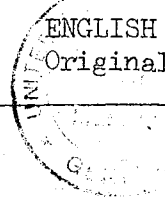




UNITED NATIONS
 ECONOMIC
 AND
 SOCIAL COUNCIL



Distr.
 GENERAL
 E/CN.4/1214/Add.12
 28 September 1976
 ENGLISH
 Original: RUSSIAN



COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
 Thirty-third session

PERIODIC REPORTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Reports on freedom of information, for the period 1 July 1970-June 1975
received from Governments under Economic and Social Council
resolution 1074 C (XXXIX)

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BULGARIA

[Original: Russian]
[13 September 1976]

After the Socialist Revolution in Bulgaria in 1944, when the people assumed power the press, television and radio became very important factors in the construction of a socialist society in this country. The abolition of reactionary laws limiting civil liberties, including freedom of speech and freedom of the press, the abolition of censorship, the transfer of the publication of newspapers into the hands of the people in the person of its political and social organizations - all these constituted an integral part of the general process of democratization of the country and an important preliminary condition for the development of the mass information media.

Already in 1947, the first socialist Constitution of the People's Republic of Bulgaria (article 88) proclaimed the principle of freedom of information as one of the basic rights of citizens of our country.

This principle was also adopted in the new Constitution of the People's Republic of Bulgaria in 1971, and was further developed by the addition of a second paragraph, providing for the creation of the necessary material conditions for the enjoyment of this right. Article 54 of the 1971 Constitution of the People's Republic of Bulgaria states that:

"(1) Citizens enjoy freedom of speech, the press, assembly, meetings and demonstrations.

(2) These freedoms shall be guaranteed by providing citizens with the material facilities necessary for their exercise."

This basic constitutional principle has been reflected in the rest of the legislation.

The material conditions for exercising freedom of speech and freedom of the press are guaranteed by the nature and structure of the mass information media and the organization of their activities, which are established by the existing legal system of the country, and are as follows:

- the socialist nature of the mass information and propaganda institutions and organizations and the material and technical mass information installations which are public property;
- the participation of the workers, through political, creative and professional organizations in the activities of mass information and propaganda institutions and organizations and the exercise of public control to verify that these activities are conducted according to the law;
- the legally sanctioned participation of the creative organizations of Bulgarian journalists and other public and political organizations in conducting, developing and improving mass information activities.

In order to understand the essential nature of these guarantees, the following important considerations and circumstances must be borne in mind:

- mass communication media cannot be private property; they belong to society in the person of its political and public organizations, and to various State institutions in the cultural field (such as the Arts and Culture Commission and others);
- almost all the newspapers in the country are published by Party and public organizations, namely: the Bulgarian Communist Party, the Bulgarian People's Agricultural Union, the Fatherland Front, the trade unions, youth and sports organizations, etc;
- the position is similar as regards periodicals published in the country, the majority of which are published by the aforementioned organizations, and also by scientific and other public institutions and creative associations;
- the democratic nature and structure of the publishing organizations, which represent the broad masses of the population, and also the democratic nature of the socialist system in the country, constitute a genuine guarantee of the observation of the above-mentioned constitutional provision concerning freedom of information. The practical implementation of this right is in keeping with the long-standing democratic traditions governing the organization of labour and with the internal regulations of the editorial offices of the socialist press and other mass information media.

The mass information media have an active influence on the conscience of citizens and raise their political and cultural level. The enlistment of the creative forces of increasing numbers of workers in the government of the State, in the economic and cultural construction of the country and in the struggle to eliminate negative phenomena in society owes much to the active role played by newspapers, periodicals, television and radio.

The wide impact of mass communications on the everyday life of the whole population of the country, the information provided by public organizations and the democratic principles by which they are governed have created genuine conditions in the People's Republic of Bulgaria for the effective exercise of freedom of speech and freedom of the press.

This trend in the development of mass information media in the People's Republic of Bulgaria continued during the period 1970-1975. Eighty-five national and provincial newspapers with a total circulation of 5 million and 207 periodicals with a circulation of 3.2 million, are now being published. In 1975, 98.5 copies of newspapers and 6.5 copies of journals and bulletins were published per head of the population.

II

Between 1970 and 1975 a number of events took place which had an important direct or indirect importance for freedom of information. In 1971 the Tenth Congress of the Bulgarian Communist Party was held and adopted the Party programme.

In a special section of the programme, basic principles were established for developing mass information media. Later, a new Constitution for the People's Republic of Bulgaria was adopted; and this contained a special formulation confirming freedom of information. In the same year the Fourth Congress of the Bulgarian Journalists' Union adopted important decisions concerning the activities of Bulgarian journalists and the mass information media, and also concerning the further improvement of their professional qualifications and ideological training. The Statute of the Bulgarian Journalists Union was confirmed; and this assigns an important role to the Union in the democratic development of information activities in the country, with a view to strengthening international relations with progressive journalists throughout the world.

