

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

**“ACTIVE MEASURES”
OF USSR AGAINST USA:
PREFACE
TO HYBRID WAR**

Analytical report

Kyiv 2017

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Published in Ukraine. All information requests, please, address to Pyrohova, 7-a, Kyiv, 01030, Ukraine
<http://www.niss.gov.ua/>

Authors :

D. Dubov – Dr. (Political Science), Senior Research Fellow – Introduction, Chapters 1-4, Conclusions, Recommendations, Annex.

A. Barovska – PhD (Public Administration) – research concept generation, Subchapter 3.3, Conclusions, Recommendations.

T. Isakova – Introduction, Subchapter 3.1.

I. Koval – Introduction, Research concept, Chapter 4, Annex.

V. Horbulin – Doctor of Engineering Sciences, Professor, Academician of the National Academy of Ukraine – Introduction, Recommendations.

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The work is dedicated to the topic of “active measures” application by the Soviet Union against the USA during the Cold War with the aim of achieving certain geopolitical goals. “Active measures” mentioned here included dissemination of deceptive information, using the agents of influence and cover organizations, media manipulations etc. Today, very similar methods are being used in the course of the hybrid war which is waged by the Russian Federation against Ukraine. Studying the history of the USSR-U.S. standoff can help improve instruments and tools used in responding to contemporary challenges of the hybrid war.

This study has been intended for the public officers, security & defense professionals, and also for wider public.

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Well, speaking in a professional language of intelligence services I can tell you that this kind of assessment is an "active measure" by enemies of Assad. It is anti-Syrian propaganda.

From the interview of Russian President Vladimir Putin to CBS, January 2015

INTRODUCTION

As of today, Ukraine has been withstanding Russian aggression for over three years. During these three years nearly all possible means and tools of influence have been already applied against our country (apart from full-scale invasion). These tools of influence were supposed to change Ukrainian political agenda and/or get under control Ukrainian statehood as such. For this, the enemy has been applying both non-military (political, humanitarian, economic, cyber-, information and psychological) and military (crisis regulation, military intervention, strategic deployment etc.) measures. Such combination of various measures has already attributed its specific features and even got a new name – "hybrid war".

Both Ukrainian and foreign experts have already contributed a lot to generalize these experiences of counteraction and explain the operational contents of the notion "hybrid war". Back in the early 2000s already the defense analysts from Pentagon and also from the Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory noted the trends of war methods' blurring and blending. This was understood as a potential response to technological dominance of the Americans in the military field. Their forecasts were, actually confirmed in Southern Lebanon during the Second Lebanon War (2006). Thus, forecasts and hypotheses evolved in the theory (and concept) of hybrid threats¹. Three U.S. Secretaries of Defense, including the current DoD leadership, found this concept rather useful. Till now, in those circles the terms "hybrid enemy"² and "hybrid policy" are being used rather extensively (Horbulin, 2016).

With the launch of military actions in Ukraine the concept "hybrid war" has been in use more and more frequently. At the same time, this concept remains to be rather debatable and is often criticized, mainly because there is no exact paradigm approach attached to it.

Criticism mostly concerns the "novelty" side of such phenomenon as hybrid war. At first glance, this criticism is fair enough, since indeed, larger share of tools and methods used during the current hybrid war have been introduced and used extensively much earlier. At the same time, we find significant differences between the separate facts of certain methods' and/or tools' application and using the same under the conditions of specifically ongoing hybrid war.

In particular, the very capacity of a certain country (or group of countries) to use some methods or tools against the enemy does not necessarily mean that they are capable of waging hybrid wars. Obviously, only a state with a certain military and economic potential (and also, importantly, with a high specific political system which enables consolidating efforts due to strict hierarchy of decision-making) is capable of waging a war of the hybrid type. Besides, using economic pressure in such a hybrid war and/or supporting some structures of influence assume not only certain level of economic development (and thus – certain financial capacities) but also certain level of country's integration into the world economy. Otherwise, all the efforts would be of little efficiency.

¹ William. J. Nemeth, USMC, Future War and Chechnya: A Case for Hybrid Warfare, Monterey, CA: Naval Postgraduate School, Master's Thesis, June 2002; James N. Mattis and Frank Hoffman, "Hybrid Threats and the Four Block War Proceedings, September 2005; Frank Hoffman, "Hybrid Threats: Reconceptualizing the Evolving Character of Modern Conflict," Strategic Forum 240, Washington. DC: Institute for National Strategic Studies. April 2009.

² Robert M. Gates "The National Defense Strategy: Striking the Right Balance," Joint Force Quarterly (1stQuarter 2009), 2-7; LeonPanetta, Remarks at the Woodrow Wilson Center, Washington, DC, October 11, 2011. Accessed at <http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid==4903>.

Besides, there is a big difference between situational (ad-hoc) use of hybrid war methods and their application en masse, having in mind a certain political strategic idea. The latter assumes there is an explicit military & political decision approved by the state, the subject of influence. De facto, the moment such a decision is made (in case it becomes known to wider circles or in case this moment can be later reconstructed through monitoring of the methods used) can be interpreted as some sort of “act of war declaration”.

State approval of this decision triggers the mechanism of attack on the other state, and one of the means for its implementation is hybrid war. However, even before the beginning of hybrid war the subject of influence is already using measures aimed at achieving the strategic goal without direct use of military power.

This conformity of the set of pressure methods used against the other state with the general goal is the main characteristic of “active measures”. This notion is also not new, it goes back to the times of Soviet intelligence services, when deceptive information, agents of influence, quazi-civil organization and information pressure became quite common tools to be used.

And today, all these practices are again on the agenda. Curiously, very often even exactly in the same form.

Back in 2000 political power in Russia got those who used to be directly engaged in the “hidden war” against the democratic West throughout the whole Cold War. Under “those” here we mean not even certain politicians and/or intelligence officers – but more like the whole system of practices which includes, inter alia, “active measures”. However, now these active measures are already in use of a younger generation of Russian intelligence officers. As well noted by Jacques Baud, the former general of Swiss intelligence and the author of the “Encyclopedia of intelligence and secret services”, the KGB did not disappear, it simply disintegrated into other services³.

Until 2014 the “active measures” of Russia were only a simple tool of permanent influence on Ukraine, and total ignoring of this tools being used upon us ended up in a hybrid war. Today, Russian Federation is also using this tool, and on a large scale, against several democratic countries at the same time.

All of the above forces the researchers pay much more attention to the idea of “active measures”. Mostly because a larger share of the related methods and tools are still being used today, in the course of ongoing hybrid war.

RESEARCH CONCEPT

American researchers and professional experts in the field often state there is an obvious connection between the current hybrid war waged by Russian Federation and the previous use of “active measures” during the Soviet times. The strategic goal of “new active measures” remains essentially the same, and their use has already become the inseparable part of Russia’s hybrid strategy⁴. However, there is an open question in this regard: is the today’s hybrid war only a “reconstructed modern version of KGB active measures”, the contemporary use of which is explained only by the necessity to fit in the 21st century technologies along with the current socioeconomic and political climate which differs greatly from the Cold War period?⁵ If not, and in this case these notions are totally different (though still interrelated) – then what is exactly the connection between them? What are the differences in methods, tools and goals behind “active measures” from those applied in the course of a hybrid war?

Answers to these questions may become yet another confident step in the direction to understanding the concept “hybrid war”. At this, valuable are the relevant considerations of the researchers and public power representatives from the USA (since this country used to be the central object of the USSR influence). Quite many of them have been studying both the concept of “active measures” and the ways to counteract them.

Besides, continuation of such research, in our view, has an obvious and immediate value for nowadays. The attempts to find the exact formula of hybrid way through understanding the essence of “active measures”, extrapolation of methods and tools used previously on today’s realia have already raised the question concerning

³ <https://ghall.com.ua/2017/04/13/sekretnyie-operatsyy-khb-vo-frantsyy-povtorenyie-ystoryy/>

⁴ KGB Active Measures and Russian Hybrid Warfare: A Brief Comparison. Retrieved from: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/kgb-active-measures-russian-hybrid-warfare-brief-alan-malcher-ma>

⁵ Ibid.

the possible ways and mechanisms of reaction to these measures. And even though we already have our own, Ukrainian experience of resisting Russian aggression, it is important to realize that previously, other states, their governments and other institutes have already faced very similar challenges. Thus, it is important to study and analyze how exactly they reacted to those, what actions have been taken to minimize the negative consequences from “active measures” and what specifically has been done so that to avoid the open military conflict.

For our detailed research we have chosen the USSR-USA standoff during the Cold War period. The Cold War as such, especially since the second half of the 1970s till the end of the 1980s, became probably the most explicit case study of Soviet-American standoff with intensive use of “active measures”. During those times, the USSR has been attacking the U.S. rather systemically and in several directions at the same time, spending billions of dollars on this. Apart from the U.S., another, larger object of influence for the Soviets was the whole “evil” West with its vision and values, and also political and military alliances, NATO first of all.

The key sources for our research are the unclassified documents of the CIA, 1947 to 1989. Other official materials of the U.S. have been also used along with research studies. This enabled us consider “active measures” as well as ways of counteracting them in a much wider context.

We intentionally excluded from our research scope quite intensive debates (which took place primarily in the USA) concerning the nature of American-Soviet relations during the 1980s and some of rather ambiguous interpretations of the CIA activities during the same period. For example, (The Gates Hearings..., n.d.) has been referring to the statements of former CIA employees who, inter alia, mentioned that “the seventh floor of the CIA” [top-management floor] had a clear vision that “the Russians are coming!”, and they are coming globally. William J. Casey [then-head of the CIA] was especially concerned with large-scale penetration of the USSR into the Third World countries, in nearly all events in these countries he always saw “the hand of Moscow”. This even led to a situation when one of the NIOs (national intelligence officer, a position in the National Intelligence Council) has accused W. Casey, when it came to Latin America issues, in the attempt to present rather regular, even though a bit hectic, political processes in Mexico as inspired instability directly related to the Soviet influence.

And today’s hybrid war has been initiated by the virtually the same aggressor and is being waged with the same methods to which W. Casey was often referring to when accusing the Soviet Union. This is why studying the CIA experiences in the field of “active measures” and especially the mechanisms elaborated to neutralize these measures may become, for Ukraine and its European partners, the source of useful instruments for further efficient counteraction to Russia’s ways of waging hybrid war, which today may be understood as both local and worldwide.

I. HOW AMERICAN RESEARCHERS AND EXPERTS SEE THE ISSUE OF “ACTIVE MEASURES”

The American researcher Stephanie K. Whittle (2015) is of the opinion that the origin of the concept “active measures” dates back to the times when the Comintern statute was approved (1919, Moscow’s Third Communist International). This document established as its long-term vision “the goal of fighting, by every means, even by force of arms, for the overthrow of the international bourgeoisie and the creation of the International Soviet Republic” which was supposed to be the transition stage until the absolute destruction of the state (translated quote from the direct link: <http://www.agitclub.ru/front/com/congress022.htm>). Other researchers (e.g., Bass, 1999) think that the concept “active measures” emerged slightly later, during the 1920s, and its appearance was in direct connection with the establishment of the so-called Cheka – the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution, Speculation and Sabotage. The Cheka, founded by Felix Dzerzhinsky, is often seen (and quite appropriately) as the direct predecessor of the KGB.

However, attention of American research and professional communities was drawn to the topic of “active measures” much later, in 1984-1985 only.

In November 1984 the Heritage Foundation organized a round table fully dedicated to the problem of “active measures” and more specifically – to the so-called “front organizations”.

In this research under “front organizations” we understand those organizations which were used by the Soviets, directly and/or indirectly, to achieve the aims of the “active measures”. Namely, they created and supported the

“legends” of Soviet spies, and they were also gradually becoming quite influential players at the information, organizational and political fields, serving the best interests of the Soviet Union. To “front organization” in particular, belonged various non-governmental organizations, scientific societies, fellowships, societies, culture clubs etc. Since all these organizations pretended to be non-aligned, independent organizations promoting good causes such as peace, disarmament, scientific progress etc., they often attracted broader public support and thus became much more effective than openly pro-Soviet organizations and/or Communist parties.

The Heritage Foundation round table invited, inter alia, Mr. Herb Mayer, the Vice Chairman of the National Intelligence Council. The invitation letter (Reading room, <https://www.cia.gov>) was directly mentioning both “active measures” and “front organizations”:

“I am happy to invite you to the second in our series of luncheon roundtables focusing on Soviet active measures. This session, on the subject of “Soviet Front Organizations”. Leading the discussion will be former staff member of the House Intelligence Committee...”.

In 1985 the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace held a conference on Soviet “active measures” in Western Europe (Hoover Institution conference, <https://www.cia.gov>). The conference became part of a project on how to elucidate the Soviets’ and their proxies’ work on undermining security and destabilizing situation in various regions of the West. The event was attended by quite a range scholars and government officials from the U.S. and Western Europe too. The keynotes from that conference, held decades ago, are of interest today due to their absolute relevance to the ongoing hybrid war of Russia against the Western world.

- The larger share of Soviet efforts in Western Europe relies primarily on conscious collaborators and “useful idiots”. Their exposure is helpful but not a panacea. The greatest Soviet strength is not in agents’ skills but in the availability of plentiful cadres and money – although nobody is quite sure of the exact funds involved.
- The Soviets cannot create situations out of whole cloth.

However, contemporary Ukrainian experience proves this statement wrong, actually. The story about the “crucified boy from Sloviansk” is probably the best illustration of Russians’ capacity to “create events” without any factual background as such. There appeared more stories later: about “two slaves and a plot of land” for Ukrainian soldiers (Ukraintsy voyuyut za..., <http://censor.net.ua>); a story about children being taught at Ukrainian schools to kill bullfinches because those are “symbols of Russia”, stories about “American mercenaries” taking part in the fights for Donetsk airport or about “members of private military firms from the U.S.” (direct links for both at <http://www.stopfake.org>, see References at the end of this book), a story about special task officer being burnt alive in Lviv (“My bez Rossii propadyom”..., from <http://detector.media>) etc.

- Although nobody knows precisely how to counter Soviet efforts, all agreed it was essential that the Soviet Union must not be allowed to define the world order and agenda. The degree of Soviet success is greatly affected by how well thought-out and steadfast the Western position is.
- Of the regions discussed, the Soviets have been most successful in Greece where they control the largest-circulation newspaper *Ethnos*⁶. In West Germany they began acquiring greater influence in 1961 when the West meekly accepted the erection of the Berlin Wall. The Soviets have failed, however, utterly in Italy, mainly due to government resolve, and they also failed in France, principally because all leading intelligentsia at that moment very predominantly anti-Soviet.
- The topical issue [as of 1985] is USSR using SDI (Strategic Defense Initiative) since the U.S. programme clumsiness and inconsistencies have given them such openings.

Events on the related topics were held directly by the CIA as well. A good example in this regard is the Deception Conference (Study proposals..., Reading room, <https://www.cia.gov>).

At the same time roughly first separate research studies began to appear in an attempt to conceptualize “active measures” neglecting though the terminology which came directly from the vocabulary of Soviet intelligence. Dennis Kux was probably the first⁷ (Soviet active measures and disinformation..., Reading room, <https://>

⁶ And this control the USSR managed to convert into a very specific political result: in 1981 Andreas Papandreu became the prime minister of Greece. Experts claim that he got this position mainly due to influence and popularity of the *Ethnos* newspaper (A classical KGB disinformation..., from: <https://www.cia.gov>).

⁷ It is important to keep in mind here that D. Kux was not just a side observer and/or independent researcher, he was the head of the U.S. working group on “active measures”.

www.cia.gov) to pay enough attention to this fact. Thus, he suggested to consider the Soviet practices on implementation of “active measures”, differentiating between “white”, “gray” and “black” activity in the interests of foreign policy. “White” activities, in his interpretation, covered classical forms of diplomatic work, including diplomacy as such, then trade, various forms of aid and also information work. “Gray” activities are those involving communist fronts, foreign communist parties, “clandestine” radio stations⁸, or well-known media outlets for disinformation. Such activities were not directly connected to the Soviet Union, however, nearly everybody knew well who was behind them. And finally, “black” activities involved genuinely clandestine operations: the use of agents of influence, spreading false rumours, duping politicians and journalists, disseminating forgeries and fake documents.

According to Kux’ vision, active measures are either “gray” or “black” type of activities, although the borderline between those two is often blurred in real life. Moreover, quoting the then-Undersecretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger, the researcher noted that “finding an appropriate English phrase to describe active measures is difficult... No phrase in English conveys precisely the meaning of active measures. Perhaps the World War II psychological warfare operations provide the closest parallel” (Soviet active measures and disinformation..., Reading room, <https://www.cia.gov>).

