

August 16, 1962

**Memorandum from Robert L. Tuck, 'Policy Paper on
Tone'**

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Summary:

Radio Liberty policy advisor Tuck circulates a draft Policy Position Statement:
Radio liberty's Task and Tone

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AMCONFIDENTIAL

August 16, 1962

MEMORANDUM

22 AUG 1962

(34)

FROM: Policy Adviser

SUBJECT: Policy Paper on Tone

Attached is a draft policy paper on tone, which is intended to encourage a more constructive and friendly approach by all writers. Please study it carefully and give me your reactions and comments, as to its practicality and real usefulness. Please write in any suggestions or specific wording which you feel would improve it.

I would like to have the draft returned by September 1, after which a revised version will be translated for consideration by the Council of Editors.

RLT
Robert L. Tuck

RLT:AdW
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RADIO LIBERTY

Policy Position Statement

RADIO LIBERTY'S TASK AND TONE

22 AUG 1962

Today's Challenge: Radio Liberty and its Audience

Radio Liberty has never had more opportunities nor faced a greater challenge than it does at the present time. The growing unity and resolve of the Free World and the increasingly serious problems within the "socialist camp" are facts which Communist leaders and propagandists cannot dismiss, facts which raise increasing doubts all over the world as to the validity of the new CPSU Program's reassertion of the "historical inevitability of the world victory of Communism." Inside the USSR the political and social ferment encouraged by Khrushchev's second attempt at overt de-Stalinization is affecting all areas of Soviet life. Economic difficulties in agriculture, price increases, and continuing shortages of food and basic consumer necessities are in deep contrast with the increasing well-being of all the peoples of Western Europe and North America, and the lot of many kolхозniks in the USSR today continues to be as wretched as that of the peoples of several of the so-called less developed countries. The rising tide of nationalism among former colonial peoples who have been given the right of self-determination by their former colonial rulers is also affecting the nationalities inside the USSR which is a source of continuing concern to the Soviet leadership.

The over-all world situation and the serious internal problems of the Soviet regime provide Radio Liberty with unprecedented opportunities for fulfillment of its mission. Radio Liberty's mission is to help the peoples of the USSR to replace the present Soviet system of totalitarian dictatorship run by and for a small oligarchy and its omnipresent, tightly organized apparatus with a form of government directly representative of and responsive to the will and purpose of all the peoples and individuals

beyond those listeners who already oppose the Soviet regime. We must work more actively to appeal to three other broad categories of listeners to broadcasts prepared for them by the various desks of Radio Liberty, Russian and non-Russian.

1. Category One -- the apathetic -- includes the large number of Soviet citizens who listen to Radio Liberty because Radio Liberty expresses attitudes which such listeners feel but are unable to voice themselves while living under a Communist dictatorship. Among these listeners are people who have suffered directly or indirectly from the Stalinist terror; people who still experience political or religious oppression; the many who, if not in poverty, suffer from the economic restrictions and limitations brought about by the bureaucratic failures of the completely centralized "planned economy." Many members of the various nationalities are in this category. People in this group of listeners are depressed and/or frustrated by the lack of basic human freedom in the Soviet system and have become apathetic. They see little or no hope for the future, and cannot think in terms of taking any initiative in changing the Soviet system in their own interest.
2. A second category -- the patriots -- consists of those people who are basically patriotic and loyal to the regime because they feel they have done well under the Soviet system and also because they have been subjected to a steady diet of regime propaganda and have had little opportunity or inclination to become informed about the outside world. They tend to accept the regime image of Radio Liberty as well as of other Western radio stations. Many people in this category, however, are likely to listen to Radio Liberty, by accident or out of curiosity, and could be won over by a friendly tone which indicates it is speaking to and for them, the peoples living within the USSR, and not simply against the Soviet system and regime which they instinctively defend.