In 1974 a National Complex for artistic creation, cultural activities and mass information media was established under the directorship of the Arts and Culture Commission. This is a public and State Complex combining activities in the fields of art and culture, carried out in accordance with the policy adopted by the State, public organizations and artists' unions. It comprises public and State organizations such as the Television and Radio Committee and the Press Committee. The National Complex pursues a policy of comprehensive development of art and culture, with a view to their constant improvement and the ever-increasing satisfaction of the cultural demands of the workers in the mass information and other fields. The creative associations participating in the Complex, including the Bulgarian Journalists' Union, retain their status as independent organizations of the creative intelligentsia.

The regulations governing these activities, more particularly the aforementioned Statute, confer the following clearly defined duties on the Bulgarian Journalists' Union for the development of information activities and the journalistic profession:

The Union is to contribute to the development of the mass information media as the main ideological weapon for the defence of democracy and peace, social progress and international co-operation;

It is to ensure the education of journalists loyal to the people, and concern itself with their ideological, political and professional qualifications;

It is to take part in the solution of professional, social and material problems specific to journalists;

In its international activity it is to be guided by the principles of solidarity with progressive and democratic journalists in their struggle against imperialism and reaction, colonialism, racial discrimination and apartheid, in the interests of truthful and accurate information.

In the performance of these duties during 1970 - 1975, the Bulgarian Journalists' Union made a number of concrete proposals to publishers and State organs concerning the social and material problems of Bulgarian journalists. In addition, every year the Union organizes seminars and courses for ideological and political training and improving the professional and linguistic qualifications of journalists.

The Union has a Research Centre Working on all these problems.

The basic training for the journalistic profession is provided by the Faculty of Journalism at Sofia University. There are also a number of additional forms of training, namely: post-graduate qualifications, specialization, one-year practical courses, etc. Special attention is given to the education of future journalists in the spirit of responsibility to society for the truth of the information which they disseminate.

III

According to Bulgarian law, legal proceedings are taken against disseminators of information which:

- is an offence against the personal dignity of citizens;
- preaches or constitutes incitement to racial, national or religious hostility or hatred, or racial discrimination;
- divulges facts which are State secrets;
- constitutes propaganda for war or for an armed attack by one State on another;
- contains writings, printed material, pictures, films, etc., of a pornographic nature.

In 1951 the National Assembly passed a Law for the defence of peace, which provides that warmongering and war propaganda by the press, radio, film, theatre, or literary or artistic production or by any other means are crimes against peace and humanity and are punishable by severe imprisonment for life (articles 2, 3 and 4 of the Law for the Defence of Peace, "State Gazette", No. 4, 12 January 1951).

The Bulgarian Criminal Code of 1968 contains similar clauses:

The preaching of or incitement to racial or national hostility or hatred or racial discrimination is considered as a crime and punishable by up to 3 years' deprivation of liberty and a public reprimand (article 162 of the Criminal Code);

The disclosure by information media of intelligence and facts which are State secrets is considered as a crime (article 104 of the Criminal Code).

A similar provision is contained in article 108 of the Bulgarian Criminal Code, which states that the preaching of fascist or any other anti-democratic ideology or the distribution of literature with such a content with the object of weakening the power of the People's Republic of Bulgaria is punishable by up to 5 years' deprivation of liberty.

Chapter 40 of the Criminal Code of 1968 contains provisions concerning crimes against peace. Freedom of information cannot be used to the detriment of the interests of peace and humanity. For instance, article 408 of this section reads: "Whoever directly or indirectly, by the medium of the press, spoken word, radio or any other means endeavours to provoke an armed attack by one State on another shall be punished for warmongering with a term of from 3 to 10 years' deprivation of liberty".

With a view to guaranteeing and protecting the rights of citizens the Bulgarian Criminal Code also contains clauses protecting citizens from abuses of the freedom of information which detract from their honour or dignity. Article 148 of the Criminal Code prescribes a sentence of deprivation of liberty for up to 3 years and a public reprimand for any insult or calumny uttered publicly or disseminated in print or in any other form.

To protect authors' copyright, the Copyright Law of 1951 also contains a number of provisions limiting the rights of third parties in using, publishing, exporting or performing the works of others. In cases of infringement of copyright, the Law fixes compensation for the damage and loss caused. An author also has the right to take legal action to ensure cessation of the publication and distribution of his works and to prevent their further publication, export or performance or any other unauthorized use, where such consent is necessary (articles 23 and 26 of the Copyright Law "State Gazette," No. 10, 1971).

As may be seen, our socialist legislation - even in its fundamental law, the Constitution - defends and protects freedom of information in its various forms. At the same time the law prescribes penalties for the abuse of this freedom when such abuse infringes upon the rights and freedom of other citizens or threatens national security, public order, morality or the welfare of the democratic society.

BYELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

[Original: Russian]

[16 August 1976]

During the period from 1970 to 1975, as previously, the mass information media of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic served as a powerful means of educating the nation and exerted a favourable influence on all spheres of social life in the Republic. Their activities were aimed at educating Soviet people in their lofty responsibility towards society, at the further involvement of the working masses in the active construction of the communist society, and at spreading the ideals of the struggle for peace, mutual understanding between the nations, democracy and social progress. The mass information media in the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic are taking a decisive stand against antihumanitarian phenomena such as national discord, racial discrimination, violence, war propaganda and the like, which are foreign to Soviet reality.