Similar problems with translation and interpretation have been mentioned by other experts⁹. Most frequently, “active measures” have been understood as only one of the possible methods, and even more frequently – merely as deceptive information dissemination.

Nonetheless, a whole range of substantial research has been published on this topic. For example, the Naval Postgraduate School published “Soviet strategic deception” (Dailey, Parker, 1987), and in that book the issue of “active measures” was studied rather comprehensively. Several works have been published by the Nathan Hale Institute. Among those, special attention deserved the studies by Lawrence B. Sulc – the former CIA officer with over 20 years of experience and later also the assistant at the Department of State. In 1985 he published a book “Active measures, quiet war and two socialist revolutions”. In his introductory notes L. Sulc notes that “This is not a product of original research. It was not meant to be. It is a modest compilation of some important points from other more detailed works concerning the nature of the war the Soviet Union is waging against the West”. Further, the author also notes that “the subject of active measures has only fairly recently begun to be examined in detail in unclassified sources”. Further in the text L. Sulc expands the list of possible actions which, in his opinion, can be classified as “active measures”, including the following, inter alia:

- disinformation;
- forgery cases (for more details, see Annex).

Despite the today’s quite wide technical capacities to check and double check information and documents, we need to mention that the practice of forgery is still quite widely spread, in particular, in Ukraine. For example, during the Euromaidan fake “documents” were used massively against certain political forces and individuals which were in opposition to then-government of the country. Such practices became even more frequent in the first days of Crimea’s occupation. Various forgeries of seemingly “internal documents” of the Security Service of Ukraine, Ministry of Defense, Council on National Security and Defense of Ukraine, Ministry of Information Policy and other state institutions were supposedly “confirming” huge losses in manpower of Ukrainian army as well as “intentions” of Ukrainian authorities to circumvent elections on the territories of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. There also appeared numerous “obvious confirmations” concerning the inappropriate or even criminal behavior of Ukrainian soldiers, “evidences” of their moral degradation etc. And if several decades ago the USSR used mostly mass media from the Third World countries to “legalize” such “evidences” – today this role in being played primarily by the Internet via numerous sites and blogs especially. The most obvious example in this regard is the site called “Cyberberkut” which is actively posting such materials and “documents”. Some of the researchers state that in real life this site is managed by Russian hackers’ group APT28, or maybe – both the site and the hackers’ group are being managed by the General Staff Main Intelligence Directorate of Russian Federation (Bears in the Midst..., <https://www.crowdstrike.com>). Fake data and documents have been also discovered during the hearing of the International Court of Justice in the Hague, 2017 when the case “Ukraine against Russia” was presented (Feiky za zvychkoyu: Rosiya nadala..., www.eurointegration.com.ua).

⁸ Clandestine radio broadcasting is broadcasting in the language of the target audience from a station which does not admit its origin of transmission or which attempts to mislead listeners about its origin (Foreign Affairs Note: Communist Clandestine Broadcasting..., 1982).

⁹ For more details see, for example: <http://inosmi.ru/politic/20160728/237359416.html>

- the use of political parties, insurgent groups and front organizations;
- international front groups and non-government organizations;
- agents of influence;
- acts of terror;
- the so-called “wet affairs” (that is, killings);
- deception acts; intrusion of the idea of the existence of two superpowers;
- the so-called “maskirovka” (which includes primarily military and political deception);
- cultural warfare;
- using foreign broadcasting;
- and even sports events.

Further in the same book L. Sulc, referring to the ideas of the philosopher Sidney Hook, described the major tool in counteracting Soviet “active measures” as follows:

“The ultimate weapon of the West is not the hydrogen bomb or any other superweapon but the passion for freedom and the willingness to die for it if necessary. Once the Kremlin is convinced that we will use this weapon to prevent it from subjugating the world to its will, we will have the best assurance of peace”. Thus the resilience and readiness to respond extremely rigidly to any “active measures” remains the key instrument, whereas when Moscow feels intense resistance, when the probability of a quick victory seems impossible, it retreats.

In 1986 L. Sulc published one more book – “The KGB and the United Nations: Soviet subversion and intelligence operations in the United Nations Secretariat”. The book describes in detail the large-scale penetration of Soviet intelligence into the United Nations Organizations structures and how exactly they were taking use of it. Inter alia, the author claims that “approximately one-quarter of the Soviet nationals employed by the United Nations were Soviet intelligence officers”.

Another researcher of the same problem, Charles M. Lichenstein confirmed this statement, actually. He mentioned that out of “28 Soviet bloc “international civil servants” in his especially sensitive unit in the UN Secretariat, at least 21 spent some or all of their duty hours on intelligence assignments” (Lichenstein, 1985).

Of course, not only intelligence officers were performing diplomatic work during that time, however, even professional diplomats were frequently involved in “measures” and events monitored by the secret service officers, and obviously, in such cases were not free to refuse to cooperate when “asked”.

In the already mentioned book L. Sulc also noted that the key tasks performed by Soviet servants within the UN structures fully complied to scope and definition of “active measures”. Most of them covered two basic areas of activity: “influencing” and “intelligence collection” (Sulc, 1986).

The major types of activities to exert the influence in this regard included:

- editing of conference materials;
- control over the flow of news and other important information;
- influencing the delegates which were seeking advice from the Secretariat;
- direct help to Soviet diplomats in their work;
- supporting Soviet propaganda;
- arranging documents for the UN Secretary General so that to make references favorable in relation to the Soviet Union;
- entering pro-Soviet documents into the UN records so that later Soviet propaganda was able to refer to the UN documents as eligible grounding;
- placement of Soviet personnel in the UN offices responsible for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and Soviet front groups which, in turn, later influenced the nature of the UN debates.

These and the related issues have been also studied well in the work by Juliana Geran Pilon (1986) “At the U.N., Soviet Fronts Pose As Nongovernmental Organizations”. This author states, inter alia, that this special status (the one of NGO) for such organizations allowed their representatives participate in highly important meetings, in particular, in the sittings of the ECOSOS (UN Economic and Social Council).

And today, Russia has actually returned to such practices in its work with the UN. For example, it manipulates the votes of separate Asian, African and Latin American countries in exchange for economic and military preferences. At the same time, Russia’s active role in BRICS and SCO is creating the image as if the country does not experience any international isolation as such (Horbulin, 2016)

Classical intelligence operations within the UN has been always performed under several rather traditional directions:

- collecting information on the UN activities, especially early warnings of any possible UN actions;
- gathering information on third countries;
- spotting, assessing and recruiting agents, both UN employees with whom agents came in contact and other citizens of the countries to which they were assigned and/or to which they frequently travelled;
- supporting intelligence operations in a host country.

Quite a lot of studies American researchers have dedicated to the attempt to determined what was exactly the organizational mechanism behind initiating, developing and implementing certain “active measures” or at least their separate elements.

For example, a 2009 volume of the CIA’s professional journal, “Studies in Intelligence”, presents the following order of disinformation organization, which, in the opinions of American intelligence officers, was the pattern of actions used by the KGB and Soviet administration:

- 1) “Center” gives strategic go-ahead for a disinformation campaign;
- 2) ideas would be generated by residency officers assigned to read local press, books, and magazines searching for the materials that could be further used for the disinformation purposes;
- 3) “Center” would evaluate the ideas suggested by these officers;
- 4) still at the “Center”, preparation involved disinformation specialists writing in their native language, approvals by managers, and further translations into the needed languages;
- 5) targeting;
- 6) “Center” typically sought to launch a story outside the Soviet bloc-controlled press to conceal Moscow’s hand. This was done frequently through anonymous letters and newspaper articles in the Third World. Once published abroad, the Soviet media was able to pick up a story and propagate it further by referring to a non-Soviet source, totally “foreign” source of information.

Overall, CIA experts of those times differentiated between two categories of operations related to “active measures”:

- operations initiated and designed within the KGB. These would usually employ rather traditional disinformation techniques such as forgeries or agents of influence. Throughout its history, the KGB has conducted hundreds of operations which fell into this category every year;
- operations which were the result of a strategic decision at the top of the Soviet active measures pyramid and directly approved by the Politburo. Such campaigns were usually planned to last several years and encompassed many elements of the Soviet state (see Figure 1).

Overall, this scheme of decision on “active measures” approval and implementation, especially when it came to the strategic level and scale, was rather standard and did not differ much between the countries worldwide.

The International Information Department of the Central Committee of the CPSU oversaw the activities of those organs engaged in foreign propaganda and disinformation, including: TASS, Novosti (APN) international broadcasting (e.g., Radio Moscow, Radio Peace and Progress) and also well acknowledged printed media channels (e.g., Pravda and Literaturnaia Gazeta) as well as the Embassy Information Department itself.

The International Department of the Central Committee of the CPSU (further – International Department) primary function with respect to active measures was to formulate and suggest active measures options to the Politburo, and then – to coordinate and implement these operations with the assistance of other elements of active measures’ apparatus. Thus, the main products of foreign fronts (such as appeals, conferences, publications etc.) were actually decided on and crafted by the International Department.

The so-called Service A of the KGB’s First Chief Directorate was responsible for the overall implementation of active measures’ operations, according to the basic guidelines it received from the Politburo and the International Department regarding various themes of active measures and the activities to be carried out.

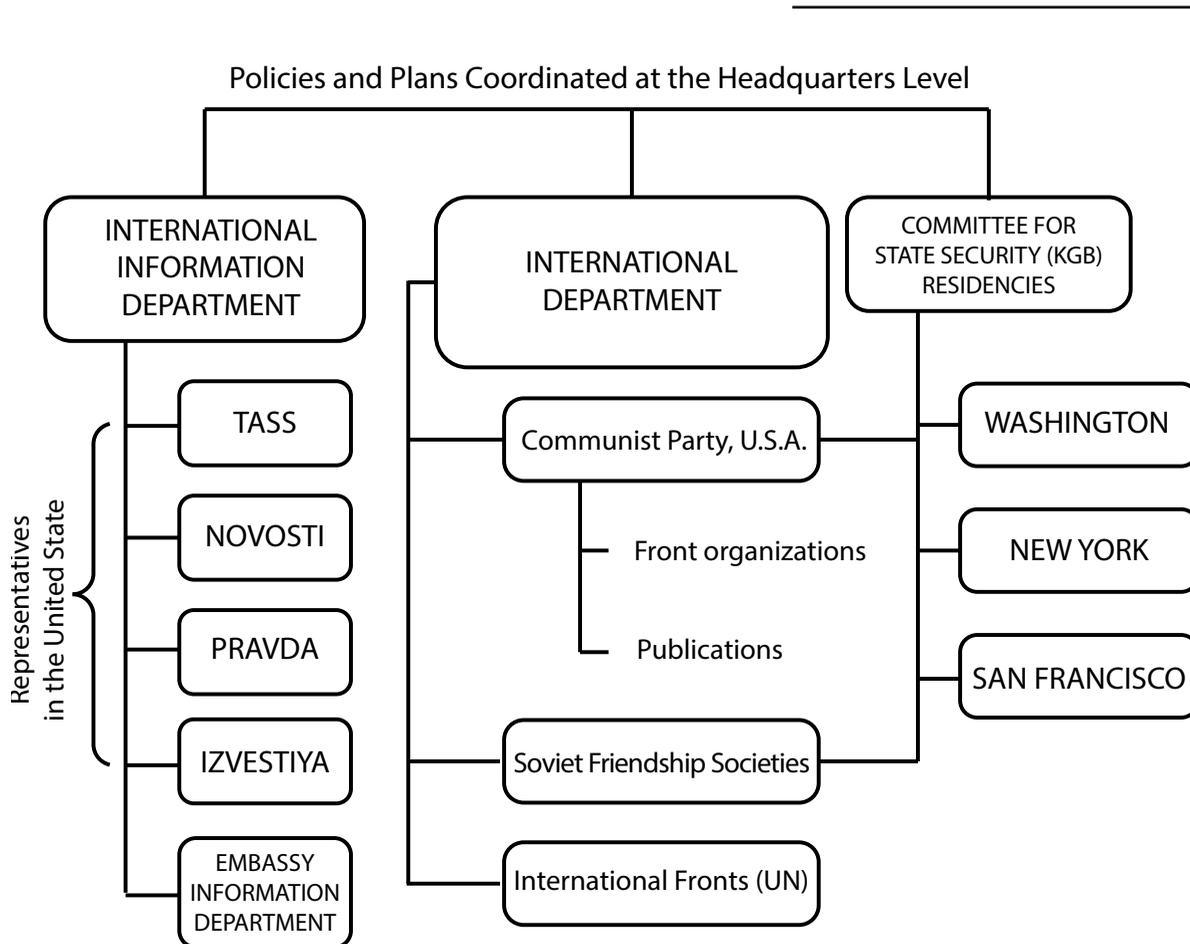


Figure 1. Soviet apparatus used for implementation of “active measures” in the USA¹⁰

Thus, it was ultimately in charge of all manipulation with foreign media assets, oral and written disinformation, operations with the agents of influence, forgeries, paramilitary operations etc.

The Service A closely monitored all active measures operations, what agents were involved into them specifically, and the relative success or failure of such operations. The Service A also prepared a daily bulletin on the progress of active measures for the members of the Politburo and the International Department.

A growing body of evidence suggests that a very similar system of top-down control is still in use by the Kremlin today (Beyond Propaganda..., 2016).

In 1988 yet another fundamental study was published – “Soviet Communication: Active Measures and Information Management” by Keenan Harry Hohol. This study analyzed in detail the overall context of active measures’ implementation along with the specific mechanisms used for this implementation. K.H. Hohol, through his thorough analysis of the key techniques, reached quite meaningful conclusions concerning the application of specific methods in the course of “active measures” taken, namely – on documents’ forgeries.

In particular, he noted to the obvious cyclicity of persistence of the KGB (or those smaller structures which were at some point responsible for the measures): in case some individual operations failed to achieve the desired result on the first try, this did not deter the Soviets from attempting the operation again. Many forgeries, rumours, and clandestinely placed press items strained credulity at first attempt, but replaying the same was often quite successful, thus making these distortions more acceptable.

¹⁰ Russian roulette: disinformation in the U.S. government and news media / Thomas Nicholas O'Brien URL : <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a223697.pdf>

In his opinion, all Soviet "active measures" rested on a certain, rather limited set of special methods (K.H. Hohol called them "classical"):

- disinformation;
- manipulations and control over foreign media;
- documents' forgery;
- agents of influence;
- international front organizations;
- communist parties and their branches abroad;
- friendship & cultural societies;
- clandestine radio broadcasting.

Once the Cold War was over, the U.S. efforts on studying and counteracting "active measures" were minimized¹¹. And today, scientists studying these issues, again primarily from the U.S., most often opt for the research on the very concept of "active measures".

In her study Stephanie K. Whittle compares the American concept of "unconventional war" with Russian "active measures" (Whittle, 2015) and she suggests, inter alia, her own structuring of the latter (see Figure 2).

In the scheme S. Whittle describes what was indeed "active measures" during the 1980s, however, this overall scheme, in our view, has several drawbacks.

In particular, it does not mention any of the "non-special" methods ("white activity", using the terminology of the already mentioned above D. Kux) which, no doubt, were also actively implemented during those times. For example, traditional diplomatic activities, standard economic relations (for example, providing economic aid, or on the opposite, introducing sanctions or other trade limitations), regular military relations (including work of military attaché in embassies and/or consulates). All of these, rather usual, types of activities were also part of "active measures" if taken as targeted activity with a rather specific aim.

At the same time, S. Whittle suggests to include military operations to the system of "active measures". However, military operations as such were seldom used in this context. Moreover, more active insurgency or resistance movement in most cases means that confrontation has already moved to another level of its development. Same concerns political homicides as a special tool in a wide range of "active measures".

This scheme above also lacks business and religious organizations as such which were/are also the agents of influence. Lack of business organizations here can be somehow justified by the fact that most of Western research on "active measures" have been performed mostly during the 1980s, and this historical fact predetermined the vision of the performance of Soviet agents of influence as those coming from the country with very closed and overregulated economic life. This is why it is rather hard to imagine that the USSR was able to use the economic interests of Western business in its "active measures" somehow.

However, situation with religious organization was radically different. According to the FBI report (Soviet active measures..., <https://www.cia.gov>, Reading room), The Soviets used to have several organizations at their disposal for conducting active measures.

1. The Moscow Patriarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church.
2. The Foreign Relations Department of the Moscow Patriarchate.
3. The Special Commission for Contacts with Foreign Religious Circles of the Soviet Peace Committee.
4. The USSR Council for Religious Affairs.
5. The USSR All-Union Council of Evangelical Christian-Baptists.
6. Others.

