before have so many Americans expressed such a pessimistic view of a new year's prospects."*



"Communist" newspaper, January 1, 1974, No. 1 (16163)

In the "Communist" (No. 9 (16171)) of January 11, 1974, the article "In Capitalist Countries: Serious Economic Crisis" discusses the negative role of the oil monopoly in capitalist countries in relation to the deterioration of the socio-economic situation. We find a continuation of the same narrative in the issue of January 24, 1974 (No. 20 (16182)), in the article "The Crisis Does Not Subside": *"The energy crisis, which as a result of the policies of capitalist monopolies and, above all, oil monopolies, has spread to Western Europe, most of the American countries and Japan, has caused significant losses to the economy of these countries. International oil monopolies are taking advantage of the artificially induced lack of warming and making huge profits. The increase in the prices of gasoline and other types of heating caused a sharp increase in the prices of food and various services, and this caused losses primarily to the workers of capital countries."*



"Communist" newspaper, January 6, 1974, No. 5 (16167)

In the article "Discrimination Continues", published in the issue of January 30, 1974 (No. 25 (16187)), the discussion was about the unequal and discriminatory attitude towards women: *"In the United States of America, inequality and discriminatory measures against women are still legalized. This manifests itself in many areas of American reality - in terms of women's wages in manufacturing, and education, as well as women's participation in public and political life."*

In the 1974 "Communist", an important topic for discussion was the political situation created by the military coup in Chile. A number of articles in different issues were devoted to the terror and repression organized by the military junta. In the issue of March 5, 1974 (No. 54 (16216)), the article "Crimes Exposed" detailed the investigation of the International Commission of Inquiry into the crimes of the military junta in Chile: *"Subversive activities against the people of*

Chile and its legitimate government. In this regard, the role of foreign states and monopolies in the preparation and implementation of the military coup in Chile will be studied. They will investigate murders, mass arrests, torture, as well as persecution with political, economic, and social motives."...



"Communist" newspaper, April 27, 1974, No. 97 (16868)

In the 1974 "Communist", one of the topics discussed was the Israeli conflict. In many articles, Israel is portrayed as an aggressor, while the United States of America is referred to as a country supporting the aggressor. In the issue of May 9, 1974 (No. 107 (16269)), in the article "Tel Aviv Intensifies Repression", the Israeli ruling circles are mentioned as the perpetrators of terror and repression in the Arab territories: *"In the last two weeks, the Israeli occupation authorities have been mass-arresting communists, trade unionists and public figures, who support the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East."*

From the middle of July 1974, special attention was paid to the discussion and analysis of the Cyprus conflict in the "Communist" newspaper, at the same time, to the steps taken to eliminate the conflict - the progress of the negotiations between Turkey, England and Greece.

In the issue of January 14, 1975 (No. 11 (16478)), the article "Quiet Americans in Western Europe" was published, in which the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) was actually accused of interfering in the affairs of Western Europe, considering its actions: *"Sakdes correspondent I. Titov informs us that many agents of the Central Intelligence Agency have been sent in recent months to a number of Western European countries allied to the United States of America, and, in particular, to England, France, and Italy."*

In the issue of January 25, 1975 (No. 21 (16488)), the conversation was about the steps taken by the United States of America to expand the military contingent in other countries. In the article "Dangerous Plans", we read: *"The United States government is negotiating with the*

governments of Oman and Great Britain to get permission to use the British military air base on the island of Masir in the Arabian Sea. This was stated by the representative of the White House at the press conference. He said that in the neighbouring area of the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf, in accordance with the policy of "expanding military presence", the United States is significantly increasing the number of its warships and aircraft operating in this area."

In the article "NATO Wants to Destabilize Cyprus", published in the February 22, 1975 issue of *Communist* (No. 45 (16512)), NATO was accused of using the Cyprus conflict for its own interests: *"What explains such a truly unfortunate activity of the North Atlantic Bloc towards Cyprus? This question is answered, for example, by the report of the bourgeois English newspaper "Sunday Telegraph", which recently wrote that the NATO states will consider the issue of creating a Pentagon military base in Northern Cyprus. In short, it is in NATO's interests to isolate Cyprus, as long as it is able to get a military base on this island."*



"Communist" newspaper, October 1, 1975, No. 230 (16697)

In "Communist" of 1975, the threats caused by NATO's military manoeuvres were actively circulated in narrative or different fictional methods.



"Communist" newspaper, May 1, 1975, No. 102 (16569)



"Communist" newspaper, August 26, 1975, No. 199 (16666)

Years 1976-1980:

In these years, as well as in the previous five-year period, the representation of the West comprised the following topics: the dominant role of the USA and its interference in the internal affairs of other states, NATO and militarism, Israel - as an aggressor state; Social issues: oppression of black people (mentioned as "negroes"), socialist resistance and strikes, rising prices, lack of rule of law (mostly under the headlines - "laws only on paper"), fewer rights for women compared to men, corruption, and many other issues.