The forms and methods for disseminating information through press, radio and television are designed to provide accessible, objective and reliable news concerning the most important events inside the country and abroad, to widen the knowledge of the Soviet citizen in various fields of learning, to give him the opportunity of enjoying literary and artistic works, etc. Together with the efforts to attain a high ideological level and efficiency in the mass information media, much has been done in recent years in the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic to improve the material and equipment used. The technical improvement of the mass information media widens their sphere of influence.

At present 177 newspapers are produced in the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic (compared with 175 in 1970), and 130 of them are produced in the Byelorussian language. Their daily circulation, including the circulation of all-Union newspapers distributed in the Byelorussian SSR and newspapers from other Republics, totalled 14.7 million in 1975. Journals and other periodical publications (a total of 151 titles) have a total circulation in the Republic of 36 million copies a year (in 1970 there were 102 journals and other periodicals with an annual circulation of 25.7 million copies). On an average, there are now 4-5 newspapers and journals for each family in the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic. Newspapers and journals from 33 countries throughout the world were also being distributed on a subscription basis and through retail outlets in the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic in 1975.

There was a considerable development in radio and television in the Republic during the period from 1970 to 1975. There was a substantial increase in the number of privately-used radio and television receivers. Statistics show that on 1 January 1975 there were 60 television sets and more than 60 radio receivers per 100 families in the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic. In 1975, 250 re-diffusion stations were operating in the Republic. An extensive network of cable broadcasting has been set up in the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, serving 2.6 million radio outlets. A three-programme cable-broadcasting system has been set up at Minsk, in all the administrative districts and in 32 regional centres of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic.

In the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic radio programmes are broadcast on all wave bands. However, frequency modulation ultra-short-wave broadcasting has become particularly widespread in recent years. Ultra-short-wave broadcasting is now available over an area occupied by 85 per cent of the population.

Despite the short period of its existence (20 years), Byelorussian television has had a profound influence on the life of the workers. It helps to raise their cultural and political level, is used for conducting correspondence courses, and contributes to the entertainment and upbringing of children, etc. In 1975 the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic had 12 powerful television broadcasting stations and 9 relay stations. There are three television programmes. Transmissions of the first programme (Central Television) cover practically the whole territory of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, and those of the second programme cover more than 70 per cent.

One characteristic feature of the work of information organizations in the Republic is their close link with their audience as evidenced by the flow of letters from industrial, agricultural and office workers to the editors of newspapers, journals, radio and television. This enables the mass information media to act as powerful spokesmen of public opinion.

The workers of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic display a lively interest in all kinds of publications, and particularly in books. In 1971-1975 in the Republic 13,775 books were published, with a total printing of 148,082,000 copies. In 1975 alone Byelorussian publishing houses published 3,102 books, with a total printing of 31 million copies. Reproduction of the works of foreign authors translated into the Byelorussian language also plays an important part in the activity of Byelorussian publishers. In 1971-75, 47 such works were published, with a total printing of 2,414,000 copies. In addition the Republic receives books by foreign authors translated into Russian, and also in the original language, published in the other Republics of the Soviet Union and abroad. Last year the book trade in the Republic had 527 bookshops and 1,202 bookstalls. In 1975 there were 7,100 public libraries with 71 million publications in the Republic. An important role in the dissemination of various kinds of information and the popularization of achievements in various fields of knowledge is played by the Republican Society known as "Znanie" ("Knowledge") whose membership in 1975 amounted to 112,645 scientists and experts. In the period 1971 to 1975 they gave more than 3 million lectures on economics and culture, science, international relations, etc. In addition, during the last 5 years (1971-75), the "Znanie" Society published 433 pamphlets with a total printing of 511,000 copies.

All the activities of the mass information media in the Republic are directly connected with the life of our people and with the whole complex of social and economic problems facing Soviet society. This was clearly shown during the years of the Ninth Five-Year Plan (1971-76), when the press, radio and television of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic gave extensive publicity to the decisions of the XXIVth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, mobilized the activities of the workers for the implementation of the national economic plans, and provided news concerning the front-rank workers in socialist competition and the realization of the grandiose programme of peace proclaimed by the Congress.

The mass information media actively participate in the preparation and celebration in the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic of a large number of events of international character, such as United Nations Day, Human Rights Day, International Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination, African Independence Day, the Week of Solidarity with the Struggle of the Peoples of Southern Africa, etc. The press, radio and television of the Republic gave wide publicity to the celebration in the Republic and other countries of the International Women's Year and the implementation of the programme of the United Nations Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial

Discrimination, and gave detailed information about the proceedings and documentation of the Helsinki Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, and the most important decisions taken by the United Nations and its organs and the specialized international agencies.