All these institutions mentioned above have been working to support the external political targets of the USSR, in particular, they served to prove that the Soviet state is the world leader of peace movement and is thus supporting the "right" ideas, among which freedom of religion has one of the top priority places (Soviet active measures..., from: <http://americasurvival.org>).

¹¹ Kincaid C. How Putin Uses KGB-style "Active Measures". Retrieved from : <http://www.aim.org/aim-column/how-putin-uses-kgb-style-active-measures/>

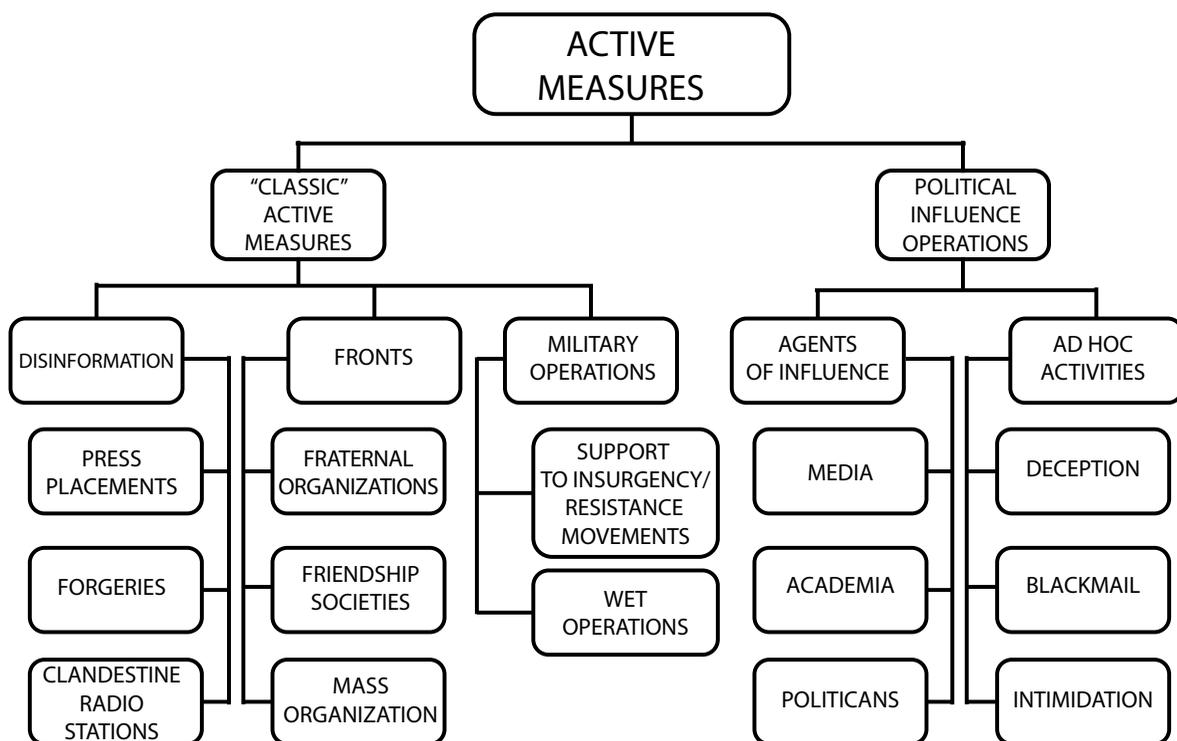


Figure 2. Structure/taxonomy of Soviet “active measures” (Whittle, 2015, p. 64)

Despite all these drawbacks mentioned above, Whittle’s scheme can be still considered as the “core” one while studying the overall system of “active measures” used by the USSR, and also in relation to newer “active measures”, however, with some additions, as we will demonstrate further in application to the system of “active measures” used by contemporary Russia.

2. APPROACHES TO DETERMINING “ACTIVE MEASURES”

In practical counteracting to Soviet “active measures” during the Cold War the public bodies of the USA often faced the problem which today’s professionals are also facing when analyzing and trying to counteract the ongoing hybrid war: what is the most exact definition of “active measures” and what they actually are?

To answer this question it is important to present the definitions and notions of “active measures” which have been already suggested by American researchers and practical professionals in the field. To a great extent, these definitions reveal the attitude of authorities to understanding this phenomenon.

It would be quite logical to present these definitions and interpretations in the chronological order.

1946 “Long Telegram” (<http://www.trumanlibrary.org>):

Unofficial basic Soviet policies in their implementation include:

- inner central core of communist parties in other countries;
- rank-and-file members of these communist parties;
- national associations, labor unions, youth leagues, women’s organizations, racial societies, religious societies, social organizations, cultural groups, liberal magazines, publishing houses etc. – all those organizations within which it would be the easiest to get new agents;

- international organizations which can be easily penetrated through the influence over their various national components. Of special importance, in this regard, were international labour movements;
- Russian Orthodox Church with its foreign branches, and through its influence – all Eastern Orthodoxy in general;
- supporters of Pan-Slav movements and other national movements (in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Turkmenistan etc.) which, within the USSR, were based on racial/national features;
- governments or governing groups willing to serve Soviet purposes, such as acting Bulgarian and Yugoslav governments, North Persian regime, Chinese communists etc. Not only propaganda machines but also the actual policies of these regimes were placed extensively at the disposal of the USSR.

1979 Defector and former KGB officer Stanislav Levchenko who used to be directly involved in “active measures” later explained (Speech for the Air War College..., <https://www.cia.gov>):

Soviet active measures include: diplomacy, propaganda, agitation, disinformation, forgeries, clandestine radio, press placement, and political influence operations <...> Strategic objectives are to denigrate U.S., to isolate from friends, influence public opinion against the U.S. military programs and against the CIA, and undermine the political resolve of the West to oppose Soviet encroachments.

1981 Special report to the U.S. Department of State “Soviet active measures”: forgery, disinformation, political operations” (Soviet active measures..., <https://www.cia.gov>):

The Soviets use the bland term “active measures” (aktivnyye meropriyatiya) to refer to the operations intended to affect other nations’ policies, as distinct from espionage and counterintelligence. Soviet “active measures” include:

- written or spoken disinformation;
- efforts to control media in foreign countries;
- use of Communist parties and front organizations;
- clandestine radio broadcasting;
- blackmail, personal and economic; and
- political influence operations.

1981 Journalist Arnaud de Borchgrave, who was specializing in international affairs, suggested the following list of what is “active measures” (Soviet Union supports terror network..., <https://www.cia.gov>):

- increased recruitment of the agents of influence in Western countries;
- assassination campaigns to discredit Western leaders;
- covertly sponsored strikes and demonstrations;
- spreading fake information to drive a wedge between the U.S. and Europe, and between the industrial West and the Third World¹².

A contemporary example of actions aimed at breaking friendly relations between the countries would be posting on the Internet a recording of the telephone call between Deputy Secretary of State Victoria Nuland with the American Ambassador in Ukraine Geoffrey Pyatt concerning the situation in Ukraine. V. Nuland was describing the variants of opposition leaders’ participation in a new Ukrainian government and used strong language in regard to the EU. This public posting of the call was meant to demonstrate there existed a conspiracy concerning the U.S. influence on Ukrainian political establishment after Yanukovich fled the country, and also it was meant to spoil the relations of Washington, DC, with Brussels.

1982 Public diplomacy document “Soviet military power” (Reading room, www.cia.gov):

Included to “active measures” are the following ones: arms trade; military advisors’ performance; use of proxy forces; allocation of military force outside the legal territories of the Soviet Union.

¹² Russia is currently running a similar campaign against the NATO member states (see <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/kgb-active-measures-russian-hybrid-warfare-brief-alan-malcher-ma>).

1982 | **"International communications policies: a scenario" and also "Detecting and Countering the Foreign Intelligence Threat to the U.S." (a national directive) formulate "active measures" as follows:**

Active Measures: A Soviet term for activities beyond traditional diplomacy which are used to achieve Soviet foreign policy objectives. Active measures are most frequently carried out by intelligence services and are intended to influence the policies of foreign governments, disrupt relations between other nations, undermine confidence in foreign leaders and institutions or discredit opponents.

1983 | **Hearings at the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, words of the CIA Deputy Director John H. Stein:**

... Rather, Soviet "active measures" involve activities by virtually every element of the Soviet party and state structure and are regarded as valuable, a regular supplement to, and closely coordinated with traditional diplomacy. <...> Soviet "active measures" include manipulation or control of media; written or oral disinformation; use of foreign Communist parties and front organizations; clandestine radio broadcasting; economic activities; military operations and other political influence operations (Soviet "active measures" against U.S., detailed... Reading room, <https://www.cia.gov>).

1983 | **HPSCI briefing, as of 20 September 1983. And also document called "Spanish-Soviet relations" (both, Reading room, <https://www.cia.gov>):**

Actions of the USSR which can be interpreted as "active measures" include:

- supporting and guiding the activities of over 70 Communist parties (in this regard of interest is the CIA internal report mentioned above – "Spanish-Soviet relations" as of 16 October, 1986. In it, Spanish Communist party is called one of the key instruments of Moscow through which the Kremlin was trying to direct Madrid policies to a more neutral side);
- ties with internal and local front organizations;
- penetrating and trying to manipulate mass movements, various sorts of leftist parties, labor and student organizations;
- influencing foreign media through controlled journalists, misleading articles, and direct forgeries;
- operating four clandestine radio stations that used to broadcast from the Soviet Union and East Germany territories;
- using the agents of influence to manipulate private channels of communication and exploit unwitting contacts;
- training and supporting insurgent and terrorist groups in Cuba and Libya.

1986 | **"Soviet active measures in the United States 1986-1987", an updated report by the FBI**
1987

In this document the following Soviet activities were mentioned in the context of "active measures":

- soviet forgery operations;
- soviet efforts to influence the arms' control and disarmament movements (through: USA Communist Party, Soviet Intelligence Operations in the United States, The Generals for Peace Movement, The Peoples Appeal for Peace);
- soviet influence on labor organizations and trade unions in the United States (World Federation of Trade Unions, Labor Research Association, USA Communist Party);
- use of Soviet media representatives (mostly through making certain topics trendy, e.g., accusing the U.S. in having political prisoners);
- soviet campaign to influence religious organizations (subtopics: Religion in the Soviet Union; Christian Peace Conference);
- soviet front organizations in the United States (National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, World Peace Council and the U.S. Peace Council);
- soviet influence in the United Nations (especially through the system of NGOs);
- soviet political influence operations (e.g., Soviet Embassy Contacts Public Relations Firms).

Overall, attempts to determine the notion "active measures" were carried out in two major directions: 1) through a combination of methods and tools used; 2) through the description of activities' aims.

The definitions of methods' combinations mostly covered the methods and tools described in the "Long Telegram", however, from definition to definition this list may have been changed/extended.

Generalization of the most typical methods of “active measures” implementation against the Western world during the 1980s enables us to compile the following list:

- use of the agents of influence (in all spheres and fields);
- preparation and dissemination of disinformation;
- use of political parties (most frequently – various leftist ones);
- establishment, engagement and support of international movements and organizations as well as manipulations with their activities;
- front organizations;
- media manipulations (including own ones);
- fake stories’ dissemination through media of the Third World countries;
- clandestine broadcasting;
- blackmail;
- political influence;
- sending military advisors to certain countries;
- training and supporting insurgent and terrorist groups;
- economic aid;
- spreading rumors;
- providing misleading information to politicians and journalists;
- spreading fake documents;
- political assassinations;
- cultural standoff;
- using foreign media for own purposes;
- using sport events;
- organization and support of “peaceful” demonstrations;
- active use of the UN and other international structures;
- use of religious organizations.

In separate cases researchers also mention arms’ supply, military operations and allocation of military bases outside own country – however, these methods were very seldom mentioned in the studies during the 1980s.

Such a variety of methods has been preconditioned not as much by the variety of authors’ views on the essence of “active measures”, but more by the objective complexity of even theoretical determination of all these types of activities. In essence, this term embodied a range of activities limited only by the imagination and creativity of the KGB’s half-million officers, and could have included anything from simple propaganda to kidnapping, murder, drug trafficking, and the illicit support of terrorism (Beyond Propaganda..., 2016).

The second variant of understanding “active measures” – that is, interpretation through aims, also had two major approaches within:

- wider understanding of aims (for example, when “active measures” are interpreted as “exercising influence on the policies of other states with the use of means, different from spying and counterintelligence”);
- specification and detalization of aims (for example, “isolating the object of attack from foreign partners, influence on public opinion”).

Interestingly, the KGB itself back in 1972 determined the aims and the essence of “active measures” somewhat differently¹³: “actions of counterintelligence which enable its penetration into the areas of an enemy so that to prevent undesirable actions, confuse the enemy, steal the initiative or ruin enemy’s subversion plans”. Despite the fact that here all these activities are described as being part of counterintelligence specifically, it is still clear that they can be identified as “offensive” and also like those that “provide opportunity to detect and prevent enemy’s activities at early stages and thus force the enemy to expose himself since in such a case the enemy would be forced to follow the initiated action and act in the most unfavorable conditions as well as in the direction convenient for counterintelligence”.

Methods suggested for use in such “counterintelligence” activity fully comply with the general understanding of “active measures” by Western states’ intelligence services: “establishment of agent network within the enemy’s

¹³ The quote is translated from the open source: “Counterintelligence Dictionary”, Higher Red Banner School of the State Security Committee under the USSR Ministry Council, 1972, however, it is impossible to prove the credibility of the online version of this dictionary available in pdf at <http://www.pseudology.org/Abel/KRSlovar2.pdf>

environment, carrying out operational wargames with the enemy using misleading information, compromising materials and demoralization”.

In our view, it is most feasible to determine “active measures” through their aim, but also briefly mentioning the key methods and instruments used, not going though deep into a long list. This would strengthen the understanding of “active measures” as destructive activity and would also provide an opportunity for more flexible interpretation of specific methods used in the course of “active measures” implementation.

3. ACTIONS OF THE U.S. PUBLIC BODIES/ INTELLIGENCE SERVICES

3.1. 1947–1981: REFLECTING ON “ACTIVE MEASURES”

The very first American official mentioning of Soviet “active measures” (though without using this notion directly, actually) as a mechanism to achieve the external political aims of the USSR contained the so-called “Long Telegram” (full text in pdf is available from: <http://www.trumanlibrary.org>) sent on February, 22, 1946, by George F. Kennan, the then-advisor in the American Embassy in Moscow. Contents and message of this “long telegram” have actually predetermined the whole paradigm of American-Soviet relations until the end of the 1980s.

The 1947 documents of the CIA also contained some mentionings of the USSR actions which could have been interpreted as “active measures”. Namely, the “Country report on Spain” (Reading room, <https://www.cia.gov>) mentioned the following: “Despite reports of a rapprochement between the USSR and Franco, the USSR continues to conduct a large-scale campaign against General Franco. In addition to using its own propaganda resources, it has mobilized Communist Parties and “follow traveller” groups in many parts of the world to bring pressure on their respective Governments in favor of active measures to effect the downfall of the Franco regime by the breaking of diplomatic and commercial relations between Spain and other countries. In the UN, Soviet-inspired pressure for action along these lines has been based on the allegation that Spain presents a threat to international peace”. Interestingly, further in the text of the same document we have another statement: “In spite of the ferocity of the USSR campaign against the Franco regime, there is good reason to believe that the immediate Soviet objective is not the elimination of Franco but his retention, coupled with the isolation of Spain from possible sources of foreign aid, until political and economic conditions reach the point of revolution”.

Today Russian efforts are to some extent concentrated on a very similar practice in relation to Ukraine. A large share of Russian manipulations is aimed at stopping economic aid to Ukraine from the side of supporting countries and/or international financial institutions (in particular, the International Monetary Fund). These actions are also aimed at presenting Ukraine to the West as a tremendously corrupted country which “does not deserve” any help (neither political, nor economic). All these ideas are supposed to provide the basis for further implementation of projects like the notorious “Maidan-3”, directly orchestrated by Russian intelligence (Moskovskiy slid Koloradskogo zhuka..., <https://www.ukrinform.ua>)

During the 1950-1960s U.S. authorities and intelligence circles were mostly concerned, apart from regular military threats from the Soviet side, by the USSR capacity to use the Communist party of the U.S. against the national security interests. Thus, in 1951 the CIA prepared¹⁴ an illustrative report “Communist threat to internal security in the event of Soviet surprise attack” (Reading room, <https://www.cia.gov>). Inter alia, this report emphasized that as of 1951 “to aid in its attempts to disrupt and frustrate our defensive and counter-offensive efforts in the circumstances of a surprise attack, the USSR has a very formidable ally within our own camp: the Communist Party, USA. The members of this organization are now estimated at 37,000. In the event of a surprise attack the Communist Apparatus may be expected to make coordinated attempts immediately to destroy:

- 1) our will to resist, and
- 2) our means of resisting.