The newspaper covered almost all regions and topical countries of the world, including: the USA, Middle East, Europe, South America, Asian countries (especially Japan and China), and Africa. Special emphasis was placed on the role of America in these years as well.

That is why, in the "Communist" of the 1970s, we find the main "findings" in relation to the USA - there are many articles in the newspaper saturated with anti-Western, propagandistic narratives, which, in fact, try to highlight the role of the USA in relation to all contemporary issues and to discuss the main defining elements of statehood in a negative context, and then to provide the reader with a kind of analysis created by his own interpretation.

The newspaper is particularly notable for its tendency to accuse the US of racism. A number of articles are dedicated to the discussion of events related to racist acts, which have direct evaluative elements related to usurping the conceptual attitude of the US judicial system to human rights.

In one of the blocks of January 9, 1977 – “And this is your Free World: Where Capital Reigns” - was published an article titled "Victims of Racism", which discusses the fate of ten young persons of color from Wilmington, North Carolina, who were arrested during a campaign against racial segregation in high schools and whose imprisonment is considered illegal by the author of the article. The article mentioned that the numerous participants of the rally held in defense of the "Wilmington Ten" demanded the annulment of the illegal sentence. To illustrate this, a photo was published depicting Pastor Benjamin Chavez (one of the activists) holding A. Beale's statement in which he admitted that by bribing the government, he had discredited the activists of color. On May 22, 1977, the decision of the Wilmington Ten court session was published, according to which the court did not satisfy the lawyers' request for a new trial. The article reads: *"The shameful decision was made despite the fact that all three main witnesses of the "accusation", based on the "testimony" of whom the "Ten" were found guilty, declared at the court in the city of Bergamo that they gave false testimony under the influence of the authorities."*

The propaganda against Western countries, mainly the USA, is characterized by interesting narratives with regard to unemployment: for example, the industrial states of the North are emptying and the population is migrating to the less developed South; there were 2,263 strikes in London during 1975. In the case of Britain, "Communist" wrote on August 3, 1976, that only $\frac{1}{3}$ of the several thousand students in London will be able to enter higher education, and the rest will join the army of one and a half million unemployed. According to a 1979 article - Victim of the Computer - an American girl was fired from the post office because they installed postal

computers and didn't need people anymore. The latter narrative is based on attempts of delegitimization of technological development and tries to transform the tone of its content from positive to negative.

It is noteworthy that the newspaper "Communist" reported the economic situation of the USA in multiple issues and developed the leitmotif of positioning it as being in crisis while discussing specific economic issues, including in the article published on February 6, 1977 (No. 31 (17109)), titled "Legislators Criticize", which talked about the economic stimulus program developed by the United States government: *"The US Congress faced significant opposition. This program is an attempt to pull the American economy out of the deepest and longest crisis in the past 40 years."*

"Communist" actively promoted the ideas of the decline in the US population, rampant unemployment, and deteriorating living conditions. For example, in the news column "Population Declines" of January 12, 1977 (#9 (17087)), we find a discussion of the deteriorating demographic situation of the capital of the United States of America, according to which, compared to 1970, the number of residents of Washington decreased by 7.3 per cent and amounted to 702 thousand. "Communist" cites the United States Census Bureau as the source of this information and notes: "The main reasons for such a situation are unemployment, the lack of public transportation, a high level of crime, and the continuous deterioration of living conditions."

Thus, like today, the Soviet portrait of the West is one of instability, chaos, and inhumanity.



"Communist" newspaper, November 14, 1976, No. 269 (17040)

On the other hand, pieces were published that presented the Soviet Union in a positive light and gave its participation in the economy of Western countries an important role. For example, according to an article from "Communist" dated February 1, 1976 (No. 27 (16798)), the US Minister of Finance called for the restoration of trade relations with the Soviet Union during his speech to Congress. And according to "Communist" (No. 39 (16810)) on February 17 of the same year, the former ambassador to the USSR, Averell Harriman, issued a similar call.

The newspaper paid special attention to the Kennedys' younger brother, Senator Edward (Ted) Kennedy, and his efforts to settle relations with Moscow. From time to time the magazine was publishing information by Kennedy and articles that always presented him in a positive light. It is interesting that in 1991, following the decision of Boris Yeltsin to open the Soviet archives, which were soon closed, some documents²¹ leaked, according to which Kennedy had direct contact with Chebrikov, the head of the KGB in 1982-1988, and through him, Kennedy communicated with the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the USSR, Yuri Andropov.²²

In addition to American politicians, during these years the newspaper mentioned with sympathy the politicians representing leftist political systems and the course they took in their own countries. Of course, the role of the communist parties was also glorified. Attention was mainly given to the left-wing authoritarian rulers of various countries, although, for example, the newspaper "was merciful" to Argentinian dictator Jorge Rafael Videla, who, despite his right-wing course and anti-communism, had good relations with the Soviet Union.