The recent XXVth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union had a beneficial effect on all spheres of the life of Soviet society. It elaborated a concrete programme for the creative activity of the Soviet people in the coming years and also approved the Programme for the further struggle for peace and international co-operation and the freedom and independence of nations. Our mass information media regard it as their exalted task to give wide publicity to the decisions and documentation of the XXVth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and to make active efforts towards the implementation of these decisions.

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

[Original: Russian]

[5 August 1976]

During this period, all the mass information media were developed in the Soviet Union with a view to achieving the over-all advancement and comprehensive development of the personality in Soviet society; there was a simultaneous widening of exchanges of cultural, scientific and other information between the USSR and other countries.

The activity of the mass information media in the USSR was devoted to a considerable extent to exchanges with foreign States, and co-ordination of the work of Soviet radio and television broadcasting with that of the broadcasting services of other countries. On the basis of exchanges of cultural, scientific and other moral values in the interests of strengthening peace, progress and the well-being of mankind. As is known, this activity was reflected in the International Covenants on Human Rights and was further confirmed by the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. The complete text of the Final Act was published in the Soviet Union with a printing of about 19 million copies.

Publishing houses in the USSR published mass editions of cheap books accessible to a wide circle of readers. The annual production totalled 1,500 million copies - an average of 4.2 million books per day. Books are published in 89 languages of the peoples of the USSR and in 56 foreign languages.

The annual printing of books, periodicals and newspapers in the USSR increased from 35,160 million copies in 1970 to 41,727 million in 1974.

In the USSR, books are published by the State Publishing Houses, by the publishing houses of public organizations, and by universities, institutes and other institutions. Publishing activities are co-ordinated by the State Committee of the USSR Council of Ministers for Publishing, Printing and the Book Trade, and by the corresponding State Committees in the Union Republics.

The Soviet Union occupies the first place with regard to the number of translated works published. The best productions of world culture are regularly re-published in large editions.

During the last Five-Year Plan alone (1971-1975), printings of works in foreign languages in the USSR increased more than three-fold.

In order to provide the Soviet people with a better knowledge of the scientific and cultural achievements of other countries, foreign literature is translated in the Soviet Union on a large scale. During the period from 1971 to 1974 alone, 262 United States literary works (with a total printing of 22.7 million copies) were published in the USSR; 272 British works were published with a total printing of 22.5 million copies; and 361 French works were published with a total printing of 39.1 million copies. The USSR monthly periodical Inostrannaya Literatura which has a circulation of 600,000, regularly publishes the best works of contemporary foreign writers.

In 1972, in connexion with the International Book Year proclaimed by UNESCO on the initiative of the USSR, Soviet organizations carried out extensive work on the popularization of books in the Soviet Union and abroad. A large number of exhibitions were organized, and sets of books by Soviet authors in foreign languages were sent to all the national UNESCO Committees. A UNESCO symposium on "Books in the service of peace, humanism and progress" was held in Moscow.

An international exhibition, "Kniga-75" was held in Moscow in August-September 1975 and more than 500 publishing houses and firms from 42 countries and 4 international organizations took part in it. The exhibition played an important part in popularizing progressive literature. The slogan of the exhibition - "Books in the service of peace and progress" - contributed to the development of co-operation in book publishing in the spirit of a relaxation of international tension. At the present time, the results achieved by the Helsinki Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe are producing still more favourable conditions for the further development of business-like relations with publishing houses of other countries.

In 1977 it is intended to hold an International Book Exhibition and Fair at Moscow devoted to the sixtieth anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. Invitations will be sent to publishing firms which are prepared to exhibit literature conforming to the slogan: "Books in the service of peace and progress". This event will undoubtedly help to strengthen international publishing links and the exchange of information on book publishing.

The dissemination of information on foreign countries is being furthered by the extensive study of foreign languages. In the USSR university and secondary education system, about 12 million people are learning English, about 11 million German and 2.5 million French.

In 1971-1975 the Moscow Polytechnic Museum held 35 foreign exhibitions - 15 from socialist countries and 20 from capitalist countries. During this period, the Polytechnic Museum sent to 6 countries 13 exhibitions illustrating the scientific and technical achievements of the Soviet Union.

The exchange of information with foreign countries has also taken the form of the establishment and development of cultural links. The USSR has concluded agreements with 120 countries in this field.

For many years "Znanie" ("Knowledge"), an All-Union society, has been co-operating with societies for the dissemination of the scientific knowledge of socialist countries, and has also maintained relations with workers' educational unions and progressive scientific organizations in a number of capitalist countries.

The Soviet and the world scientific communities display great interest in the yearbooks "Nauka i chelovechestvo" ("Science and Humanity") and "Budushchee nauki" ("The Future of Science"), which are published by "Znanie" in conjunction with the USSR Academy of Sciences. These unique popular scientific publications provide very wide circles of the Soviet public with information on the latest achievements of world science. During the 5-year period, they have published articles by 70 of the most eminent scientists from 24 countries. Every year the Society, using its contacts and relations with foreign organizations, sends scientists and specialists to various countries as lecturers and as members of delegations and special tourist groups. During

the last five years, over 2,500 active members of "Znanie" have been sent to 34 countries and have learnt about the economic, scientific and cultural development and the life of foreign peoples.