¹⁴ Strictly speaking, the authorship of this document was outside the CIA. In its opening remarks it is mentioned that it became the product of cross-departmental intelligence conference, in which, apart from the CIA, also participated the representatives of: FBI, G-2, U.S. Armed Forces, military and navy intelligence and also special investigations office of the U.S. Army.

Psychological warfare directed towards the destruction of our will to resist might take the form of widespread circulation, e.g. broadcasts over seized radio stations of false reports and rumors concerning: the strength and initial successes of the enemy; the destruction and/or capture of important cities; the slaughter of millions of military and civilian citizens by means of both powerful and insidious weapons; the surrender of important units of our Armed Forces. To destroy our means of resisting the attack Communists may be expected to attempt the sabotage of our vital installations and industries.

And what American intelligence and counterintelligence, back in 1951, treated as a purely theoretical problem, in Ukraine these days have been implemented in real practice. From the very beginning of the conflict on the East representatives of the local leftist parties became members of terrorist organizations, forming various illegal insurgent groups or getting “posts” in the newly emerged “state institutions of young republics”¹⁵. Members of the Communist Party of Ukraine and Progressive Socialist Party of Ukraine were also directly engaged in organizations of “referendums” on the seized territories of Donetsk and Luhansk regions. They were also involved in promotion and social support for the members of the insurgent groups (up to becoming members of their families). They initiated numerous “political” and “social” projects in the so-called Donetsk/Luhansk People’s Republics: Luhansk Guardia, “Rule of the People”, “Novorossia Society”, “Peace to Luganshchina” etc.

During the 1960-1970s the USA made first attempts to track systemically and analyze Soviet propaganda. One of the examples in this regard can be the weekly report by the Foreign Broadcast Information Service “Trends in communist propaganda” (Reading room, <https://www.cia.gov>).

On May, 5, 1971 special sub-committee of the U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary was hearing the testimony from Lawrence Britt (Testimony of Lawrence Britt..., Reading room, <https://www.cia.gov>). Before escaping to the U.S., this man used to be a Czech intelligence officer (since 1954), at the rank of major. Since 1964 he was deputy head of the Disinformation Department (though according to the terminology of the Soviet intelligence, this department was called Department of “active measures”)¹⁶.

Work of his department L. Britt described in the following words: “Department prepares and carries out disinformation, black propaganda and so-called influence operations. These operations, first of all, aim at influencing the sphere of public opinion of the non-Communist world, trying to deceive the world public opinion, to undermine the American positions all over the world. The second direction of these activities is deceiving decision-makers of the non-Communist countries, and to bring them to false decisions. In the parlance of the intelligence services, it means to “feed” them with false information and expect that they will then use it as a basis for wrong conclusions and measures”.

In his statement L. Britt clearly distinguished between the three components of the Department’s activity: “There are basically three types of operations: disinformation, propaganda (aimed primarily on the internal audience of the communist countries), influence operations, which are the most demanding and very rare. These operations are based on the activities of the so-called influence agents, Communist agents working in non-Communist countries, who have important positions in the government, political parties or in Parliament. They can let instructions from East European Communist intelligence services, for instance, how they should react in Parliament, in a parliamentary discussion or if they occupy an important position in an enemy’s intelligence service, what to do, in order to make it less efficient”.

Testimony of L. Britt concerning the KGB activities during the 1950-1960s has a curious direction connection to today’s situation (in particular – with Russia’s intrusion in presidential elections in the U.S. in 2016): during those days the KGB was already trying to carry out very similar operations, however, then still small-scale and with less obvious evidence.

¹⁵ Examples are borrowed from the online resource “Mirotvoret” (translated as Peacemaker, <https://myrotvorets.center/>). However, these issues today require a separate research which should be based on more exact, detailed and systemic statistical information.

¹⁶ Czech officer Ladislav Bittman became defector in 1968 (Schoen, Lamb, 2012). Later, already as Lawrence Martin, he became Professor at Boston University and continued his research activity on the same topic – counteraction to disinformation campaigns. In 1972 he published a book titled “The Deception Game; Czechoslovak Intelligence in Soviet Political Warfare”, and then in 1985 another one – The KGB and Soviet Disinformation: An Insider’s View. Later on, he was even invited to do research for the CIA on the issues related to adaptation (first of all – psychological one) of Soviet defectors (Letter to William J. Casey from William W. Geimer..., Reading room, <https://www.cia.gov>).

L. Britt was also recalling one of the propaganda operations targeted against Barry Goldwater, presidential then-nominee. The campaign was built on accusations in racism, thus, it became an attempt to influence directly the African-American voters. According to L. Britt, some facts in the leaflet about Mr. Goldwater were picked up from American books and newspapers and they were mixed with sensational ingredients attacking Mr. Goldwater as a racist. These letters were mailed to the United States in diplomatic bags by the members of Czechoslovakian intelligence station in the United States.

Lawrence Britt was not the only defector from the Soviet bloc, of course. The authors of the article "Active measures: What lay behind Russia's interference in the 2016 election – and what lies ahead?", for example, have been referring to the words of another Soviet defector – Vasilij Mitrokhin (Osnos et al., 2017). In particular, basing on his testimony, they state the similarity between Russia's intrusion in the most recent elections in the U.S. with the re-election campaign of R. Reagan in the 1980s. According to extensive notes made by Vasilij Mitrokhin, a high-ranking KGB officer and archivist who later defected to Great Britain, Soviet intelligence tried to infiltrate the headquarters of the Republican and Democratic National Committees, popularize the slogan "Reagan Means War!", and discredit the President as being corrupt and also as a supposedly McCarthyism supporter (Osnos et al., 2017).

Moreover, R. Reagan, as an active follower of such ideas, was also "working in collusion with the FBI and the House Committee on Un-American Activities concerning Communist infiltration into the Hollywood film world" (Soviet active measures..., <http://americasurvival.org>).

In 1984 Manfred R. Hamm from the Heritage Foundation prepared another special report – "How Moscow Meddles in the West's Elections" (Hamm, 1984). In it, the author, inter alia, noted: "Having failed to dislodge incumbent governments through the ballot box in West Germany and Britain in 1983, the Kremlin leaders [began to interfere] in the 1984 presidential election". Namely, the Soviet Union made every effort to popularize (in the U.S. themselves, European and other countries worldwide) the idea that American military and foreign policies were provoking world instability, thus leading to numerous conflicts.

The Kremlin declared that it would boycott the Los Angeles Olympic Games. Just prior to this event, the Soviet press compared the Reagan Administration to the leaders of Nazi Germany and Reagan himself was portrayed as the crony of a top Nazi. However, in Hamm's view, this was just secondary discrimination. To ensure Reagan's defeat, Moscow has developed a two-pronged approach. The first one – trying to depict the President as a danger to international peace, who carelessly wanders on the brink of a nuclear catastrophe and is the source of international tensions because of his quest to impose U.S. world domination. The second approach was targeting the White House and Administration which were portrayed as being uninterested in arms control agreements with the Soviet Union and having initiated an open-ended arms race to restore U.S. military superiority.

However, Soviet toolkit was not limited to only these strategies. Moscow was ready to use any topic which potentially could have been damaging to Reagan's election campaign, in particular, U.S. policy in Central America and/or increased spending on the military sector. In these operations Soviet television was very actively used along with Soviet politicians and researchers (for example, the Institute of the USA affiliated to the USSR Academy of Sciences). The final aim of this very intensive campaign on discrimination was to show the American (as well as Soviet and European) citizens that the Soviet Union simply could not deal with such a "monster" as Ronald Reagan, thus, it would be naïve to expect better American-Soviet relations in case he was still a President elect.

Since most of Kremlin information messages (then as well as now) were no more than an information play, after being re-elected R. Reagan has set quite adequate relations with the Soviet Union.

In the later course of the Cold War, until the end of the 1970s, mentions of "active measures" in the CIA documents have become more and more rare, and whenever mentioned – were mostly addressed to the press (The CIA: Time to come..., Reading room, <https://www.cia.gov>). "Active measures" as a separate phenomenon was again remembered only in the later dated January, 10, 1977, written by the CIA then-director George Bush to the U.S. President. This letter was dedicated to the reforms inside America intelligence service, however, of interest for us would be its annex titled "The Soviet Strategy Against Third Areas" (Letter to the President..., Reading room, <https://www.cia.gov>). The annex started with the overview of the most prominent activities of the "enemy", including: large increase of arms' transfers and number of advisers, "active measures", growing role of allies/proxies, direct military operations [in Afghanistan].

Later in 1979 the CIA made an attempt to estimate the USSR spending on “active measures”. The overall sum was above \$ 3 bln, and, according to the CIA estimations, the structure of these expenditures looked approximately like that (Hohol, 1988):

Organization/Activity	Expenditures (mln \$)
CPSU International Department	100
TASS	550
Novosti (APN)	500
Pravda	250
Izvestia	200
New Times and other periodicals	200
Radio Moscow foreign service	700
Press sections in Soviet Embassies	50
Clandestine radio broadcasts	100
International Communist Fronts	63
Subsidies to foreign Communist Parties	50
Service A of the KGB	50
Covert action by Soviet residencies	100
Support to National Liberation Fronts	200
Special campaigns in 1979, including anti-NATO TNF modernization campaign	200
TOTAL	3,313

Not included in this table above were the estimated expenditures on the Soviet friendship and cultural societies. The CIA estimate for the overall costs of active measures in 1982 rose to \$4 billion.

The U.S. political authorities became interested in the topic of “active measures” only when R. Reagan was elected President and his team came to the White House. To a certain extent, this interest was predetermined by one event which happened one year before the elections, in 1979 – one KGB officer, Stanislav Levchenko, defected to the USA. As it was later (in 1984) remember by the CIA director William J. Casey (Speech for the Air War College class of 1984, Reading room, <https://www.cia.gov>): “He was first officer, who has got a lot of specific information to give us about Soviet strategic concept of “active measures” in all its fullness”.

Thus, it came as no surprise that in February 1980 already the Intelligence Committee was hearing the testimony of CIA depute director on operations John McMahon, the larger share of which was dedicated to the problem of Soviet “active measures” against democratic countries (How the Soviets funded American communists..., Reading room, <https://www.cia.gov>).

3.2. 1981–1988: COUNTERACTING “ACTIVE MEASURES”

In 1981 the USA finally shifted from acknowledging the problem to finding mechanisms and tools for its solution.

First of all, Interagency Active Measures Working Group (IAMWG) was established in 1981 (its final report is dated 1992). The Group included the stakeholders from the Department of State (DOS), Department of Defense (DOD), Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Department of Justice (DOJ), Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA – later folded into the State), and the U.S. Information Agency (USIA).

The mission of the IAMWG was to identify and expose Soviet disinformation. The group's work encouraged allies and made the Soviet Union pay a price for disinformation that reverberated all the way to the top of the Soviet political apparatus (Beyond Propaganda..., 2016).

Activities of this Working Group were organized in the following way:

1. Data and information collection. Key sources – USIA¹⁷, CIA and FBI (mostly from their investigations).
2. Analysis of the gathered information. This analysis took place in Washington, DC; the group members generally met on a weekly basis. Attendance varied and members rotated in and out based upon the requirements at their "day jobs".
3. Formation of a document. The group produced semiregular reports on Soviet disinformation. The reports were unclassified and circulated throughout the Interagency and to the press. The group also developed a "road show" to help educate personnel at Embassies, as well as host nation intelligence services and members of host nations' media. By publishing their reports and conducting road shows, the group raised awareness, which led to a virtuous cycle of reporting. The more they publicized Soviet disinformation efforts, the more frequent and better reports they received from the field.

The Active Measures Working Group became one of the most persuasive examples of interagency success. These bureaucratic and substantive achievements were unusual for an interagency working group, and other organizations later took note of this group's success (for more details, see (Shoen, Lamb, 2012)).

In October 1981 IAMWG finalized one of the central official documents of the U.S. government which later publicized the problem of "active measures" – "Soviet active measures: forgery, disinformation, political operations" (Reading room, <https://www.cia.gov>). This report became a truly turning point in the formation of systemic attention of the USA to the problem of "active measures". The document, first of all, served to make this problem official, visible. Besides that, it described in detail the very essence of "active measures" and what are their key methods and tools. The use of their application against the U.S. was demonstrated on the explicit examples. Later on, "Soviet active measures: forgery, disinformation, political operations" became one of the most cited documents in the circles of journalists working on this problem.

The next logical step in this regard, also described in the related documents, was the issue of more active counteraction to Soviet "active measures", namely, from the CIA side. Today's already declassified documents of this American intelligence organization contain an internal report dated October, 15, 1981 concerning the current state of American propaganda and possible ways to improve the system of Soviet propaganda counteraction¹⁸. Inter alia, this report mentioned that as of then the USA had very little to counterpose against Soviet "active measures" and that overall, "Soviet's propaganda is more effective compared with American (in spite of the fact the United States is more popular than the Soviet Union)". The text contained two core theses: the U.S. needs their own "active measures" to capture and hold public opinion and again identify the United States with positive objectives, with "the pursuit of happiness", with the issue of peace; and second one – there is a need for adequate organizational system for "planning, coordinating, implementing and monitoring such activities" (Reflections on the U.S. propaganda posture, Reading room, <https://www.cia.gov>), since then several separate departments were responsible for various elements of such counteraction, thus, there was an obvious lack of coordination.

Despite the interest and readiness of the security and defense organizational units to counteract "active measures", there were also separate voices questioning the seriousness of this problem. Some officers were of the opinion that the problem was really exaggerated or even factitious. For example, Diane La Voy, who was then working for the Permanent Committee on Intelligence, was actively against the idea of intensifying counteraction to "active measures", questioning the existence of this phenomenon as such (Upcoming HPSCI hearing on Soviet active measures, Reading room, <https://www.cia.gov>). Correspondence between intelligence offices and staff of the HPSCI frequently mentioned a draft of the Interagency Intelligence Memorandum (IIM), one of the coauthors of which was then-DDO, Deputy Director for Operations. This document contained several variants of defining the notion "active measures", the first of which describes

¹⁷ United States Information Agency (USIA) was established in August 1953 with the aim to consolidate all foreign information activity of the U.S. governmental organizations under one program. It worked till 1977, and later became part of the USICA – United States International Communications Agency. In 1982 USICA was again renamed USIA, existed till 1999.

¹⁸ Even though the report did not have a specifically indicated authorship, from one of the later declassified letters (Letter to Tom Polgar from William J. Casey, Reading room, <https://www.cia.gov>), one can track that it was Thomas Polgar, a CIA officer, who got retired same 1981 year.

them as “an offensive instrument of Soviet foreign policy” which is “poorly understood and infrequently countered systematically” – and Diane La Voy noted that these descriptions were very much similar to regular “covert operations”. On the other hand, “active measures” were also often defined to include virtually every instrument of Soviet foreign policy, from trade to diplomacy, and most of such actions were presented in intelligence documents on six non-classified cases. Such width of definitions and lack of clarity were the major reasons why D. La Voy was so peremptory. In her view, the draft of IIM lacked evidences to prove there was a special type of Soviet activity there.

Despite the explicit presence of such a position, at the beginning of the 1980s the idea that U.S. attitude towards Soviet “active measures” should get more aggressive became actively promoted, and later, it even forced the Soviet Union to opt for a more defensive strategy (Meeting with Judge Clark..., Reading room, <https://www.cia.gov>).

On December, 12, 1981, the CIA presented a classified document concerning the necessary further steps to be taken on counteracting enemy propaganda and also on optimization of overall coordination of all the related activities (International communications policies: a scenario..., Reading room, <https://www.cia.gov>). One of its chapters titled “Discussion” underlined that with these aims specifically a Project Truth was introduced. Also, establishing a separate coordinating committee was suggested for more integrated counteractions to Soviet “active measures” on the side of the Department of State, CIA and USICA.

At that stage media coverage of the “active measures” topic as such was already rather large-scale, moreover, it already became an important media trend. Articles in newspapers and other mass-media materials on “active measures” became a common practice (Newsweek article entitled..., Reading room, <http://www.cia.gov>).

Such an active information campaign on introduction of a new notion into circulation in the field of national security threats led to the situation in which rather general discussions, interdepartmental correspondence and occasional parliamentary hearings were gradually turning into more concrete decision-making and launch of specific projects.