While mentioning some countries in a positive context, we come across contradictory articles as well. For example, in "Communist" (No. 81 (10780)) of April 5, 1980, in the column authored by V. Solomin, there were two articles "Doctors of Sao Paulo" that discussed how baboons, tigers, lions brought from the zoo of the city are treated at one of the hospitals; How the turtle's armour damaged by the crocodile was glued together so well, etc. The second article of the same column, "They are cutting down the Amazon jungle", refers to the unsystematic deforestation and exploitation of the "lungs of the world", the Amazon jungle, by American business corporations.

²¹ For more see:

<https://www.forbes.com/2009/08/27/ted-kennedy-soviet-union-ronald-reagan-opinions-columnists-peter-robinson.html?sh=3f9a2413359a>

²² Forbes. "Ted Kennedy's Soviet Gambit." Accessed December 13, 2022.

<https://www.forbes.com/2009/08/27/ted-kennedy-soviet-union-ronald-reagan-opinions-columnists-peter-robinson.html>.

Thus, the representation of the West, if it was even done in a positive context, still served to confirm the fairness of Soviet policy.

The news column of "Communist" of January 14, 1976 (No. 11 (16782)), "Assisting Interventionists" contained talk about the coup attempt in Angola. It said that *"Patriotic forces have seized 8 arsenals of weapons... these weapons have been obtained from the People's Republic of China, as well as from the United States of America and other Western countries. Some of the boxes were marked "NATO"*. There is similar information in the newspaper of February 4 of the same year (No. 29 (16800)) - "NATO is getting ready", which discussed NATO's involvement in the Angolan civil war.

The portrayal of the Western world as a divisive and conflict-promoting force was characteristic of the Soviet press of the 1970s.

The actions of the anti-Soviet people who emigrated from the Soviet Union did not go unnoticed by Soviet propaganda. "Communist" March 24, 1976 (No. 69 (16840)) information concerned the "Anti-Soviet tramp" Alexander Solzhenitsyn and his interview on Central Television in Madrid. According to the newspaper, he was justifying the execution of the Basques and the dictatorship. Here, "Communist" asked a rhetorical question about Solzhenitsyn's mental health and in this way tried to delegitimize his future statements.

Since the 1950s, after the warming policy carried out by Khrushchev, the scale of repression of the Stalin era decreased and the forms changed, although another one of the severe forms of repression - forced treatment in a psychiatric institution - was gradually established in the Soviet Union. Propaganda described this issue in an ironic way. The article of "Communist" of June 1, 1976 (No. 127 (16898)) - "Here's what the Italian magazine writes" referred to the people sentenced to treatment in a forced psychiatric institution in the Soviet Union. These people are Alexander Yesenin-Volpin (who spent 14 years in psychiatric institutions of the Soviet Union), Titov, and Tarsis, who after emigrating abroad, again ended up in a psychiatric institution. These individuals raised their voices after emigration, and the Soviet Union tried in every way to discredit them and portray them as mentally ill. For example, there is a document²³ about Valery Yakovlevich Tarsis in the archive of Vladimir Bukovsky, which clearly states that the KGB continues to take measures abroad to present Tarsis as a mentally ill person.²⁴

²³ The dissident Vladimir Bukovsky (1942-2019), who after the collapse of the Soviet Union, was briefly allowed into the former secret archives in the spring-summer of 1992, photographed on a Japanese portable computer scanner and secretly brought out top-secret documents. Today, as recognized by Western scientific circles, these documents are as valid as the originals.

²⁴ archival document: О мерах в связи с антисоветскими материалами в английской печати (Тарсиса): Решение Президиума ЦК КПСС № 238/132 от 8 апреля 1966 по записке Николая Степановича

In addition, in the biographies of the above-mentioned persons available to us, there are no indications that they underwent treatment in psychiatric institutions abroad.

As in other years, armaments, NATO, and other similar issues were discussed under the auspices of anti-Western propaganda. In the January 12, 1977, issue of "Communist" (No. 9 (17087)), in the article "Generals sound the alarm", we find an analysis of the changes made by the United States of America in relation to the budget in 1977 in order to improve the military system, according to which the military budget amounted to 113 billion, and it was expected that this funding, with the involvement of high-ranking military officials, would increase to 125-130 billion dollars by the following year. In this regard, the author of the article wrote: "And against the background of all this, the noisy campaign in the United States of America because of the mythical "military threat" from the side of the Soviet Union looks really hypocritical."

