



Soviet Influence Activities:

A Report on Active Measures and Propaganda, 1986 - 87

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Front Groups in the United States

One of the most important Soviet active measures in the United States is the use of front groups-particularly the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship (NCASF) and the United States Peace Council (USPQ). These organizations are largely financed and controlled by the Soviet Union, and their activities are principally directed against the policies of the United States and other NATO countries. They attempt to obscure ties with the U.S.S.R. to avoid having to register with the U.S. Government under the Foreign Agents Registration Act and to maintain a facade of independence. NCASF, originally formed in 1943 by the CPUSA, currently consists of approximately 25 active chapters in the United States. Plans call for at least one chapter

in each of the 50 states.

Soviet direction of NCASF is channeled through the Union of Soviet Societies for Friendship and Cultural Relations With Foreign Countries (SOD), under the authority of the International Department. Soviet representatives of SOD, who are in regular contact with NCASF officials, direct some NCASF activities in support of Soviet active measures campaigns. Certain KGB agents are assigned to maintain contact with key NCASF officials.

The publicly stated purpose of NCASF is to promote friendship and understanding between Soviets and Americans through cultural, educational, and travel exchange programs. While these goals may be met, NCASF also provides the Soviets with an excellent conduit to promote active measures campaigns, meet with influential Americans, spot and assess Americans for recruitment, and influence organizations within the U.S. peace movement.

Additionally, NCASF sponsored Goodwill Tours enable KGB personnel to travel to various American cities where they previously had limited access or to travel in areas closed to Soviet diplomats in the U.S. During 1986, NCASF sponsored a number of Soviet visitors who supported existing active measures operations. Two such events, designed to influence the nuclear disarmament movement, were the Mississippi Peace Cruise and the signing of the Peoples Peace Appeal at the United Nations.

The Mississippi Peace Cruise, which took place in

the summer of 1986, was an eight-day steamboat cruise from St. Paul, Minnesota, to St. Louis, Missouri. It was modeled on seven previous Soviet peace cruises down the Volga River in which Americans participated. The Soviet Peace Committee (also called the Soviet Committee for the Defense of Peace) carefully selected the Soviet participants. Although the Peace Appeal was portrayed by the cruise organizers as having been drafted while on the cruise, several individuals, including retired Soviet Lt. Gen. Mikhail Milshteyn, had drafted the Peoples Peace Appeal several months earlier in Moscow.

The deception regarding when, where, and by whom the appeal was drafted, coupled with its intent to manipulate U.S. public opinion, distinguishes the appeal from simple propaganda and makes it an active measure. Likewise, the fact that the cruise was conceived by the Kremlin, staged with Soviet support, and involved Soviet front-group activity-all the while purporting to be a genuine grassroots peoples movement-marks it as an active measure. . . .

Although the Peace Appeal did not receive much support from various U.S. organizations in 1986, thus far it has in 1987 received the endorsement of several large national organizations, religious groups, trade unions, and elected officials. In February 1987, NCASF claimed to have received a total of more than 200,000 signatures.

The Peoples Peace Appeal is perhaps the best example of a political influence operation run by front organizations in the U.S. and directed by the Soviet

Peace Committee in Moscow. Some of these front organizations have already been directed to send photocopies of the signatures collected for the Peoples Peace Appeal to U.S. Congressmen. The CPUSA and some international Soviet front organizations with affiliated chapters in the U.S. have asked their members to send preaddressed postcards to the President of the United States and to Members of Congress. . . .

The Peoples Peace Appeal

The United States Campaign for a Peoples Peace Treaty and the Soviet Peace Committee undertook a joint project to collect millions of signatures in the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. on a peace petition-the Peoples Appeal for Peace. The petition is endorsed and supported by several organizations, including front groups discussed elsewhere in this report-the Christian Peace Conference, the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, and the U.S. Peace Council. The text of the petition is as follows:

Whereas the nuclear arms race brings the world closer to war, and both President Reagan and Secretary-General Gorbachev have declared, Nuclear war cannot be won and must not be fought, and

Whereas the destructive power of nuclear weapons makes war suicidal and war is no longer a means of settling international disputes, and

Whereas strict observance of existing arms control agreements (such as SALT 11 and ABM) and new practical steps to limit and reverse the arms race are urgently

required, and

Whereas development and deployment of space-based weapons would be a mortally dangerous escalation of the arms race,

Now, therefore, We the people of the United States and the Soviet Union, in order to advance peaceful relations between our peoples and improve the security of our countries and of the peoples of the entire world urge

- A verifiable comprehensive nuclear test ban.
- A freeze, phased reduction and eventual elimination of all nuclear, chemical and biological weapons
- A transfer of resources from military to human needs
- An increase of people to people contact.