In October 1982 Deputy to Assistant Secretary on Intelligence and Research Herman Jay Cohen addressed the deputy director of the CIA on operation John H. Stein with a letter titled “Heightening awareness of Soviet ‘active measures’” (Reading room, <http://www.cia.gov>). The letter, inter alia, noted the following: “We are encouraged by the start which has been made in heightening awareness of Soviet “active measures” and wish to express appreciation for the considerable support already given by CIA to these efforts. In this connection, we believe it would be most helpful if CIA could produce a fully classified memorandum which is focused specifically on Soviet “active measures”. As indicated, it is our intention to increase public attention directed at Soviet “active measures” on a worldwide basis”.

Apart from many other documents, the CIA was preparing “USSR Monthly Review” (Reading room, <http://www.cia.gov>). One of these reviews, dated April 1983, contained a clarification regarding the concept “active measures” and participation of the KGB in it. Partially repeating the already well acknowledged by then features of the phenomenon, the review also noted that “KGB’s special role in active measures is to plan and carry out covert activities that require the use of trained intelligence personnel”. This document is also of interest because it provides probably the most comprehensive overview of how “active measures” were actually prepared and implemented by the USSR: which KGB departments were specifically engaged and how they interacted; how the aims were cross-coordinated and agreed; what authorities specific intelligence officers had in the course of “active measures”; what posts in embassies were these officers assigned to etc. On the latter it was specifically noted that: “KGB active measures officers abroad use a variety of cover assignments. Many are assigned to embassies under diplomatic cover, but others use non-diplomatic and non-official assignments that provide access to particular target groups in the host society. Journalistic cover is especially favored because of the wide access and freedom of travel that it provides. The KGB has long relied heavily on journalists and journalistic cover to recruit foreign agents and influence foreign opinion in the Soviet interest” (USSR Monthly Review, April 1983, Reading room, <http://www.cia.gov>).

Specific examples of “active measures” were presented on the case of Japan where the already mentioned above defector S. Levchenko used to work for quite a long time. In particular, he provided evidence that in Japan KGB had over 200 recruited agents during the 1975-1979 period. Many were used for anti-American active measures at one time or another. These agents included journalists, members of parliament, a former cabinet minister, and leaders of Japanese political parties. Namely, during the 1970s the KGB heavily influenced the political platform of Japanese Socialist Party: 10 of the party’s high-rank members were Soviet agents of

influence. Another example of Soviet influence in Japan was formation of a parliamentary group to promote Japanese-Soviet political and economic cooperation. A Soviet agent, who was a parliament member, helped to found this group, and the KGB funded its staff salaries and a monthly magazine publishing (USSR Monthly Review, April 1983, Reading room, <http://www.cia.gov>).

In August 1983 the U.S. Senate was hearing the FBI report entitled “Soviet Active Measures Relating to the U.S. Peace Movement”. This document contained numerous examples of how the Soviets used their agents of influence and simply naïve enthusiasts of the Peace movement with the aim to impact the American arms policy. The report contained quite an interesting statement in this regard: “This [...] does not require direct Soviet control or manipulation to be effective. The Soviets believe they can achieve these objectives through a planned series of arms control, and disarmament proposals that play on the sentiments of Western peace movements in concert with the systematic use of the Soviet worldwide propaganda apparatus international fronts and local communist parties and agents” (Because of your interest in the area..., Reading room, <http://www.cia.gov>). Moreover, according to the FBI data, the KGB agents were directly involved in instructing the proxies within these movements, and occasionally even participated themselves in separate actions.

In September 1985 the White House requested both CIA and FBI to prepare a series of reports (twice a week), highlighting examples of Soviet Active Measures abroad. The CIA was responsible for reporting on external Active Measures, while FBI was supposed to report on those carried out inside the USA: “I am also asking the FBI to produce a complementary bi-weekly report noting Soviet Active Measures in the United States. The update should begin as soon as feasible and continue until after the November meeting” (Request for bi-weekly updates..., Reading room, <http://www.cia.gov>). The then-President R. Reagan required these data for the future meeting with Mikhail Gorbachov (November same year). There is no public data regarding such reports on the FBI side, however, CIA prepared several of those. The central topics of these reports became: SDI and arms control; human rights’ protection; and the upcoming summit on arms control and disarmament. In particular, types of actions and events then used by Soviet propaganda machine in relation to Western audience were described: round tables, communication with media, conferences, informal diplomatic gatherings, peaceful demonstrations, lobbying in the UN headquarters, forging documents, spreading the necessary messages through the media of the Third World countries, using front organizations etc.

The U.S. government’s concern with the problem of “active measures” also found its manifestation in the reforms of the CIA and defense sector overall. In particular, one of the directions in these reforms became more support to the CIA efforts on developing the State Department program for detecting and counteracting “active measures” (Letter to Ronald Reagan..., Reading room, <https://www.cia.gov>).

American intelligence units were trying to react organizationally to the challenges posed by “active measures”. For example, the instructive materials dated May, 18, 1983, suggested a readymade list of objectives and authorities for a potentially suggested post – NIO/Irregular Force¹⁹. Inter alia, it was mentioned that American intelligence already recognized that “may be an equally dangerous threat in the mix of tactics implemented by the Soviet Union. This mix of tactics include destabilization, terrorism, subversion, support of insurgencies, political action, propaganda and other active measures” (NIO/Irregular forces, Reading room, <https://www.cia.gov>).

In 1984-1985, such a post was indeed assigned with the system of National Intelligence Committee, however, under a slightly different name – *National Intelligence Officer / Foreign Deception and Intelligence Activity (NIO/FDIA)*. Judging from the weekly reports of this NIO, a larger share of this officer’s activities concerned general coordination of actions, meetings with legislators and staff from other intelligence units.

In 1986 the HPSCI prepared a comprehensive report “Meeting the espionage challenge: a review of United States counterintelligence and security programs (Reading room, <https://www.cia.gov>). One of the chapters in this report, dedicated specifically to “active measures”, stated that “the CIA has estimated that if the United States were to undertake a campaign the size of the Soviet “neutron bomb campaign” of the 1970s, it would cost over \$100 million. Currently, there is evidence of a major Soviet active measures campaign against U.S. development of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI)”.

The report also noted that Soviet efforts on implementation of “active measures” were primarily focused on the Third World countries in the attempts to damage the U.S. positions in the related regions.

¹⁹ From the analyzed documents it is not exactly clear whether this post was formally approved at the end, or it was just a proposition.

In the early days of 1986 one of the analytical departments of the CIA, SOVA (Office of Soviet Analysis)²⁰ prepared a 80-page report²¹ titled “The Soviet Foreign Propaganda Apparatus” dedicated to a detailed analysis of the instruments and techniques of Soviet foreign propaganda. Much of the information used in this paper comes from working-level positions in Soviet media and KGB. According to this report, at least one-third of TASS personnel are staff employees of the KGB or GRU, and some other, additional data indicated that the number could have been even higher for APN (Soviet propaganda apparatus, Reading room, <https://www.cia.gov>).

Today discussion concerning possible connections between Russian large media outlets working primarily for abroad and Russian intelligence offices is again on the agenda. And even though nobody can really estimate the share of intelligence officers working in media, some of the Western headings formulate the problem quite explicitly, for example, The New York Times: Russia’s RT Network: Is It More BBC or K.G.B.? (Erlanger, 2017). Very similar trends are observed in relation to Ukraine too. Russian military units, responsible for information and psychological war operations against Ukraine, are actively using the so-called media of Donetsk/Luhansk “People’s Republics” as well as the status of “military journalists” for their destructive activities on the occupied territories as well as on the territories under Anti-Terrorist Operations. These media of “People’s Republics” are managed primarily by Russian citizens who often happen to be Russian intelligence officers at the same time.

SOVA started to be active engaged in the “active measures” research and investigations in 1986. Same year it initiated a quarterly project “Worldwide active measures and propaganda alert”. This document²² was supposed to emphasize on the key directions in propaganda activities of the Soviet Union as well as to determine the most probable future “active measures” (on the regional levels as well as in the context of the whole world). Each issue consisted of two parts: an overview and the calendar with the most important future events in a short term (up to one year). Description of campaigns was always following the same logic: key topic of a campaign and all related facts; engagement of which “active measures” specifically was serving which exactly objectives of the Soviet foreign policy.

3.3. 2014–2016: “ACTIVE MEASURES” AGAIN ON THE AGENDA

At the contemporary stage U.S. counteraction to “active measures” started with fighting Russian propaganda. Since the beginning of Russian aggression in Ukraine the Department of State activated the Twitter account “Progress for Ukraine” (in Russian) and it is still successfully functioning²³. This account was created with the aim of providing more easily available and more specific information concerning the Department of State stand regarding the current situation in Ukraine specifically for the Russian-speaking audience. Another important aim was to prevent all possible misrepresentations of this position which often take place today due to rather biased translations of the English-language statements.

During 2014 the U.S. Congressmen discussed over 40 legislative initiatives concerning the information means and methods of influence. The official document “United States International Programming to Ukraine and Neighboring Regions”²⁴, approved on April, 3, 2014, assumes involving Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) as well as the Voice of America service to Ukraine to provide news and information that is accessible, credible, and accurate, emphasize investigative and analytical journalism to highlight inconsistencies and misinformation provided by Russian media. This activity shall prioritize programming to areas where access to uncensored sources of information is limited, especially in Crimea.

On December, 4, 2014 the U.S. Congress approved a resolution which called on the President and the United States Department of State to develop a strategy for multilateral coordination to produce or otherwise procure

²⁰ In 1981 the CIA reorganization led to the dismantling of several departments, including office for economic research, office for political analysis and office for strategic research. At the same time, new offices were introduced, now divided on the regional basis. One of them was SOVA. Available data provides grounds to believe this Office was functioning till 1992.

²¹ The central part of this report was never declassified. Only a brief resume of this document is available.

²² Several issues are present in our References list below (Worldwide active measures and propaganda alert..., Reading room, <https://www.cia.gov>).

²³ <https://twitter.com/UkrProgress>

²⁴ Available online: <https://www.congress.gov/113/plaws/publ96/PLAW-113publ96.pdf>

and distribute news and information in Russian language to the countries with significant Russian-speaking populations. The members of the House of Representatives recommended supporting the establishment of private companies with state participation for further generation of the related content and later to join these efforts with those of the national governments of the region in question.

Quite active has been also the financial provision of the fight against Russian aggression:

- the law as of April, 3, 2014, assumed additional funding in the amount of 10 mln USD on the Voice of America broadcasting as well as on RFE/RL broadcasting in Ukrainian, Balkan, Russian and Tatar languages;
- Broadcasting Board of Governors on March, 4, 2015, approved a decision according to which 23.3 mln USD were assigned for Russian-language programming²⁵;
- on May, 5, 2017 the U.S. Congress made available 100 mln USD²⁶ for the assistance to counter Russian influence and aggression in the countries of Europe and Eurasia, provided that such funds shall be referred to as the Countering Russian Influence Fund (the Fund), and be made available to civil society organizations and other entities in these countries for rule of law, media, cyber, and other programs that strengthen democratic institutions and processes and counter Russian influence and aggression.

In 2015, during the hearings of the Committee on Foreign Affairs (House of Representatives) Daniel S. Hamilton presented his report “The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership Geostrategic Implications²⁷” in which he, inter alia, noted: “For all these reasons, the Kremlin is conducting “active measures” in Eastern Europe, and in the EU itself, including tactics of pressure and intimidation, to derail the TTIP” [TTIP – Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership] (Testimony by Daniel S. Hamilton..., <http://docs.house.gov/meetings>).

Even more attention the topic of “active measures” got in 2016. In May of that year the senators which were members of the Senate Intelligence Committee called the U.S. President to establish an interagency committee to counter Russian “active measures” (Senate Intelligence Committee Advances FY2017 Authorization Bill, <http://www.feinstein.senate.gov>).

Later, in November 2016, the House of Representatives approved a legislative act under the title “*Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017*” (<http://intelligence.house.gov>). In this document, “active measures” were defined very specifically: “The term “active measures by Russia to exert covert influence” means activities intended to influence a person or a government that are carried out in coordination with, or at the behest of, political leaders or the security services of the Russian Federation and the role of the Russian Federation has been hidden or not acknowledged publicly, including the following:

- establishment or funding of a front group;
- covert broadcasting;
- media manipulation;
- disinformation and forgeries;
- funding agents of influence;
- incitement and offensive counterintelligence;
- assassinations;
- terrorist acts.

The document also explained the necessity to “established within the executive branch an interagency committee to counter active measures by the Russian Federation to exert covert influence. The head of an agency or department of the United States Government set out under this subparagraph are the following:

- The Director of National Intelligence;
- The Secretary of State;
- The Secretary of Defense;
- The Secretary of the Treasury;
- The Attorney General;
- The Secretary of Energy;
- The Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation;
- The head of any other agency or department of the United States Government designated by the President for purposes of this section“.

²⁵ Testimony on Ukraine before the House Foreign Affairs Committee. <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rm/2015/mar/238147.htm>

²⁶ Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 <https://rules.house.gov/sites/republicans.rules.house.gov/files/115/OMNI/CPRT-115-HPRT-RU00-SAHR244-AMNT.pdf>

²⁷ Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership – a planned agreement on free trade between the European Union and the USA.

On certain issues the document is even referring to the practices suggested a while ago, during the R. Reagan's presidency. For example: "Accredited diplomatic personnel and consulars of the Russian Federation in the United States may not be permitted to travel a distance in excess of 25 miles from their diplomatic post in the United States".

Congressman Jim Himes, a member of the Intelligence Committee on a meeting dated December, 1, 2016 noted: "One of the most timely and necessary is the creation of a new committee, made up of members from various intelligence agencies, dedicated to countering active measures by Russia to exert covert influence across the globe. That includes media manipulation, funding front groups, and spreading disinformation. The threat posed to global security is real, and we must treat it with a high level of seriousness" (Intelligence Authorization Passes House with Himes Support..., <https://himes.house.gov/press-release>).

Another American Senator, Tom Carper, was also referring to the use of "active measures" during the presidential campaign in September 2016 (Twitter CEO on Covert Operations..., <https://www.hsgac.senate.gov>).

American politicians in general (primarily the Democrats) have been always active in using the notion "active measures" as such and in relation to Russia's intrusion into the presidential campaign 2016 in particular.

In 2017 the notion "active measures" has already become American political buzzword. For example, on March, 2, 2017 the Senator Richard Burr addressed the Attorney General and the Department of Justice with the request to launch an investigation concerning "active measures" of Russian Federation during the election campaign 2016 (Burr Statement on DOJ Investigation..., <https://www.burr.senate.gov>).

The following it press release of the Intelligence Committee (House of Representatives) concerning Russia's intrusion in the U.S. elections was nearly fully dedicated to the issues around the "active measures" problem. In particular, it was noted that the Committee would like to see answers to the following questions which would help better understanding of the problems with Russia's influence on the elections: "What Russian cyber activity and other active measures were directed against the United States and its allies? Did the Russian active measures include links between Russia and individuals associated with political campaigns or any other U.S. Persons? What was the U.S. Government's response to these Russian active measures and what do we need to do to protect ourselves and our allies in the future? What possible leaks of classified information took place related to the Intelligence Community Assessment of these matters?" (Intelligence Committee Chairman..., <http://intelligence.house.gov>).

In his introductory note at the beginning of the hearing which took place on March, 20, 2017, the head of the Committee Devin Nunes underlined: "...our inability to predict the Putin regime's plans and intentions has been the biggest intelligence failure that we've had since 9/11. I hope that this Committee's bipartisan investigation will result in a definitive report on the Russian actions taken during the election campaign"²⁸.

Following this and also in his opening statement Ranking Member of the same Committee Adam Schiff remarked: "We know a lot about the Russian active measures during the 2016 election, about the way they amplified the damage their hacking and dumping of stolen documents was causing through the use of slick propaganda like RT. But there is also a lot we do not know... The stakes are nothing less than the future of liberal democracy. We are engaged in a new war of ideas, not communism versus capitalism, but authoritarianism versus democracy and representative government. And in this struggle, our adversary sees our political process as a legitimate field of battle"²⁹.

Further in his speech the Congressman Schiff emphasized on the necessity to establish a special committee for a proper investigation.

On the same meeting the Congressmen gave a hearing to James B. Comey (director of the FBI) and also Mike Rogers (director of the NSA – National Security Agency)³⁰ to decide later that the list of people to testify in front of this Committee concerning Russia's intrusion in the elections must be expanded³¹.