The article also discussed the interview given by the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the NATO United Armed Forces stationed in Europe, American General A. Haig, to the magazine "I. S. News and World Report" in which, according to "Communist", Haig *"indiscriminately accused the countries of the Warsaw Pact Organization of allegedly increasing their military potential, and he said that "this will give them the opportunity to go on offensive operations in a short period of time." **NATO will collapse, he threatens the United States and its allies in the North Atlantic bloc, "if we do not respond to the growth of the Soviet Union's military power in Western Europe."***

The mentioned article simultaneously emphasized the bias of the French press agency covering the material as well: *"The fact that General Haig is trying to scare NATO countries and conjure up the "Soviet threat" is not at all surprising. What can he do, he is a NATO general. Truly surprising is that the French press agency acted as the popularizer of Haig's statements. Not only did it ask Haig for an interview about Pentagon's favorite topic, but it also distributed the interview to its subscribers under the note "material in our column on the Soviet threat to Western Europe"...*

Through the Soviet press, the danger of the creation of new types of weapons by the USA was actively propagated in order to convince the public that this was a real threat to the Soviet Union. In the issue of April 6, 1977 (No. 80 (17158)), the article "Breach of Commitment" states that *"as "the Los Angeles Times" reports, the Pentagon has introduced to the United States Congress a program to create a means of destroying 'enemy satellites'." In the next five years,*

Захарова и Романа Андреевича Руденко от 14 февраля 1966 и записке Андрея Андреевича Громыко от 5 апреля 1966

the plan is to create an interceptor that will be able to "shoot down" a Soviet satellite from orbit."

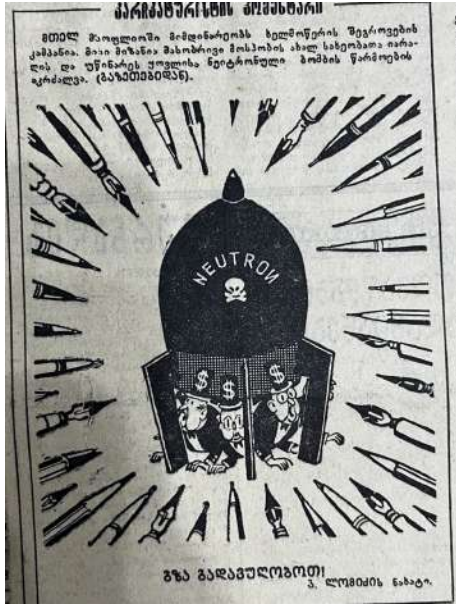
The August 7, 1977 issue (#183 (17261)) focuses on the US's development of a neutron bomb. The article "The Neutron Bomb Must Be Banned" reads: *"The world community, protesting against the Pentagon's criminal plans to begin production of new types of weapons of mass destruction, at the same time expresses serious concern that the implementation of these plans will undoubtedly result in a series of far-reaching negative foreign-political consequences.*

...when American propaganda preaches the false idea that the neutron bomb is "fundamentally different from atomic weapons", it creates the conditions to psychologically facilitate the use of the neutron bomb, which is actually only a kind of nuclear weapon."



"Communist" newspaper, August 7, 1977, No. 183 (17261)

Several cartoons from 1978 newspapers are devoted to the topic of the neutron bomb.



"Communist", January 13, 1978, No. 11 (17393)



"Communist" newspaper, January 8, 1978, No. 7 (17389)



"Communist" newspaper, January 28, 1978, No. 24 (17406)

The "Communist" called the crisis background of the then-current political or economic processes and the attempts to solve the emerging problems the "illusory unity" of Western countries. A clear example of this is the article "When there is no agreement" published in the issue of February 3, 1977 (No. 28 (17106)), in which the meeting of the foreign ministers of the member countries of the "Common Market" that ended before the deadline, which was supposed to discuss the relations of the European Economic Union with the United States of America after the election of a new president. The newspaper reads: *"It is noted in local circles that the ministers, who deliberated in a closed hall, refused to discuss a number of issues in order to avoid the aggravation of disagreements and to maintain an ostensible unity."*

In "Communist" (No. 43 (17121)) of February 20, 1977, in the column - world news, facts, problems - we find a discussion about the visit of the ambassador of the USSR to the United States of America, A. T. Dobrynin, to Acting State Secretary, A. Harriman. The title of the article is "Meddling in other people's affairs is intolerable". The mentioned article talks about Dobrynin's reaction to the statements and actions of Harriman, who, as the author notes, did not agree with the goals of the positive development of Soviet Union-American relations. According to the ambassador of the USSR: *"The Soviet side cannot reconcile with attempts to interfere in its domestic affairs, in matters that are within the domestic competence of the states, under the flimsy pretext of "human rights protection".*

The article also talks about the factors determining the future peaceful coexistence of the Soviet Union and the United States of America: *"The peaceful coexistence and constructive cooperation of the USSR and the United States of America for the interests of both peoples can only develop fruitfully when it is based on mutual respect for the principles of sovereignty and non-interference in domestic affairs, as stated in the founding documents of the Soviet Union and the USA"*.