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3. Category Three -- the waverers -- is perhaps the largest and, from Radio Liberty's point of view, the most important sector of its audience. These are listeners who are not uncritically sympathetic to Radio Liberty but who are searching everywhere for new ideas and alternatives. They have adjusted to the Soviet system as best they could and, in the process, have contributed to and are often proud of the economic and technological accomplishments of the USSR. At the same time, they have serious reservations in their minds about many policies and actions of the Soviet regime. Many of these listeners remember the Stalinist terror and now have been shaken by two waves of official de-Stalinization. Taking advantage of the ferment and uncertainty resulting from de-Stalinization, many of them are already consciously working to change the Soviet system in their own interests -- and therefore often against the will of the party dictatorship. This category is particularly important to Radio Liberty because it includes the better educated and technically trained, the lower-level party and government officials, etc., i.e., those people who may be in a position some day to influence the policy of the regime. They also can afford better radio receivers.

All three of these categories are a challenge to Radio Liberty. The apathetic must be brought out of their apathy and given hope and encouragement in the belief that neither Communism nor the Soviet system are inevitable. The patriots of Category Two must be persuaded that Radio Liberty is not simply an anti-Communist radio station but is a friend of the Soviet citizen and is actively interested in helping him to help himself better his condition. And the waverers in Category Three must be given more of the new ideas and alternatives they are already looking for as a means to change the Soviet system in their own interest.

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Furthermore, Radio Liberty must attempt gradually to bring listeners from Categories One and Two into Category Three: Radio Liberty must encourage the apathetic listener to work more actively in his own interest so that he will be receptive to the new ideas and alternatives Radio Liberty can describe to him; it must also win the patriots away from ill-informed support of the regime to questioning of the Soviet system and receptivity to the ideas and practical alternatives which Radio Liberty has to suggest.

Objectives

By maintaining a constantly friendly tone toward its listeners and selecting relevant broadcast material,

1. To win more serious listeners to Radio Liberty;
2. To make Radio Liberty's criticism of Communism and the Soviet system more effective; and thereby
3. To help listeners more effectively to help themselves to change the Soviet system in their own interest.

Treatment

Radio Liberty cannot now soften its criticism of Communism or the Soviet system. On the contrary, Radio Liberty must make such criticism even more meaningful and effective, never being content to assert simply that Communism and the Soviet system are bad but always explaining why in concrete terms and offering constructive ideas and alternatives which Soviet listeners can adapt to their own efforts to transform the system.

An over-all friendly tone is all-important from the point of view of sharpening Radio Liberty's criticism of Soviet policy and the impact of that criticism on the listener. Radio Liberty's prime task is to win a large, loyal listenership by cultivating a tone of warm, sincere friendship for the peoples of the USSR, so that sharp, cogent Radio Liberty criticism of a particular regime policy can stimulate listeners to try to do something to bring about a change in that policy.

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The key question is not "How can Radio Liberty change the Soviet system?" but "How can Radio Liberty's listeners change the Soviet system in their own interest?" By its very nature Radio Liberty cannot engage the Soviet regime directly. Radio Liberty's task is to help its listeners in their front-line struggle by liberating them intellectually and spiritually from the regime's bondage with dynamic, not static, scripts. Radio Liberty's program must improve in content, style, and format. Above all, each writer must constantly think nastupatel'no (aggressively), searching out real present-day vulnerabilities of the Soviet regime and system which he can point out to his listeners, and offer them constructive encouragement and relevant, meaningful alternatives which they can use in their own way to weaken the regime and better their condition.

Specific approaches

In carrying out the various policy position statements and guidances of Radio Liberty, each writer will bear in mind the following questions while writing every script.

1. Which category (or categories) of listeners am I appealing to -- the "apathetic," the "patriots," or the "waverers"?
2. How does this script help listeners of the category (or categories) I am appealing to? Does it give hope to the "apathetic"? Will it win some of the "patriots" to Radio Liberty? Does it offer a constructive alternative to the "waverers"?
3. Does the tone of this script show Radio Liberty's sincere interest in and love for its listeners? Or does it show only Radio Liberty's hatred of Communism and the Soviet system?
4. Is my criticism of the regime or of Soviet policy clear-cut and specific? Is it presented in a way that enables the listener to continue to think about it, i.e., does the script end with a question the listener must continue to think about and try to answer for himself? Or does it end with a flat assertion which gives the listener no chance to think for himself, no challenge to spot the vulnerabilities of the Soviet system and find ways to exploit those.