During the same period, the Soviet Union received about 1,000 foreign scientists and specialists from sister organizations. "Znanie" provided them with wide facilities for learning about Soviet realities and also for giving lectures and reading papers on scientific and cultural questions in foreign countries to various sections of the Soviet people. In the five years, over 2,500 lectures have been given in various cities of the USSR by foreign scientists through the agency of "Znanie".

"Znanie" in co-operation with "Intourist", undertakes information work among foreign tourists visiting the Soviet Union. In Moscow, Leningrad, Sochi, Kiev, Minsk, Odessa and other large cultural and tourist centres in the USSR, special meeting halls have been created for the organization of lectures, "round-table" discussions, question-and-answer evenings and other events to help tourists acquaint themselves with the internal and foreign policy of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, with the achievements of the Soviet People in the construction of communism, and with the Soviet way of life. These events arouse great interest among foreigners. In 1967, 66 events were held at the Central Meeting Hall of the Society at Moscow, and these were attended by only 3,500 foreign tourists; but in 1975, there were 741 events attended by 72,500 tourists from 36 countries.

The links between "Znanie" and educational organizations and societies in foreign countries help to promote exchanges of information on scientific, technical, economic and cultural achievements, provide rich experience in the dissemination of information and help to strengthen friendship and co-operation between peoples.

The dissemination of information in the USSR is greatly furthered by modern mass information media such as television and radio. In 1970-1975, these media were further developed. Television is now available over an area occupied by 75 per cent of the USSR population, and the radio is heard in practically every home in the country.

The broadcasts are full of the most varied information. The television programmes deal with questions of USSR internal and foreign policy and international events. The sources of information are oral, video-tapes and filmed reports from television correspondents in various regions of the country and abroad, together with material received from numerous foreign agencies.

There has been a great development of co-operation between the USSR and other countries in radio and television. The USSR is a member of the International Organization "Intervision".

More than 40 long-term agreements have been concluded on co-operation with foreign radio and television organizations. Radio programmes are exchanged with 85 countries, and radio and television programmes and television films are made in co-operation with the staff of many foreign organizations.

In October 1975, television audiences in the United States were shown a 10-hour programme about the Soviet Union, which was prepared in co-operation with the United States company ABC.

In co-operation with "Telekom", a company in the Federal Republic of Germany, a video-tape was made of the ballet "Romeo and Juliet", which was televised simultaneously in 120 countries on the 200th anniversary of the Bolshoi Theatre. This is the first time an endeavour on this scale has been undertaken.

In 1975, the USSR broadcast 500 programmes and 294 news bulletins on the "Intervision" channels and received 452 programmes (329 on "Intervision" and 123 on "Eurovision").

In 1975, Soviet correspondents made 44 broadcasts to the Union from Socialist countries and 65 from capitalist countries. 225 broadcasts via terrestrial and satellite channels were arranged for foreign correspondents in the USSR.

The State Committee of the USSR Council of Ministers on radio and television broadcasting maintains permanent links with 41 radio and 50 television organizations in 27 capitalist countries.

In 1975 the State Committee acquired 57 films from capitalist countries, including a number of serials ("The Moonstone" and "David Copperfield" from the United Kingdom; "Seven Seas", "The Life of Puccini" and "Fernandel Today" from Italy; "Adventures in Africa", "Flipper" and "Tom and Jerry" from the United States of America; "The Rejected" and the "Les Thibauts" from France, and short Charlie Chaplin films from the Federal Republic of Germany). 294 films were sent to television organizations in capitalist countries.

109 films and documentaries were made in co-operation with television organizations in Western countries.

The State Committee concluded new agreements with the United Kingdom agency "Visnews Limited" and the United States agency "United Press-Independent Television News" for the reception of up-to-date television news in colour.

In return, these agencies undertook to distribute among their subscribers (television organizations in more than 100 countries) no less than 220 television news programmes about events in the life of the Soviet Union.

In 1975 the State Committee held the first international festival of television programmes on popular art. In addition to the USSR, the participants in this festival - known as "Raduga" - were the People's Republic of Bulgaria, the Hungarian People's Republic, the German Democratic Republic, Cuba, the Polish People's Republic, the Socialist Republic of Romania, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, the Arab Republic of Egypt, Belgium, the United Kingdom, India, Ireland, Spain, Finland and Sweden. The festival was a noteworthy event in cultural life and is an interesting example of international co-operation.

In 1975 the State Committee organized the 18th International Television Display for representatives of television organizations of socialist and certain other countries, and also organized the 9th International Television Forum for "Intervision" countries.