²⁸ Chairman Nunes Opening Statement: https://intelligence.house.gov/uploadedfiles/chm_opening_statement_final_version_3.20.2017.pdf

²⁹ Intelligence Committee Ranking Member Schiff Opening Statement During Hearing on Russian Active Measures. Retrieved from: <http://schiff.house.gov/news/press-releases/intelligence-committee-ranking-member-schiff-opening-statement-during-hearing-on-russian-active-measures>

³⁰ Open Hearing on Russian Active Measures Investigation. Retrieved from: <http://intelligence.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=769>

³¹ <http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2017/03/30/7139706>

Two more hearing took place in March 2017:

1. "The Evolution of Hybrid Warfare and Key Challenges" in the House Committee on Armed Services³², during which two out of three speakers – Dr. Christopher S. Chivvis (from RAND Corporation) and Dr. Francis G. Hoffman (from National Defense University) stressed there is indeed a connection between the "active measures" used by the USSR and the hybrid warfare of contemporary Russian Federation (Understanding Russian "Hybrid Warfare" And What Can Be Done..., <http://docs.house.gov>; The Evolution of Hybrid Warfare..., <http://docs.house.gov>).
2. The second one was titled "Undermining Democratic Institutions and Splintering NATO: Russia's Disinformation Aims" and was organized by the Foreign Affairs Committee, U.S. House of Representatives³³. The participants of this event were, inter alia, stressing that "Russian disinformation campaigns today are part of a broader arsenal used in Putin's assault on democracy. They are both old – in that they are continued core elements of Soviet "active measures" efforts – and new – in that they have harnessed new technologies and used them effectively"³⁴.

Also, the experts were discussing the specific examples of simultaneous use of propaganda and leaking of stolen documents: "Wikileaks has become the most well-known platform for Russian intelligence to distribute their stolen caches. Hacked material is dumped, some of it unadulterated, some of it perhaps modified – then gets distributed alongside propaganda and used as a kernel around which fully-formed propaganda stories are distributed. The coordination of the two tactics was apparently exposed several times during the U.S. presidential campaign when RT or Sputnik ran a story based on hacked material several hours before it was posted on Wikileaks"³⁵.

The fact that Russia is back to the tactics of "active measures" is no news for the NATO either. During 2012-2016 A. Vershbow, the Deputy Secretary General of this organization, outlining the changed NATO objectives "in the Trump era" emphasized that "Allies should support a bigger NATO role in [...] defending against highly sophisticated influence operations, disinformation and "active measures" by Russia" (Vershbow, <http://www.atlanticcouncil.org>).

Therefore, after a nearly 20-year pause researchers and intelligence experts of the U.S. had to turn back to the concept of "active measures" (e.g., Fleitz, 2016; Dayspring, 2015; Wood, 2014).

The researcher Leon Aron from the American Enterprise Institute (one of the leading think tanks of today's "neoconservatives" in the U.S.) wrote in this regard the following: "Fake news", too, is a long-standing and very well-documented strategy. Like hacking, it is aimed at eroding the legitimacy of democratic institutions and procedures. During the Soviet Union, disinformatsia was one of the KGB's key "active measures" against the West. <...> As a student in the KGB's post-graduate Red Banner Institute, Vladimir Putin undoubtedly studied these techniques" (Aron, <https://www.aei.org>). L. Aron's colleague from the same American Enterprise Institute, L. Schmitt, who used to be (during the 1980s) member of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, also confirms that Russian "new "active measures" follow the very much familiar "Soviet style" (Schmitt, <https://www.aei.org>).

Furthermore, in the RAND Corporation analytical report titled "How to Counter Putin's Subversive War on the West" its authors, William Courtney and Martin Libicki, note that today "cyberwar, sport (for example, recent state-sponsored doping of Olympic athletes), aid to right-wing political parties in Europe, information attacks on German Chancellor Angela Merkel are among the arrows in Moscow's quiver of "active measures" against West" (Courtney, Libicki, <http://www.rand.org>).

F. Hill from the Brookings Institute is also referring to Putin's personal experience with the KGB in this regard: "Through the prism of his time in the KGB, Putin, in particular, considered U.S. democracy-promotion efforts in the 1990s and 2000s to be continuations of the CIA's so-called "active measures" from the Cold War" (Hill, www.brookings.edu).

Today's context of Russian Federation's "active measures" also includes Syria and the ongoing war there: Russia is actively supporting the regime of Bashar al-Assad and is currently blaming the West in the use of "active measures" against him (Syria: Barrel Bombing..., <http://www.atlanticcouncil.org>).

³² The Evolution of Hybrid Warfare and Key Challenges. Retrieved from: <https://armedservices.house.gov/legislation/hearings/full-committee-hearing-evolution-hybrid-warfare-and-key-challenges>

³³ Undermining Democratic Institutions and Splintering NATO: Russian Disinformation Aims: <https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/hearing/hearing-undermining-democratic-institutions-splintering-nato-russian-disinformation-aims>

³⁴ Statement / Daniel Baer Jr. // March 9, 2017 hearing on "Undermining Democratic Institutions and Splintering NATO: Russian Disinformation" U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs/<http://docs.house.gov/meetings/FA/FA00/20170309/105674/HHRG-115-FA00-Wstate-BaerD-20170309.pdf>

³⁵ Statement / Daniel Baer Jr. // March 9, 2017 hearing on "Undermining Democratic Institutions and Splintering NATO: Russian Disinformation" U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs/<http://docs.house.gov/meetings/FA/FA00/20170309/105674/HHRG-115-FA00-Wstate-BaerD-20170309.pdf>

However, all these analysts are only stating the obvious, not providing, unfortunately, specific recommendations on how to counteract new attacks on the West from the side of Russian Federation. For example, the already mentioned above Courtney & Libicki, referring to the previous experience of the USA (during the 1980s, the times of Reagan’s Administration and their campaign aimed at making Soviet “active measures” as public as possible) suggest to act in a very similar manner today as well: “Sunlight may remain the best disinfectant. Moscow’s provocative active measures cause foreign investors and international lenders to see higher risks in doing business with Russia” (Courtney, Libicki, <http://www.rand.org>).

However, efficiency of such “going public” campaign remain quite debatable. The number of Western large businesses that are searching for various (sometimes really doubtful) ways to avoid and/or circumvent Russian sanctions today clearly demonstrate that not everyone is looking for the truth.

Therefore, the concept of “active measures” and all the related notions are back to American political dictionary again, after a pause of 35 years. In the opinion of many contemporary American researchers and politicians, this concept can be extremely useful in describing the relations not only between the USA and Russian Federation, but on the global level too.

4. “ACTIVE MEASURES” OF THE USSR AND HYBRID WAR OF RUSSIA: DETERMINING COMMON FEATURES

So, were the Soviet “active measures” of the second half of the 20th century actually successful? Did they achieve their result? Taking into account the final result of the Cold War (that is the Soviet split), we can state that probably only partially. However, estimating “active measures” only in relation to this final geopolitical outcome would not be fair and/or reasonable enough, at least because many of these “active measures” were quite successful, taking them separately. Moreover, we are still fighting quite a range of consequences from Soviet large-scale operations implemented by the KGB at the international level. Many of these fake news and misconceptions are still shaping the mass consciousness, in numerous countries (the most common examples are, probably, “CIA responsibility for the assassination of Olof Palme” or “CIA created the AIDS virus in its secret labs”).

Experience and tools used for decades in the Soviet Union are now being at full disposal of Russian political machine. Strictly speaking, the pause in “active measures” use lasted around 15 years, and the Russians returned to these practices already in 2007-2008³⁶.

Russia today is using quite known (and many times already mentioned within the text) tools and methods, including agents of influence, deception and use of media (own and foreign ones), front organizations etc. – however, most of these methods under today’s conditions are getting new contents and meaning.

Despite all American efforts to reveal Soviet “active measures”, still, till today, the very notion of “active measures” is not yet fully conceptualized. Therefore, we would like to suggest our own definition which is more appropriate for today’s context, for practical application to contemporary (in particular – Ukrainian) realia as well as for more general estimation of today’s Russian “active measures” potential. Thus:

“Active measures” stand for the activities aimed at the achievement of external and internal political aims of the state as the subject of influence, and these activities are implemented so that to influence negatively the public opinion in the state which is the object of influence and also to change the policies and activities of the government in this state, erode trust to its political leaders and institutes as well as to disorient the global public opinion in its assessments of this state’s policies and activities.

This negative influence first of all means general population’s attitude to the acting political authorities, political institutes in general as well political efforts in the fields of economy, diplomacy and military affairs.

³⁶ There is a big question mark regarding this “pause” as such. Quoting one of the defectors from Russian intelligence to New York, Sergey Tretyakov: “Nothing has changed. Russia is doing everything it can today to embarrass the U.S.” (quote as of 2008, from: Osnos et al., 2017)..

Trying to compare Soviet “active measures” with the “active measures” of today’s Russia it would be reasonable to get back to S. Whittle’s scheme already presented at the beginning of our research. Of course, the older scheme would require some changes and updates, in particular, related to: 1) the remarks described above concerning military operations and agents of influence; 2) the need to do some “refreshing” taking into account the today’s changed context, namely, all globalization factors and especially – emergence of brand new methods and means of information transmission. The experts, quite expectedly, note that the speed and the scale of contemporary Russian information campaigns are much larger, and so are the targets. And this has become possible primarily due to the capacities of the Internet, digital television, social media in its variety as well as the emergence of brand new economic levers of influence on foreign governments. Besides that, today’s Russia is less limited in terms of ideology, thus, it is more free in the choice of both objectives and methods used to reach these objectives (Understanding Russian “Hybrid Warfare”..., <http://docs.house.gov>).

In Whittle’s taxonomy described at the beginning of this research an update would be required in terms of agents’ of influence use and clandestine broadcasting. The most obvious choice would be substituting the latter with a new group of cybermethods (which would include: cyberspying, cyberattacks, cyberdiversion etc.).

Clandestine broadcasting used to be very much relevant and meaningful as part of Soviet “active measures” in the middle of the previous century (for example, Radio Ba Yi, established in 1979 and broadcasting in Mandarin language for China; or the National Voice of Iran, established in 1959 and broadcasting in Persian on the territory of Iran) (Foreign Affairs Note..., <https://archive.org>). However, in today’s high-tech conditions radio broadcasting is quickly losing its role and value as such. Thus, today functions of clandestine broadcasting are being performed mostly by social networks (especially YouTube, streaming in other social networks, Internet radio).

Today Ukraine is having problems with clandestine broadcasting, which is mostly due to non-sanctioned use of Ukrainian telecommunications for establishing illegal broadcasting in “new republics”. In particular, information activity of Donetsk/Luhansk “People’s Republics” started with takeovers of TV centers, networks and TV towers for further broadcasting of their information programs on the occupied territories. In its own way, this can be interpreted as “clandestine broadcasting” since de-facto it is non-sanctioned, and de-jure is also illegal. Besides, both territorial groups of insurgents are quite active in social networks and also have YouTube channels for news broadcasting.

The use of religious organizations and their separate representatives as the agents of influence has also got much larger scale. Today, Orthodox churches belonging to the Moscow Patriarchate in various countries of the world are becoming the immediate providers of “active measures”, the open platforms of pro-Russian and anti-Western propaganda, while their clergy are fully supporting all Russian actions, sometimes even directly with military equipment in their hands.

Ukraine was among the first countries to realize that Russian Orthodoxy can be an agent of political influence, and under crisis conditions it was very quick to switch from “soft measures” to open support of the pro-Russian insurgents. Active support for the insurgency on the East of Ukraine on the side of Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate have been confirmed by evidences. For example, one clergyman was adjusting the insurgents’ fire near Donetsk (Svyashchennyk UPC MP..., <https://inforesist.org>). Other clergymen of the same Church³⁷, especially at early stages of Russian aggression, were providing the insurgents with housing, food etc. and we also agitating for joining the insurgency movement. Moreover, they consecrated the arms and other military equipment or even sometimes were forming their own terrorist groups, thus becoming insurgents themselves. In Slovyansk priests of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate were among the most active participants of the city’s seizure. Another important direction in anti-Ukrainian activity of the Ukrainian Orthodox (Moscow Patriarchy) clergy was anti-state propaganda and agitation for separatism. Till now, among Ukrainian Orthodox clergy there are quite a lot of priests rejecting the fact of Russian aggression and supporting (or even heading in some cases) the separatist movements. Popularization of Orthodoxy in this context is based on the ideology of all-Slavic unity and commonness, and church publications of pro-Russian orientation are calling mostly for boycotting mobilization to Ukrainian army and reaching peace on the Donbass “at any price”.

³⁷ Data on the activities of separate representatives of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Moscow Patriarchate, mentioned here, are borrow from the site <https://myrotvoretz.center/>

Despite the fact that today's economic capacities of the Russian Federation are limited as compared with the capacities of the Soviet Union, the use of economic agents of influence still remain possible due to the country's much more proactive economic policy (especially since the middle of the 2000s and further on). Moreover, the overall number of Russia's economic agents of influence today is larger than in the other spheres of influence: since 2007-2008 Russia has been actively attracting foreign companies to enter Russian internal markets, luring them with potential hyper-profits and vast opportunities due to rather relaxed and flexible legislation. Today these, already well established, economic connections are being actively used in the course of “active measures” implementation (both in Ukraine and in Western countries).

Very close cooperation between Ukrainian and Russian companies which has lasted for decades as well as nearly absolute dependence of separate Ukrainian large enterprises upon Russian market have predetermined the availability of vast opportunities to use these businesses in the interests of the Russian Federation, and in some cases these enterprises were not even aware they were being used. Most interested in Russia (and thus – most dependent upon the aggressor) are the huge financial-industrial groups (or their separate representatives).

Russia is also actively using this economic factor in its numerous information-psychological campaigns against Ukraine. Namely, during 2016-2017 Russia was carrying out an information campaign within which certain Ukrainian enterprises were publicly calling for restoring the economic relations with the Russian Federation. After a thorough clearance it turned out that a larger share of such declarations were actually fake (“My bez Rossii propadyom...”, <http://detector.media>).

Thus, taking into account the current context and summarizing all already available definitions and generalizations, suggested by American both researchers and professionals in the related field, we find most comprehensive the following classification of the contemporary “active measures” (Figure 3).

In its standoff against the Russian Federation Ukraine is facing nearly all of these methods mentioned above. At the same time, the current situation is radically different. Today, the emphasis on the use of cyber and psychological methods as well as active use of other most actual trends of the global world development (mostly related to the information revolution, spread of military technologies and also globalization) is supplemented by military aggression. On the one hand, this aggression has become the direct consequence of the “active measures” use on the territory of our country for many years, if not decades; and on the other – these “active measures” are still being used against Ukraine till now, in parallel to military operations.

The very fact of military factor availability “converts” the implementation of “active measures” into the act of hybrid war. While the beginning of this hybrid war confirms the lack of capacities of the subject of influence to reach its objectives through non-military methods.

From the theoretical standpoint of the contemporary military & political thought, the concept of “active measures” can become the basis for proper understanding of the “hybrid war”, if the latter is taken as an evolutionary development of “active measures”.

We can also state that hybrid war today becomes not only the continuation of “active measures” (the next logical step in their development; their update due to changes in the external environment; or as the so-called “alternative” actions³⁸), but it somehow “absorbs” them, adding at the same time the military factor on the top, which is implemented through the following actions:

- direct military aid to the insurgents, the facts of which are officially denied by the side providing this aid;
- providing resources (financial, economic, diplomatic, military and administrative) to the groups directly waging military aggression;
- annexing part of the territory of another state.

Both “active measures” and hybrid war are **destructive influences, subject to one common political strategic plan**, imposed by one state against another, or by one state against several other states.

³⁸ A. Malcher, for example, states that “active measures” and hybrid war are inseparable and all their elements may be used together, “separately or tailored to fit various objectives and may be culturally, religiously or politically specific for the optimum effect” (Malcher Alan. KGB Active Measures and Russian Hybrid Warfare: a brief comparison: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/kgb-active-measures-russian-hybrid-warfare-brief-alan-malcher-ma>).