"Communist" newspaper, 1977, April 3, N78 (16815)

On the pages of "Communist", we also find attempts to accuse others of anti-Soviet propaganda actions. These, as always, were mainly aimed at the USA and in some cases at European or Asian countries. The article "Provocative Exhibition" published in the issue of March 8, 1977 (No. 56 (17134)), reads: *"A provocative anti-Soviet exhibition has been opened in the Library of Congress in connection with the uproar that is now raging in the United States of America over the question of the violation of so-called "civil rights" in socialist countries. A brochure is distributed at the exhibition that contains anti-Soviet trending rumors. In this regard, the Embassy of the USSR in Washington drew the attention of the US Department of State to the fact that such an exhibition organized by an official American organization is against the goals of improving relations between the two countries, as well as the form and content of the Helsinki Agreement."*

The cartoon published in the issue of March 12, 1977 (No. 59 (17137)) can be considered as a continuation of the above-mentioned narrative, as it is dedicated to ascertaining the role of England in anti-Soviet propaganda. In the description of the caricature we, read: *"The English bourgeois press is trying to present the Strasbourg trial on the violation of human rights by the*

English authorities in Ulster as a simple "dispute" between two states. At the same time, it dedicated dozens of papers to a thousand types of rumors about the Soviet Union".



"Communist" newspaper, March 12, 1977, N59 (16796)

The "Communist" of 1977 focuses its attention on the developments in the Middle East, specifically on the Israeli conflicts. And the United States of America is accused of standing in the way of resolving these conflicts. The article "Plans of the Occupiers", dated October 16 (No. 243 (17321)), discusses the statement of Israeli Foreign Minister M. Dayan *"which reaffirmed Tel Aviv's desire to continue the occupation of the territories seized in 1967 ... he expressed the firm intention of the Israeli authorities to maintain occupation forces on the West Bank of the Jordan River. The Israeli minister stressed that the authorities of Tel Aviv will never agree to create an independent Arab state of Palestine."*

In the issue of March 18, 1977 (No. 64 (17142)), the article "Incitement to Annexation" talked about the Israeli Prime Minister I. Rabin's statement at the Knesset session about his visit to the USA and negotiations with President J. Carter. According to the article, Rabin said that Carter emphasized the difference between Israel's political borders and defensive borders. The author notes: *"What Israel's "defensive borders" mean is best evidenced by the activities of the occupiers in the captured Arab territories. Today, these "borders" are drawn not with ink on the map, but with embrasures of military fortifications, asphalt of strategic roads, concrete blocks of paramilitary settlements on the West Bank of the Jordan River, the Sinai Peninsula, and the Golan Heights. The territory that Tel Aviv wants to turn into "de facto" Israeli territory as part of the "insignificant change" of the 1976 borders, which is being planned in the United States, it seems, is not intended to be returned to the Arabs."*

The majority of articles directed against Israel simultaneously highlighted the role of the US. In the March 17, 1977, issue of "Communist" (No. 63 (17141)), a caricature was published under the title "Aggression Facilitator", in the description of which we read: *"Encouraged by Washington's support, the Prime Minister of Israel said that he will not make concessions on key issues and hopes to achieve progress in settling the Middle East problem this year. He called it "unrealistic" (from the newspapers)."*



"Communist" newspaper, March 17, 1977, No. 63 (17141)

In relation to the key themes of "Communist" of 1977, it is worth noting that the political, economic, demographic, military, or war agenda of the USA, Japan, China, Germany, France, Italy, Israel, Middle East, various African countries, etc., are used as the main topics. However, 90% of newspaper issues are in fact devoted to coverage of current US actions or future plans.

The coverage of the Middle East news was actively continued in the following years in the context of the Israel-Egypt conflict. The support of Israel by the USA was denounced, and "Communist" called Egypt's attempts to normalize relations with Israel were an anti-Arab conspiracy and separatism. The emphasis on these countries is especially focused in early 1978, in the issue of January 6 (#5 (17387)) talking about President Carter's visit to the Middle East, with the column titled "The Anti-Arab Conspiracy."

Exactly the same pathos was felt in the editions of the following months. The situation, for obvious reasons, changed in September, when a peace agreement was signed between the two countries at Camp David. In the issue of September 21 (#222 (17604)), for the first time, in an

evaluation of the Israeli-Egyptian peace agreement, the "Communist" perceives it as a threat and calls it the "dangerous alliance" of the USA, Israel, Egypt, and Iran, directed against the Arab world and the Soviet Union.