Artists from the State Committee - makers of documentary and feature television films - take part in international festivals and competitions. In 1975, Soviet

television films were shown at the following festivals: the 12th International Festival of Short Films at Krakow, the 12th International Festival of Feature and Musical Films at Prague, the 3rd International Festival of Sports and Tourism Films at Portorož (Yugoslavia), the "Prix Italia" and "Prix Japan" Festivals, the Festival of Sports Films at Cortina d'Ampezzo, (Italy), the Monte Carlo Festival and the 8th "Golden Harp" Festival of popular art at Dublin.

The best films shown at these Festivals are acquired by Soviet television and shown to an audience of many millions.

II

Every year, the Soviet information organs give wide publicity to United Nations Day, Human Rights Day, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, etc. which are organized in the Soviet Union on the initiative of the United Nations.

The USSR Ministry of Communications issued several series of stamps devoted to important events in the life of the United Nations.

The Soviet public was widely informed and took the most active part in measures connected with International Women's Year, proclaimed by the United Nations in 1975. After the entry into force of the International Covenants on Human Rights, the Gazette of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR published the full text of the Covenants for the information of wide sections of the Soviet public.

III

During the same period, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and the Council of Ministers published a number of decrees designed to improve the efficiency of some of the organs of information and to give concrete expression to their main tasks and functions. For example, the Press Committee attached to the USSR Council of Ministers and the Cinema Committee attached to the USSR Council of Ministers were transformed by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, in decrees dated 1 and 4 August 1972, into the Union and Republican State Committee of the USSR Council of Ministers on Publishing, Printing and the Book Trade and the State Cinema Committee of the USSR Council of Ministers (Goskino, USSR) respectively. In a decree dated 5 March 1971, the USSR Council of Ministers confirmed the Statute of the State Committee of the USSR Council of Ministers on Television and Radio Broadcasting, and on 19 October 1973 it confirmed the Statute of the State Committee of the USSR Council of Ministers on Publishing, Printing and the Book Trade.

The Statutes emphasise that the main tasks of these committees are to publicize the internal and foreign policy of the Soviet State - a policy of friendship among peoples and peaceful co-operation between States having different social and economic systems; to publicize the struggle of the peoples for peace; to provide information on national liberation movements of colonial peoples and dependent countries against imperialist oppression; to popularize the best works of Soviet and progressive foreign literature and art; to provide regular information on events in the country and abroad, and to ensure the further development of television, radio, publishing, the book trade etc.

In a decree dated 21 February 1973, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR introduced some amendments and addenda to the Principles of Civil Law in the Soviet Union and in the Union Republics, and the Presidia of the Supreme Soviets of the Union Republics similarly amended the Civil Codes of the republics. These changes relate to the rules governing copyright for works published in Soviet territory and abroad; the use of an author's works by other persons and their translation into other languages; and the procedure and occasions when works may be used without the author's consent and without payment of royalties.

According to the Law, the period of copyright, including the rights for collective works, lasts for the author's lifetime and for 25 years after his death, if the copyright is inherited.

The Civil Codes of the Union Republics define two types of author's agreements, which the author or his representative has the right to conclude with the appropriate organization for the purpose of using his works. These are as follows: (1) author's agreement on the assignment of a work for use and (2) author's licensing agreement. The corresponding articles in the codes of the Republics lay down a number of limitations on the use by third parties of works which are covered by an agreement. They also define the liability of organizations which infringe an agreement.

On 26 February 1973, the Soviet Union acceded to the Universal Copyright Convention signed at Geneva on 6 September 1952, and became a member. The All-Union Copyright Agency was set up in the USSR and its functions were defined by the decree of the USSR Council of Ministers dated 16 August 1973. These functions include:

- ensuring the observance of the rights and legal interests of Soviet and foreign authors and of their agents in the use of literary and scientific works and works of art in the USSR, and the rights of Soviet authors and their agents in the use of their works abroad; representing the legal rights and interests of authors and their agents, and taking the necessary measures to prevent infringement or to restore any right which has been infringed;

- acting as agents in the conclusion of agreements, and concluding agreements (contracts) with foreign legal and physical persons on the use of works by Soviet authors abroad and the use of works by foreign authors in the USSR;

- receiving and paying royalties due in accordance with agreements (contracts) concluded indirectly or directly by the All-Union Copyright Agency, for the use of works by Soviet authors abroad and the works of foreign authors in the USSR;

- receiving and paying royalties due to Soviet and foreign authors and their representatives in return for public use of their works in Soviet territory, and receiving and paying royalties to Soviet authors and their representatives in return for public use of their works abroad;

- receiving and paying royalties due to Soviet and foreign authors and their representatives for cinema and television films, depending on the circulation (with the exception of television films produced in co-operation with foreign organizations and firms), and for gramophone records and the use of works of art; and

- receiving and paying royalties due to the heirs of Soviet authors for use of their works in the USSR.

The decree also stipulates that, in the case of a work by a Soviet author which has already been published in the territory of the USSR, the right of use (publication, public use and other forms of use) outside the USSR may be granted by the author or his representative to a foreign user, but only through the All-Union Copyright Agency and with the permission of the first Soviet user of the work or of another user of the copyright.

A work by a Soviet author which has not been published in the USSR or abroad may be assigned by the author or his representative for use abroad only through the All-Union Copyright Agency.