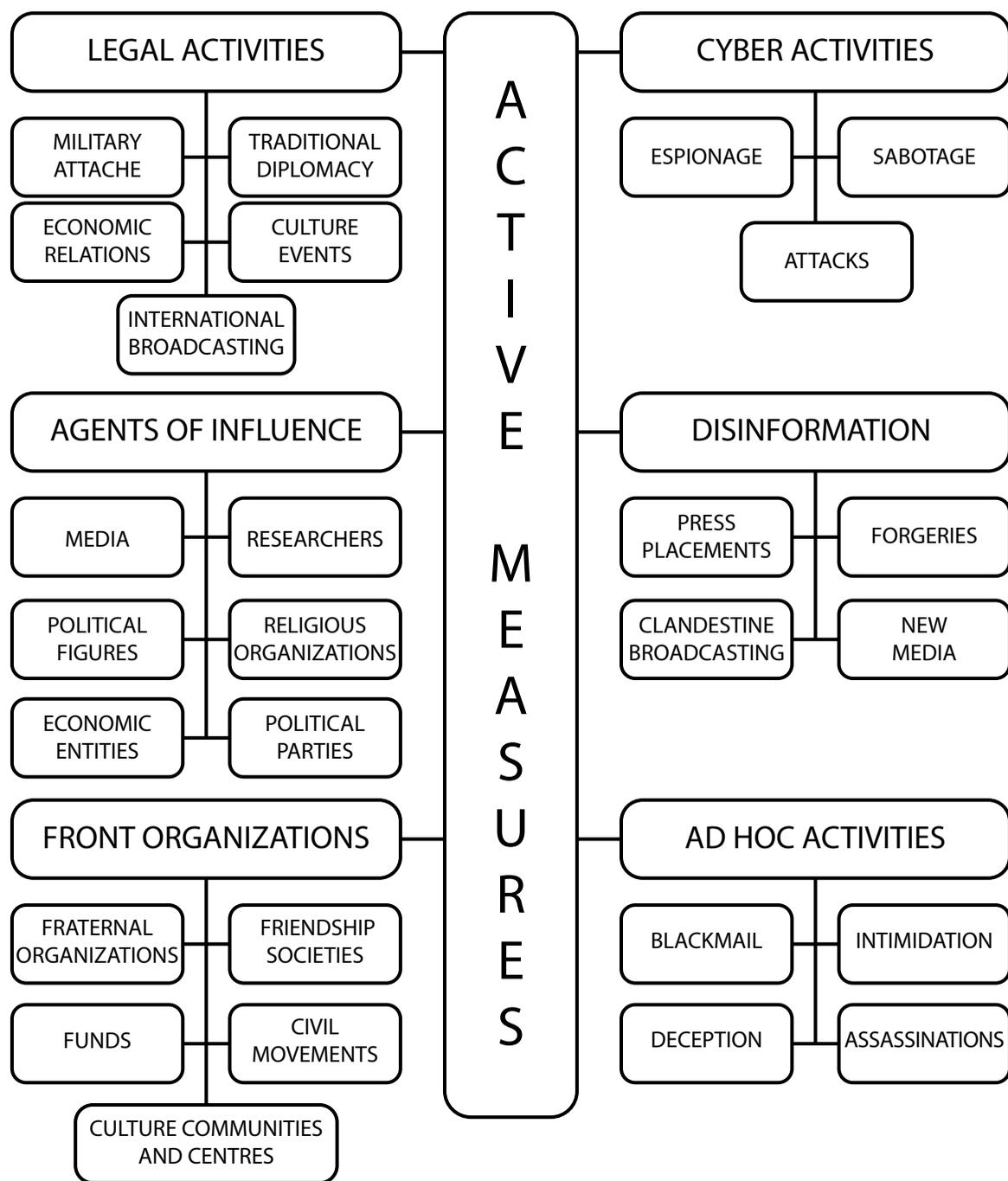


Figure 3. Methods of contemporary “active measures”

Before the actual implementation of “active measures” this more general political strategic plan must be approved. For example, it may include bringing to power the controlled subjects of political influence (the agents of influence) which are supposed to adjust the general course of a country (external, economic, military, cultural etc.) in the needed direction. This would be the maximum control level. While the minimum control level in this regard would include formation of a rather neutral perception of an aggressor by the local public opinion, with the emphasis on supposedly “friendly relations”. Formation of the needed public attitude and imposing the idea that such cooperation and friendship have no reasonable alternative require the application of quite a variety of methods and tools from the “active measures” toolbox.

In our view, implementation of “active measures” is a permanent activity, especially when it comes to the states which happen to be neighbours of other states with very ambitious plans of expanding the sphere of

interest and of direct influence. Such geopolitical situation put forward the question regarding the efficiency of intelligence and counterintelligence units' performance and also the question of what measures must be taken to consolidate population, what preventive measures must be applied to avoid the most aggressive "active measures" being used (or at least what measures can be taken to minimize the consequences). This actually implies efforts must be taken on building a "sustainable society" which is able to restore quickly after a destructive scenario is being implemented against it.

In theory, full implementation of "active measures" means a certain strategic political plan has been achieved. However, in real life there maybe additional (pre)conditions

- if the aggressor, after obtaining the minimum-level control, decides to go for the maximum-level control too;
- if the state which is the object of aggression is able to demonstrate rather efficient and persuasive counteraction, however, the latter is not strong enough to declare obvious win in the standoff;
- in case the policy of "soft power" has failed,

hybrid war becomes the only way to reach the strategic political aim. In a certain sense, the object of influence is forced to wage a hybrid war because this is the most logical continuation of "active measures" if the latter are not efficient enough. The key task of "active measures" at the stage of transition to hybrid warfare would be creating an artificial trigger for open military actions (Understanding Russian "Hybrid Warfare"... , <http://docs.house.gov>).

Russia's annexation of Crimea generated concerns that the Kremlin might seek to use a hybrid strategy to create a pretext for military actions elsewhere, such as in the Baltic states. Russia might seek to foment discord between the minority Russian population in a country like Estonia, creating a narrative that portrays the Estonian government as being repressive and then exploiting this narrative to justify Russian military intervention on behalf of this Russian minority. It would almost certainly be accompanied by the efforts to influence broader European and world opinion in the ways that favor Russia's intervention (Understanding Russian "Hybrid Warfare"... , <http://docs.house.gov>).

Using the prepared in advance resource, the subject of influence launches limited but direct military intervention – this is the beginning of a hybrid war. Major efforts are concentrated on general support of the insurgents, and this support may have many aspects. First of all, this is direct military aid through arms supply and also sending the qualified staff, mostly from among special forces officers. Economic support is also provided – ranging from direct financial inflows to quazi-humanitarian aid.

One of the necessary preconditions for initiating a hybrid war is overall negative socioeconomic and/or political situation in the country against which the aggression is being used. One important factor which makes hybrid war possible is weakness of internal military force of the object of influence, including outdated equipment, unpreparedness of the local army to real tasks, disinclination of military leaders to face real war situations.

Taking into account all of the above, we suggest the following classification of methods used during a hybrid war (see Figure 4).

Therefore, we can state that today Ukraine is experiencing the hybrid war as a special form of standoff and a combination of "active measures" being used against it with military aggression.

Hybridism of this ongoing conflict has been determined by the Pentagon analysts in the early 2000 already and later found its full manifestation in Ukraine. Fusion of various forces and means employed in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts includes: support for separatists, sending own special forces and Russian regulars with advanced military capabilities, electronic warfare, drones, rocket launchers; employment of political repressions, control over food supplies and suppression of local employment and economic security to control local population. Moreover, accidental catastrophic act of killing 217 passengers aboard MH-17 is also representative as an additional hybrid threat (The Evolution of Hybrid Warfare..., <http://docs.house.gov>).

It would be also fair and feasible to consider Ukrainian local conflict in a wider context – that of the "world hybrid war", that is, Russia's waging hybrid war against the West world as such (Ed. Horbulin, 2017). Hybrid

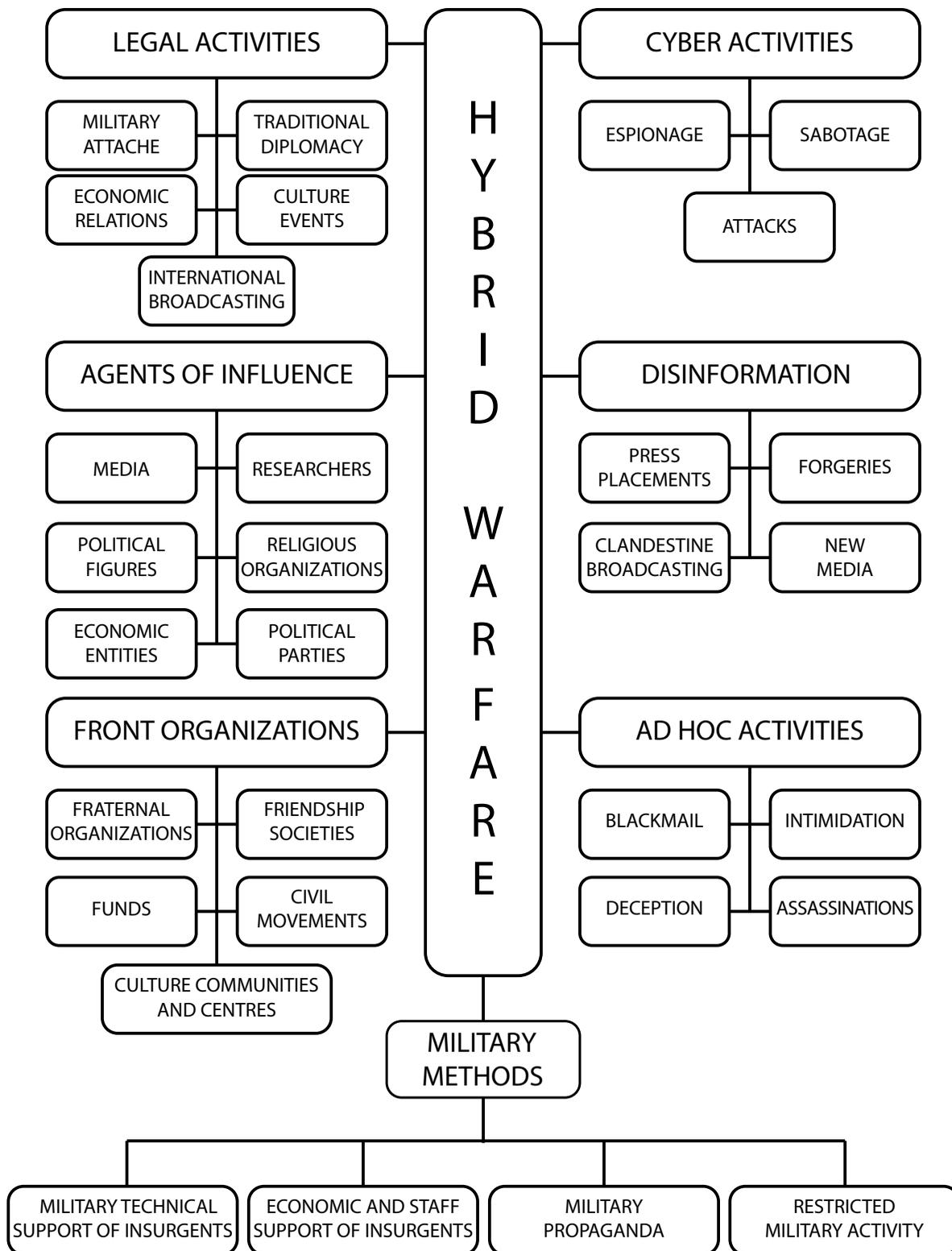


Figure 4. Methods of hybrid warfare

war as a form of Russia’s rather aggressive solving of its geopolitical tasks is not limited by Ukrainian territories, it tends to develop further, and its forms become more and more diverse, thus spreading hybrid warfare on new territories (Horbulin, 2016). Military intrusion in Syria and incidents with Turkey are additional evidences confirming that Russian hybrid warfare is quickly becoming global, and the aggressor’s attempts to guarantee itself the maximum control may have the most negative consequences for the global order as such. Moreover, the less Western states react to the aggressive behavior of the Russian Federation – the most probable this scenario gets. On the regional level of “Western world” (that is, Europe and the USA) the standoff still remains to be on the level of “active measures” only, however, even in these, rather distanced, countries these “active measures” become more and more aggressive.

Further conceptualization of the notion “hybrid warfare” taking into account the notion “active measures” would allow optimizing (and systematizing) the mechanisms which can be applied while counteracting the aggressor, since this would enable the consolidation of separate actions and steps from various fields of activity into one common, logically constructed, chain of actions.

5. CONCLUSIONS

1. Finding the right preconditions for the formation of the concept “hybrid war” requires a thorough research on several historic periods which covered rather large-scale and many-aspect standoff of the world leaders. One of these periods was the Cold War, primarily its final part – the 1980s, as the time of the most radical and severe standoff of the Soviet and Western systems.

2. Since the end of the 1970s – early 1980s the topic of “active measures” used by the USSR against the countries of the West, primarily USA, became especially relevant and popular among researchers.

3. It took quite a while for the U.S. authorities to understand how dangerous Soviet “active measures” can be. Till the very end of the 1970s this term had been barely used in legal documents and/or classified expert materials. However, after a range of defections from the socialistic camp (Stanislav Levchenko from the Soviet Union and Lawrence Britt from Czechoslovakia) the American intelligence and political establishment finally got sufficient data on the nature of such Soviet activities and their real scale. Already then the Soviet Union was using its “active measures” to influence the political processes, and not only in the U.S., but in a range of other democratic countries too.

4. However, real acknowledgement of the Soviet threat to the national interests of the USA due to the USSR “active measures” happened only in the 1980s, when Ronald Reagan became the U.S. President. Only after that, a range of public reports (on the side of the Department of State) and classified reports (on the side of the CIA and also National Security Council) formed the basis for the future system of the “active measures” counteraction.

5. Further on, the organizational system which was supposed to find the right mechanisms for the “active measures” counteraction included the Interagency Active Measure Working Group as well as several separate subjects from the security sector: CIA, FBI which were regularly reporting to the related House committees along with SOVA – the Office of Soviet Analysis.

6. It would be very hard (if not impossible by now) to get the fair estimates of how efficient the Western counteraction measures really were throughout the 20th century. However, taking into account the very final result of the Cold War, we may assume that probably, these measures were successful enough. Among those methods used in counteraction to Soviet “active measures”, data on which is available for expert evaluation, American researchers mention as the most successful the following: making public the destructive efforts of the USSR; overall rigidity in relations with the Soviet Union, first of all, demonstration of the U.S. readiness to use power in case of any provocation; consistency in relations with allies; and finally – counterinformation activity.

7. The topic of “active measures” was back on the agenda within expert and political communities in the USA since 2014. In 2016 the House of Representatives approved the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017, and in it, the updated definition of “active measures” was directly provided: actions influencing people or governments, which are implemented in cooperation with or upon the demand of political leaders or

intelligence offices of the Russian Federation, while the role of the latter remains to be hidden or at least not acknowledged publicly. Moreover, the same document presents the list of potential “active measures”, namely: founding and/or financing of front groups; clandestine broadcasting; media manipulations; disinformation and forged documents; financing the agents of influence; provocations and offensive counterintelligence; political assassinations; acts of terror.

8. Similarity between 20th-century activities of the Soviet Union and that of today’s Russian Federation (in which nearly all political powers belong to former staff members of the Soviet intelligence) only proves how relevant to the today’s context would be further detailed research and analysis of “active measures” and the potential mechanisms to be applied to response to these measures.

9. Despite the large variety of “active measures” definitions and a long list of methods used for their implementation, we can still make several generalizations. During the 1980s national security experts and defense officers in the USA were mostly operating the following definition of “active measures”: “Soviet term which stands for various forms of activity outside traditional diplomacy, used to reach the targets of the Soviet Union external policy. “Active measures” are usually implemented by the intelligence services and are aimed at influencing the policies of foreign governments, at damaging the relations between the nations and ruining the trust among the foreign leaders and/or institutes through opponents’ discreditation”.

10. Combination of the methods applied in the course of “active measures” would be hard to formalize, however, to the key methods belong: disinformation, use of communist parties and front organizations, clandestine broadcasting, influencing foreign media, using the agents of influence, forgeries of documents. “Classical” methods within “active measures” can be structures in the following way: spreading disinformation (via publishing materials in mass media, forging documents and/or clandestine broadcasting), use of front organizations (societies of friendship, civil movements), using the agents of influence (in the fields of media, science and politics), illegal activities (deception, blackmailing, intimidation, political assassinations etc.).

11. The above list of methods does not fully match the today’s environment already. Namely, to the list of “active measures” today we also need to add the methods used in cyber space (cyberspying, cyberattacks, cyberdiversion etc.). Also, to the list of relevant agents of influence we need to add the Church and business circles. Besides that, the new generation of media today is radically transforming the information environment, thus providing new opportunities for destructive influences.

12. Nowadays the research on “active measures” must be not only “renewed” but must also provide a methodological basis for more exact determination of the nature and structure of Russia’s hybrid war against Ukraine. Analysis and comparison of the concept “active measures” and “hybrid warfare”, going deep into the details of their content, enables proving that these notions are mutually determined. Both “active measures” and hybrid warfare are destructive in nature, both are also initiated by the state which is the subject of influence, according to a certain strategic political plan – e.g., getting control over another state – the object of influence. However, if the subject of influence has got the wrong impression – that the minimum control over the object of influence is imposed – the former would most probably try to impose also the maximum control, often not assessing carefully all potential consequences (including strong resistance on the side of the object of influence). In some cases the subject of influence is simply not able to reach the strategic political aim by means of non-military methods (due to loss of “soft powers”) – thus, a hybrid war begins.