Criticism of capitalism ("sick" American currency) due to the fluctuations of the American currency continued actively, with America being blamed for unemployment in Europe. Such a fluctuating exchange rate was expected because it was the so-called period after the end of the "Golden Age of Capitalism"²⁵ - the world went through a great recession in 1973-75²⁶, and this explained the current unemployment. This was not a lie, but it was a manipulation and misrepresentation of information.



"Communist" newspaper, January 10, 1978, No. 8 (17390)

The US is often criticized for interfering in the domestic affairs of other countries. However, the information is presented in such a way as to create the implication that these countries are worried about it and they actually do not want the help of the West. In fact, the sources cited are quotes from the Communist Party in these countries, which naturally support Soviet policies. In the January 20, 1978, issue of "Communist" (No. 17 (17399)), for example, the words of an Italian communist politician are cited, in which he criticizes the US for interfering in Italy's internal affairs. A Communist politician condemns the State Department's statement - that the Communist participation in the governments of Italy and Western countries is "undesirable" for America. A corresponding caricature is also attached.

²⁵ For more see: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/tag/golden-age-of-capitalism/>

²⁶ For more see: <https://www.statista.com/topics/8095/the-1973-1975-recession/#topicOverview>



"Communist" newspaper, January 20, 1978, No. 17 (17399)

In rare cases, propaganda reached the field of art as well, especially concerning works depicting the Soviet Union. One such article, "James Bond Again", dated August 28, 1979 (No. 200 (17883)), talked about the eleventh film, Moonraker (or as the newspaper called it, "Lunatic Tramp"), about which the author wrote: "It has been 17 years since "Dr. No" came out - the first film in the series based on the books of former British agent Ian Fleming. 17 years later, James Bond, who hasn't aged at all, is just as dapper in this world, completing seemingly impossible tasks. The ancient ruins of Athens and the azure sea of the Caribbean, the mountains of Japan and the Amazonian jungle... are just a few of those many places where he has been in search of the vilest enemies of "true civilization", who are traditionally either deranged and fantastically rich maniacs intent on subjugating the world, or... "agents of the Kremlin"."

It is not surprising that art often became a political weapon, and the leaders of the Soviet Union understood this well. And in the 1970s, when the interest in Western culture and art was growing, the Soviet media tried to discredit elements of culture partially seen through the Iron Curtain.

Sports were also a hot topic for propaganda, especially in light of the 1980 Moscow Olympics and the boycott by about 70 countries that refused to participate in the Olympics because of the Soviet Union's war in Afghanistan.



"Communist" newspaper, April 4, 1980, No. 79 (18062)

Since 1980, the main narrative of the propaganda campaign has been the war in Afghanistan, which the Soviet Union launched on December 25, 1979. During this period, information about the military budgets of America and the West increased in the number, as well as topics like "hidden" armaments. The Soviet Union, despite the active war, still maintained its "peacekeeper status". In an interview published in "Communist" (No. 82 (18065)) on April 8, 1980 (translated from the French newspaper "Lumanite"), Babrak Karmali²⁷ emphasizes that the limited contingent of the Soviet Union will leave the country after the US and China stop training terrorists in Pakistan.

Transformation of Soviet Propaganda and Modern Propaganda Narratives

Lenin and the Bolsheviks envisioned themselves in the role of a kind of "gendarme" of the world until they came to power. Lenin's doctrine about the presence of Bolsheviks in the vanguard of the world's socialism and the slogan "Proletarians of all countries, unite!" clearly expressed this idea.²⁸

In this regard, modern Russian propaganda is no longer a defender of socialism, although it constantly emphasizes its own special role for the protection of various values, be it Christianity/spirituality, family, or other associated concepts. To this purpose, since the 2000s,

²⁷ Babrak Karmali (1929-1996) - with the help of the KGB of the Soviet Union of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, after the assassination and coup d'état of the president, Hafizullah Amin (1929-1979), came as a head of the so-called proxy government, as a chairman of the "Revolutionary Council".

²⁸ Service, Robert, and Robert Service. *A History of Modern Russia: From Tsarism to the Twenty-First Century*. 3rd ed. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2009.

the concept²⁹ of Русский мир [Russian World/Peace] is being actively propagated. The concept considers former Soviet and Eastern European countries to be under Russian influence while envisaging the right to intervene for Russia in case the mentioned countries attempt to follow a foreign policy path unacceptable to Russia.

Within Russia itself, the concept of Русский мир emphasizes the distinctiveness of Russian civilization as the last bastion of traditional values and Christianity. A fund with the same name was established on June 21, 2007, based on the order of the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, and has a number of partners³⁰ in Georgia as well.