Infringement of the decree renders the transaction invalid, and also involves legal liabilities.

In accordance with the decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR dated 23 May 1975 on State Taxes or Duties on Payments to USSR citizens by transfer of foreign currency, the USSR Council of Ministers exempts citizens from taxation on authors' royalties received from abroad.

On 15 November 1971 the USSR, together with a number of other countries, signed an agreement to set up an international system and organization for space communications, known as "Intersputnik".

The principles of freedom of information, affirmed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, are being given an increasingly practical interpretation in the USSR in mutual relations with other States, irrespective of their social and economic systems.

IV

Freedom of information in the Soviet Union may not be used for the purpose of war propaganda in any form (article 71, Criminal Code of the RSFSR); it is forbidden to engage in propaganda or agitation to provoke racial or national hostility or discord, or directly or indirectly to restrict the rights of, or to give direct or indirect preference to, citizens because of their race or nationality (article 74, Criminal Code of the RSFSR); it is forbidden to produce, disseminate or advertize pornographic literature, printed matter or pictures or other items of a pornographic nature, or to trade in such articles or to keep them with a view to selling or disseminating them (article 228 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR). Soviet law forbids the use of the organs of information for spreading slander or other deliberately false allegations derogatory to human dignity (article 130 UK RSFSR), or libel or deliberate affronts to personal reputation or human dignity expressed in indecent form (article 131 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR).

It is also prohibited by law to use information media for agitation and propaganda to undermine or weaken Soviet power or for carrying out crimes, particularly treasonable crimes, or for spreading slanderous fabrications for the same purpose, involving defamation of the Soviet State and social system. It is also forbidden to circulate, prepare, or keep literature of the aforementioned kind for the aforementioned purposes (article 70 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR).

In our country, the methods and activities of the information media consist mainly of the circulation of ideas and reports which help to strengthen peace and international security and intensify the process of détente, to develop friendly relations between States, to intensify the struggle against colonialism, neo-colonialism, apartheid, racism and racial discrimination and to promote respect for the dignity of the human personality.

V

Important work in the dissemination of information among wide sectors of the Soviet public is undertaken by "Znanie", a mass voluntary scientific and educational society in the Soviet Union. In recent years the number of members of this society has significantly increased, and there has been an increase in a number of lectures and the variety of its methods and activities.

Since 1970, the membership of "Znanie" has increased by 660,000 to about 3 million. The members include 1,800 Academicians and corresponding members of the USSR Academy of Sciences, the Academies of Sciences of the Union Republics and sectoral academies, about 16,000 doctors of science and professors and 115,300 masters of science and university lecturers. The members of the society also include 375,000 engineers and technicians, 106,500 economists and 195,000 agricultural experts.

During the last five years, the society's lecturers have given more than 106.5 million lectures to groups of the population of the USSR. In one year alone, over 23 million lectures were given, i.e. 5 million more than in 1970. These lectures were attended by more than 1,000 million persons - representatives of the working class, peasants on collective farms, intellectuals, students and young workers.

The main objective of the information activity of "Znanie" had been and still is to explain to the Soviet people the urgent problems of the construction of the new communist society in the USSR, and to clarify questions of the internal and foreign policy of the Communist Party and the Soviet State, and the struggle for the strengthening of peace, international co-operation and friendship among peoples.

The Society also makes wide use of forms of information activity which are appreciated by the workers, such as series of lectures and talks by scientists to worker's associations on present-day problems of science and technology, discussion evenings, news talks, clubs for meetings of interest, international friendship clubs, travel film clubs, etc.

People's universities, which are increasing in number every year, are becoming more and more prominent in the general system of mass information for Soviet workers. At present, there are over 35,000 people's universities operating in enterprises, collective and State farms, cultural institutions, higher education institutions and research institutes. In these universities, more than 9 million persons spend their free time learning about present-day problems in science and technology, economics, literature, art, education, politics and law, etc. Work in the people's universities is conducted by more than 630,000 scientists and experts ("Znanie" activists) on a communal basis.

An important role in the dissemination of various kinds of information among workers is played by the various institutions and organizations of "Znanie": the

Polytechnic Museum, the Central Lecture Centre and the Central Polytechnic Library at Moscow, the institutes for scientific and technical propaganda and scientific atheism and the planetaria.

"Znanie" takes an active part in publishing. It is the largest central publishing house in the country supplying information and popular scientific literature. During the last five years about 3,500 books and pamphlets have been published on various branches of knowledge, with a total printing of more than 230.4 million copies. In 1975 the number of books and pamphlets published was 56 million, i.e. 17 million more than in 1970.

In 1970-1975 there were also further developments in mass information media such as sound and television broadcasting.

Central Television broadcasts an average of 57.4 hours of programmes a day.

Every day, six different television programmes are broadcast from Moscow (Central Television). Programmes from the capital cities of all the Union and autonomous republics and from large cities are transmitted by a further 130 television centres. All broadcasts are made free of charge in 42 languages of the peoples of the USSR.