13. Hybrid warfare must be understood as the continuation of “active measures”, to which military methods are added. This means limited in capacities but still direct military intervention along with economic and diplomatic support of the insurgents, supplying arms and military staff (the latter often become the leaders of the insurgents since they are purposefully selected among the special forces officers).

14. Waging a hybrid war also becomes possible when the military forces of the object of influence are weak, while the system of public administration is dysfunctional and there is also lack of strong political will within national political establishment.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UKRAINE: MECHANISMS FOR COUNTERACTING “ACTIVE MEASURES” AND HYBRID WAR

Thorough analysis of the U.S. experience in its standoff against the Soviet Union during the Cold War enables developing a list of recommendations for the Ukrainian sector of national security and defense concerning, inter alia, the optimization of actions and measures applied to counteract the hybrid warfare of the Russian Federation against Ukraine. Even though these particular recommendations have been elaborated for a specific situation of Russian aggression in Ukraine, they overall can become a reasonable basis for the development of similar recommendations for other countries, also suffering from similar aggression. The following recommendations can be also used in the course of tasks' setting by other states which are also trying to counteract Russian Federation in its today's implementation of “active measures”.

1. Taking into account the fact that today “active measures” of Russian Federation constitute the largest share of its hybrid actions overall, the capacities of Ukrainian intelligence and counterintelligence services must be seriously strengthened. This concerns not only increasing their financial and technical capacities but strengthening also the legal and the education aspects of all related processes.

2. In parallel to strengthening the development of national intelligence and counterintelligence, special attention must be paid to ongoing modernization of the Military Forces of Ukraine, since high potential of the latter is the strongest guarantee that Russian Federation will not be able to implement its strategic political plan. Considering that the larger share of practical actions on Russian side today are not large-scale operations but more of inspiring escalation by special forces groups, the key efforts of the opponents must be concentrated on increasing the mobility of the Military Forces, their equipment with the most high-tech arms and their capacity to respond quickly to newly emerging challenges which often can be rather far from the conventional methods of waging wars. This does not mean that traditional preparation of the national military forces must be stopped until the country stops the military aggression against it since large-scale direct invasion is still among the possible scenarios of the current situation further development.

3. All units of the national security and defense sector in Ukraine must be ready to act under the conditions of any “active measures” use against them, in particular, in the course of the ongoing hybrid war. Keeping this objective in mind, national security and defense must develop multilevel and multifunctional comprehensive plans for further national protection. An important component of this readiness is development of the national resilience system which is supposed to not only complicate the implementation of “active measures” for Russia, but also perform another important function, vital for today's situation in Ukraine: development of national resilience in all spheres must become the priority for higher flexibility and better adaptability of the national security system under the conditions of permanent hybrid challenges.

4. For more efficient information exchange and efforts' coordination between the units of national security and national defense working on counteraction to “active measures” of Russian Federation it would be feasible to create an interagency working group.

5. Monitoring of Russian “active measures” against Ukraine must become part of the overall monitoring of threats to national interests and national security, according to the Doctrine of Information Security of Ukraine (Decree of the President of Ukraine N47/2017, <http://www.president.gov.ua/documents/472017-21374>).

Determining the structure of this monitoring along with the forms of presenting information (for example, reports) as well as forms of data collection (both formal and informal) must become one of the most urgent tasks for the already mentioned above Interagency working group on “active measures” counteraction. The monitoring report must be publicly available, at least partially – similar to what was recommended to the White House and the U.S. Intelligence Community during the hearing “Undermining Democratic Institutions and Splintering NATO: Russian Disinformation”³⁹.

³⁹ Statement /Lincoln P. Bloomfield, Jr. // March 9, 2017 hearing on "Undermining Democratic Institutions and Splintering NATO: Russian Disinformation" U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs: <http://docs.house.gov/meetings/FA/FA00/20170309/105674/HHRG-115-FA00-Wstate-BloomfieldL-20170309.pdf>

6. Another important element in “active measures” counteraction is strengthening information & communication capacities of all public authorities. This would contribute to strengthening of truly European values in the mass consciousness of Ukrainian citizens and also to the formation of the environment of understanding, openness and support based on these European values. Therefore, public opinion would rest on state interests but not on some sort of primitive friend-or-foe division. The most relevant instrument to be used to achieve this aim would be strategic communications which are supposed to contribute to better mass understanding of the true values and sense of the state’s existence as such.

7. It also seems to be appropriate by now to analyze the opportunities for radical revision of Ukrainian legislation in terms of expanding the authorities of intelligence and counterintelligence bodies (and partially – also law enforcement bodies) so that they can react more efficiently to new challenges:

a) we need to acknowledge here that in some cases counteracting “active measures” can be a rather borderline process when it comes to universal human rights and norms of a truly democratic society. In an attempt to make society better protected there is also a potential risk to deviate from the democratic principles. At the same time, we must take into account the conditions of the ongoing hybrid war and also the fact that Russian Federation is using “active measures” on a daily basis. In this regard, it would be expedient to approve the framework legal act “On the specific features of national legislation application to the state aggressor” (or simply – “On the state aggressor”). This framework change would divide Ukrainian national legislation overall into two large blocks: general (acting) legislation, containing all standard democratic norms and values – and special legislation, applicable specifically to the relations between Ukraine and the state aggressor. Norms of this specific legislation must be applicable solely to the relations of Ukraine with the states which Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine would declare to be “state aggressors”.

The related legislation must introduce the restrictive measures and/or interpret the specific application of general legal norms in the course of relations with the state aggressor. First of all, this must concern the strengthened control over financial relations between Ukrainian residents and the state aggressor. Another important direction in the related legal changes must be limiting certain activities (professional ones) of the citizens from the state aggressor on the territory of Ukraine, including the introduction of criminal responsibility for the activities which, under normal conditions, are not punishable as such or fall into the category of administrative liability only. Similarly changed rules must be applied to media outlets which are functioning on the territory of Ukraine but are at same time financed, managed and/or controlled in other way from the state aggressor and/or by its citizens etc.;

b) Ukrainian legislation in force must mention “active measures” directly and specifically – with exact interpretation of their key aims and brief description of potential key methods (though this list should be not limiting but on the opposite – open for updates). This would, on the one hand, contribute to legal entrenchment of understanding these activities as destructive ones, and on the other – would provide more opportunities for flexible interpretation of various methods used in the course of “active measures” implementation. The latter, in turn, would open up new opportunities for the actions of intelligence and counterintelligence bodies in Ukraine.

8. The fight against separate manifestations of “active measures” being implemented does not have much prospect due to large scale and wide variety of the related activities of Russian Federation. However, the core of today’s Russian “active measures” consists of a rather limited set of methods/instruments which must be always in the center of attention of the national security and defense experts in Ukraine. This limited set of the most widely used methods/tools include:

- **The use of front organizations which have the official status of NGOs, movements, charity funds, cultural societies etc.** Counteracting to the activities of such organization must rest on stricter legal control over their activities and especially over their financing (most probably – fully performed by Russian Federation, the state aggressor)⁴⁰. It would be expedient to add legal norms on how to shutdown such organizations (once it is confirmed that they are being financed by the state aggressor with a specific purpose) and how to further take their management to court in case counterintelligence and/or law enforcement bodies have enough evidence to prove the organizations have been “informally financed” by

⁴⁰ Here and further in our recommendations “the state aggressor”, “Russia” and “Russian Federation” are used as exact synonyms. Overall, our recommendations are universal in nature, thus, they can be applicable to any other country considered as the state aggressor by another country

Russian Federation. Another mechanism to be applied against such organizations can be “rights’ limitation” for their staff, for example, a 5-year limitation on public service posts if a person has been recently employed by such organization.

- **Financing and using the agents of influence.** The key issue in this regard is determination of the legal status of such “agents”. Once the status of an agent of influence is confirmed by sufficient evidence, there is a necessity to define the liability and also to determine what limitations can be applied to the activities of such agents. For minimization of potential misuse the state authorities must set the exact criteria according to which a person or an organization can be named “the agent of Russian Federation influence”. For example, political parties can be such agents. Even though in Ukraine financing of political parties from abroad is prohibited by legislation, this legal norm needs to be re-emphasized by providing additional explanation on political parties as agents of influence. Once the facts are presented proving that a political party has been financed by the state aggressor (and these facts must be presented in court), the party must be nearly automatically shut down, and the actions of its leadership must be interpreted in court as the most serious offence.
- **Manipulations and the use of mass media outlets.** Activities of Russia media on the territory of Ukraine are already rather restricted, however, this counteraction mechanism requires additional systematization. For the most popular media outlets (first of all – TV channels) the text of a license for broadcasting must contain a special block of conditions concerning the relations with the state aggressor. The following preconditions for broadcasting must be strictly controlled: financial relations of a media outlet with its sponsors, who is represented in top management and in the Board, what is the nature of subordination relations inside the management structure etc. Internet media remains to be the most complicated sector in terms of regulation and monitoring. If the near future already Ukrainian media community itself would not demonstrate efficient enough forms and actions of self-organization and internal influence on its members, then the state would have to intrude in this sphere too. Of similar opinion are also the representatives of the media expert community: “Under conditions when Ukrainian TV channels are not capable to perform self-regulation, the civil society must demand the state introduces much stricter norms of content regulation. The state also has its own reasons to impose them, since under current sociopolitical conditions in Ukraine quite frequent become the cases when aggressive and/or obviously anti-social behavior is not only punishable but is somehow treated as socially successful. And media, intentionally or not, only promotes this trend”⁴¹.

9. Keeping in mind the key aim – to increase the efficiency of counteraction to hybrid war, it would be expedient to carry out the “inventory” of the methods and tool currently used by the Russian Federation and then – to develop the key potential scenarios for further counteraction. Taking into account that hybridity of this war is revealed through a combination of various elements, it is important to demonstrate the possible variants of counteraction combinations too, since the availability of readymade combinations would simplify future identification of the needed chains of actions.

10. Same potential scenarios of hybrid war further spread and counteraction to it should be also taken into account in the course of trainings and re-trainings for the staff of national security and defense sectors.

11. Also useful would be further development of scientific & analytical grounds for strategic communications’ implementation by public authorities of Ukraine. For this matter, it seems to be necessary to establish, on the basis of the National Institute for Strategic Research, a corresponding center which would perform research and expert analytical activities in close cooperation with similar institutions in the structure of NATO and in the countries members of this Alliance.

⁴¹ Our translation of the quoeae from: http://mediarada.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/17-01-IMC_STB_Shows-1.pdf

Annex

Forgery cases

In the course of Soviet “active measures” implementation the USA were especially concerned with the large volumes of documents’ falsification. Quite quickly this phenomenon became indeed massive and thus was causing serious consequences for the U.S. foreign policy⁴². According to the CIA data, some 150 anti-U.S. forgeries of suspected Soviet origin had surfaced since the end of World War II (USSR monthly review, Reading room, [https:// www.cia.gov](https://www.cia.gov)). These forgeries included the State Department cables, Pentagon news release, U.S. business firms’ correspondence, U.S. officials’ personal and official correspondence, a Commerce Department memorandum, U.S. Army field manuals, and other U.S. Government documents. The most widely spread method to create such “documents” was photocopying the real blanks and signatures and later using them in fake texts (Soviet active measures in the United States..., Reading room, [https:// www.cia.gov](https://www.cia.gov)).

In 1982 this specific type of Soviet “active measures” became so efficient that the CIA prepared a special report which originally was titled “Soviet forgeries of U.S. Government documents”. Later, USICA distributed the same report, already under the title “Soviet Forgeries Field Manual” (Reading room, [https:// www.cia.gov](https://www.cia.gov)).

Another CIA report, dated March, 23, 1983, confirmed the fact of forgery of Reagan’s letters’ to the King of Spain (Soviet attempts to intimidate Western leaders, Reading room, [https:// www.cia.gov](https://www.cia.gov)).

In 1983 the CIA prepared a report under the title “Alleged KKK death threats to third world olympic athletes: a Soviet active measure”. The situation preceding this report was, briefly, as follows:

“The National Olympic Committees of eleven Asian and African countries received letters threatening the lives of their Olympic athletes. The letters, allegedly sent from the United States by the Ku Klux Klan, were extremely racist and violent in tone. The CIA believed the letters were forgeries produced and disseminated by the Soviet Union in order to bolster Moscow’s claim that athletes’ security cannot be guaranteed at the Olympics, to reduce Third World participation at the L.A. Games, and to discredit the United States”.

This conclusion was supported by the following facts: the letters did not appear to have been written by a native English speaker; the letters spelled “Ku Klux Klan” with a hyphen between the first two words, a construction not used in English; the story of the letters was very quickly picked up by the Soviet media; the letters were mailed to the correct addresses of National Olympic Committees, which included post office box numbers in some cases; none of the pro-Soviet African or Asian nations boycotting the Olympics received such a threatening letter (Alleged KKK death threats..., Reading room, [https:// www.cia.gov](https://www.cia.gov)).

In 1986 several American media outlets got anonymous mail which contained the correspondence between (supposedly) United States Information Agency (USIA) official Herbert Romerstein to Senator David F. Durenberger, former Chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. The letter, dated April 29, 1986, described an alleged USIA campaign to spread disinformation on the Chernobyl nuclear power plant disaster. In particular, this disinformation was supposed to mention 2-3 thousand people suffering from acute radiation sickness instead of 29 officially confirmed dead by the Soviet Union⁴³.

Analysis of this “letter” revealed that the signature of H. Romerstein had been “borrowed” from another official USIA letter.

Slightly later the FBI also produced a report, more general in nature and contents – “Soviet active measures in the United States – an updated report by the FBI” (Reading room, [https:// www.cia.gov](https://www.cia.gov)). This report concerned the problem of forgeries too. In particular, the FBI experts noted that the key aim of such forgeries was to discredit the United States and its allies, influence political action and public opinion in America and abroad, and promote worldwide Soviet foreign policy goals. These forgeries were often designed to supply the “factual evidence” needed to prove the disinformation that Moscow had already advanced through other

⁴² Quite an interesting overview of this phenomenon as a factor of influence on American politics is presented in: Document Forgery, <http://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences-and-law/law/crime-and-law-enforcement/document-forgery>

⁴³ This case is also an illustration of preventive defamation, since in real life the USSR was doing its best to hide the actual statistics on the dead and sick and the real scale of the problem.

active measures operations and propaganda. Many Soviet forgeries were aimed at influencing the Third World countries as well as the United States. The Soviets tried to get forgeries and disinformation stories be printed in the non-communist media. If the Soviets were successful in this, they usually then reprinted these news accounts in their own media. Even when the U.S. Government issues denials on the authenticity of a forged document, the Soviets believed that the denial would never entirely offset the damage already caused by the initial “news story” based on forgery.

Another type of forgeries used to influence foreign governments were the so-called “silent forgeries” which were never supposed to get public. One of the example of such a “silent forgery” use was spreading a copy of “a summary paper on U.S. foreign policy approved by the National Security Council in February 1985.” It was sent to a number of embassies in the Washington, D.C. area in an apparent effort to damage U.S. relations with various foreign countries. The forged document was ten pages in length and reported the alleged United States’ goal of strategic domination over the Soviet Union by accelerating the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) research program and thus establishing “an effective first-strike capability by the year 1995 which would mean victory in a nuclear war and survival thereafter”. This second forgery did not receive widespread dissemination or publication in the United States (Soviet active measures in the United States – an updated report, Reading room, <https://www.cia.gov>).

Today “silent forgeries” are mostly spread via the Internet channels, the initial source being, most often, some sort of “secret idealistic whistleblower”.

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Наукове видання

«Активні заходи» СРСР проти США: пролог до гібридної війни:

Аналітична доповідь

(англійською мовою)

Присвячено тематиці застосування Радянським Союзом «активних заходів» проти США під час холодної війни з метою досягнення власних зовнішньополітичних цілей. «Активні заходи» включали поширення дезінформації, використання агентів впливу та організацій прикриття, маніпулювання ЗМК та інші методи. Сьогодні ці самі методи застосовуються в межах гібридної війни, яку веде РФ проти України. Дослідження досвіду радянсько-американського протистояння дозволить поліпшити інструменти протидії сучасним викликам гібридної війни.

Розраховано на державних службовців, фахівців сектору безпеки і оборони, а також на широкий загал.

Друкується в авторській редакції

Відповідальний за випуск: *О.М. Романова*

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