The name of the concept and foundation is interesting insofar as it can be translated in two ways: Russian world and Russian peace (Pax Russica).

According to Stephen Kotkin³¹, Russia believes that it carries a "special place" or a "special mission" in the world and considers itself not a separate country, but a different civilization. The mentioned narrative in modern Russia, we can assume, is an influence of the politics of the Cold War period, since modern Russia is the primary successor state of the Soviet Union. Consequently, Russia tries to dictate its own agenda on a global scale, although its capabilities nearly never match its ambitions.³²

Another common motif of communist propaganda preached that the Soviet Union was a peaceful space. For example, the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, by which Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union effectively split Poland in two and triggered the outbreak of World War II, was recognized as a step towards world peace.³³

It is important to take into account that the secret clauses of the mentioned pact became public only after the collapse of the Soviet Union. In recent years, Russian officials and state-controlled media have been conducting a long-term information operation, the main tactic of which is to change the context and association of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and equate it with the anti-aggression agreements signed by other European states with Nazi Germany (e.g. the Munich Agreement).³⁴

²⁹ For more, visit:

http://mdfgeorgia.ge/uploads/library/117/file/%E2%80%99Crusuli_samyaro%E2%80%9D_saqarTveloSi.pdf

³⁰ http://www.damoukidebloba.ge/c/news/rusuli_fondebi_saqartveloshi

³¹ For more, visit: <https://www.newyorker.com/news/q-and-a/stephen-kotkin-putin-russia-ukraine-stalin>

³² "A Scholar of Stalin Discusses Putin, Russia, Ukraine, and the West | The New Yorker." Accessed December 13, 2022. <https://www.newyorker.com/news/q-and-a/stephen-kotkin-putin-russia-ukraine-stalin>.

³³ Anthony Rhodes, Propaganda: The art of persuasion: World War II, Chelsea House Publishers, New York, 1976, p.216-217.

³⁴ More resources: 1-

<https://uacrisis.org/en/blast-from-the-past-how-russian-propaganda-revises-historical-role-of-the-molotov-ribsentrop-pact>

2-

Modern Russia is often the author of a false dilemma offered to the countries of the post-Soviet space. This pseudo-dilemma contrasts with each other the ideas of peace and freedom, where peace is equalized with staying under the influence of Russia. Naturally, such a policy is based on the aim of expanding Russia's power and the aspiration to influence Eastern European and post-Soviet states.

The invasion in Ukraine is also an echo of the above-described politics. Russian propaganda presents Russia's renewed war in Ukraine as a "special operation" to de-Nazify Ukraine and ensure peace. Before the intervention, Russia used various steps to prepare the grounds for the intervention, although all the steps were cloaked with the concept of "peace". For example, since Euromaidan in Ukraine, Russia's main disinformation narrative against Ukraine is that Ukraine is aggressive and oppresses the residents of Donbas. On February 18, 2022, the self-proclaimed, Russian-backed leaders of Luhansk and Donbas announced the evacuation of local civilians to Russia. The evacuation, based on the "aggressive Ukraine" narrative, was followed by Putin's recognition³⁵ of Donbas on February 22. Although the recognition of Donbas was a gross violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as the norms of international law, Russian officials say that the recognition was necessary to ensure peace. On February 24, Russia launched a "peacekeeping operation" that is in reality a full-fledged aggressive war on the territory of Ukraine.

In contrary, on March 10, 2022, two weeks after Russia's intervention in Ukraine, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said³⁶ that Russia did not attack Ukraine, but, to the contrary, Ukraine had created a situation threatening Russia. Likewise, the spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Maria Zakharova, stated³⁷ on March 17 that "Russia does not bomb cities".

This is a well-rehearsed Russian disinformation tactic - to shift the blame to the opponent. By maintaining the image of a peacemaker, Russia is trying to avoid responsibility and place the blame on the victims of aggression themselves.

As in the 70s, modern Russia is actively³⁸ spreading information about various types of conspiracy theories concerning biological weapons, the use of animals for military purposes,

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/aug/23/moscow-campaign-to-justify-molotov-ribbentrop-pact-sparks-outrage>

³⁵ For more see:

<https://iz.ru/1295022/2022-02-22/gosduma-22-fevralia-ratifikiruet-priznanie-nezavisimosti-lnr-i-dnr>

³⁶ For more see:

<https://www.euronews.com/2022/03/10/ukraine-war-russia-did-not-attack-ukraine-says-lavrov-after-meeting-kuleba>

³⁷ For more see: <https://twitter.com/iameurmishvili/status/1504416003396194308>

³⁸ For more see: <https://bit.ly/3gxOGwe>

tests conducted on the military, etc. Such theories have become significantly more active and widespread after the war in Ukraine.

Since February 2022, Russian official propaganda media have been actively spreading disinformation about US military testing. The opposition media - Настоящее Время - stated that the source of most of the information is the Bulgarian journalist Dilyana Gaitanjieva. They spread unsubstantiated information through the website - dilyana.bg - where she allegedly substantiates such opinions by exhibiting "leaked documents". Gaitanjieva became involved in a scandal years ago after talking about the shipment of weapons to terrorists by Azerbaijani diplomats in one of the stories. The National Security Service of Bulgaria found out that this information was so-called "fake", following which the journalist was fired.³⁹

In recent years, there has been an orchestrated attack on American laboratories opened in the post-Soviet space. In Georgia, the Lugar laboratory is constantly under attack by the authors of disinformation. It is significant that the above-mentioned Bulgarian journalist Gaitanjieva disseminated information about the Lugar laboratory most frequently.⁴⁰

Similar to contemporary trends, in the news column of January 14, 1976 - "Secrets brought to light", the "Conflict Study Institute" was discussed, which, according to the "Communist", was created with the support of the American Central Intelligence Agency and was interfering in the domestic affairs of European countries.

The founder and director of the organization was Brian Rossiter Crozier, a journalist and activist of the anti-communist movement who wrote for Reuters and The Economist, was an editor of The Sunday Times, and a BBC commentator. He worked in fairly high circles of the government and provided many writings on the threats coming from communism.⁴¹

The activities of the organization itself were transparent, with the organization regularly publishing financial income reports during the years of 1970-1989.⁴²

As a rule, Western-backed organizations operate transparently in terms of their goals and activities. On the other hand, similar organizations funded by Russia, operating in the scope of the Russian soft power internationally, practically never publish financial reports. IDFI has devoted attention to this trend within the comprehensive study published in 2015.⁴³

³⁹ More information on case:

<https://www.currenttime.tv/a/another-fake-od-russian-propaganda-debunked/31672434.html>

⁴⁰ More on: https://idfi.ge/ge/russian_information_war_against_lugar_laboratory

⁴¹ Further on the issue: <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2012/aug/09/brian-crozier>

⁴² See the link: https://powerbase.info/index.php/Institute_for_the_Study_of_Conflict

⁴³ The study is available at:

<http://www.damoukidebloba.ge/assets/up-modul/uploads/pdf/rusuli%20gavlena%20media%20da%20NGO-1.pdf>

Conclusion

In the Soviet Union, many narratives and visualizations were created about the situation behind the "Iron Curtain" and the image of the West, which were then spread through large-scale press. Despite the diversity of the narratives, their content and the main message were unambiguous - life in the West is worse than in the Soviet Union.

The above-mentioned Manichean approach manifested itself in different forms. Firstly, the narrative representing the West as an unstable space with a vulnerable economy and general chaos was perhaps the most widespread. Economic hardship and the failure of the capitalist system in general were most frequently discussed across the pages of the "Communist" newspaper. In addition, the environmental situation and corresponding politics in the West became a tool of disinformation and negative framing.

On top of the somewhat material and tangible issues of everyday life, one could also encounter an evaluation of Western democracy standards on the pages of the press. From the perspective of the Soviet Union, Western democracy was painted as inferior, with limited women's rights and curtailed freedom of speech. The "Communist" often talked about the disintegration of the West, the difficulties of forming a unified opinion or policy amongst Western countries.

It should also be noted here that, despite the declared unstable socio-economic or democratic system, the editors of "Communist" often referred to "Western" sources in order to give more legitimacy to their own narratives. In itself, it is an interesting fact that even in modern times the Western democratic standard is criticized and approved at the same time depending on how it resonates with the Russian narrative and politics.

The roots of modern anti-Western ideas can also be observed in the description of Western lifestyles in the Soviet press of the 1970s. The Soviet propaganda unequivocally linked the Western lifestyle to drug addiction, violence, and racism, with particular emphasis on the latter. Propaganda portrayed the youngest American generation as people addicted to drugs, far from any type of a healthy lifestyle.

As in the modern international politics and (pro-)Russian media, the West was portrayed to have a double face in the 1970s as well. The second, positive face appeared in the narratives of

the Soviet press only when it could be used as a proof of the legitimacy of Soviet policy. In the modern world, Russian politics is often characterized by a friendly attitude towards "anti-Western" forces that belong to the West (e.g. Western far-right).

Finally, according to the Soviet narrative, a friendly attitude towards the West was impeded by the latter's tendency to interfere in the "internal affairs of the Soviet Union." Nowadays, the continuation of the mentioned narrative can be seen in Russia's attitudes towards the countries of the post-Soviet space and their free choice after the end of the Cold War.