Foreign films, plays by foreign authors, and talks by foreign tourists or members of delegations are a permanent feature of Soviet television programmes. On the occasion of national festivals or in connexion with other events, Soviet television devotes entire evenings to the programmes of particular countries - both socialist countries and countries with different social systems.

It is a tradition of Soviet television to invite leaders, political and social figures and ambassadors of foreign powers to speak before a multi-million audience of Soviet listeners.

The first programme of Central Television is the basic all-Union information, social and political, artistic and educational programme. On the average, it broadcasts 13 hours a day.

The programme includes more than 130 items and deals with all the most important political, economic, scientific and cultural events in the life of the country and abroad.

The main information items on television are the daily news bulletins (three times a day) and the 30-minute programme "Vremya" ("Time").

In a socialist country with a public economy, in which the workers who create material wealth are themselves in control of production, it is very important to ensure the wide and free dissemination of scientific, technical and economic information and of progressive experience.

Television, together with other mass information media, constantly provides this information to millions of viewers, e.g. in programmes such as "Building the Five-year plan", "Agricultural Hour", "More and Better Goods", "Moscow and the Muscovites", the "Moskvichka" television club, and viewers' comments on internal political questions.

These programmes give wide publicity to specific questions relating to the economy and to action by the Government and economic organizations for improving production management methods, increasing the efficiency of enterprises and improving the quality of products, and also to questions of patriotic and international education.

The second programme is concerned with information, publicity and art. It is received in many European regions of the USSR. The average daily broadcasting time is 6 hours.

A significant amount of broadcasting is about events in Moscow and the Moscow district.

The third programme is scientific, popular and educational. It is received in a number of European parts of the RSFSR, and in the Ukraine, Byelorussia, Latvia and Lithuania. Average daily broadcasting time is 6.2 hours.

The programme is intended for students at secondary schools and higher education establishments, and for specialists in various branches of the economy.

More particularly, this programme regularly broadcasts courses in English, French, German and Spanish.

The fourth programme relates to the arts. It is broadcast in the Moscow district. The average daily broadcasting time is 3.5 hours.

The territory of our country is divided into 11 time zones. When television broadcasting on the first programme begins in Moscow at 9 a.m., it is already evening in the Far East, Kamchatka and Chukotsk. To ensure that the programmes reach viewers at a convenient time, Central Television prepares two special programmes, as follows:

The "Vostok" programme relays the first programme and is received in Uzbekistan, Tadzhikistan, Kirghizia, Turkmenia, a number of regions in the Kazakh SSR, and the Urals. It is transmitted by terrestrial transmission systems. The average broadcasting time per day is 13 hours.

The "Orbit" programme is transmitted by the space communications system to Siberia, the Far East, the extreme North, and a number of regions in Kazakhstan and Central Asia. The average broadcasting time per day is 15.7 hours.

During the same period, there were also significant developments in the USSR radio system. In addition to the Central Radio, which broadcasts in Russian, there is a large local radio network working in 67 national languages of the peoples of the USSR, and the State station, Radio Moscow, which broadcasts in 70 foreign languages. In the USSR there are altogether 512 radio organizations with their own programmes (one, two, three or more).

There is stereophonic broadcasting in Moscow, in all capital cities of the Union Republics and in nine cities in the RSFSR. The Central Radio programmes contain a considerable amount of information about events in the USSR and abroad, and much attention is given to general education, literary and musical broadcasts.

Moscow Central Radio broadcasts 8 programmes with a total broadcasting time of 154 hours per day.

This is made up of $22\frac{1}{2}$ hours of information programmes, $21\frac{1}{2}$ hours of social and political programmes, $88\frac{1}{2}$ hours of programmes on literature and music, $19\frac{1}{2}$ hours of broadcasts for children and young people, and 2 hours 10 minutes of sport.

In the USSR, solutions are being found for the problems of improving and creating more favourable conditions of work for foreign press, radio and television representatives. The practice has been introduced, on a reciprocal basis, of granting renewable one-year visas to journalists from the United States of America and European countries including France, Italy, Finland, Sweden, Norway, the Federal Republic of Germany, the United Kingdom, and other countries, who are permanently accredited to the USSR. Visas are also granted to members of their families.

Facilities for them to travel all over USSR territory have been extended. More particularly, journalists have the right to travel by any form of transport to cities and regions of the Moscow district which are open to visits by foreign citizens without informing the Soviet authorities, and they may travel to the remaining towns, inhabited localities and districts in the Soviet Union which are open to foreign tourists if they give notice 24 hours before the journey begins.

Foreign journalists and tourists leaving the Soviet Union are given unlimited and unrestricted rights to export different kinds of tape-recordings, undeveloped cinema films and photographs and other materials from Soviet territory.

VII

The above information is evidence of the attention given in the USSR to the co-ordination, efficiency and improvement of the mass information media.

As a result, the influence of the media on the development of the economy, on science and culture, and on the entire social life of the country has increased even more.

During this period, however, some difficulties have been encountered in fully satisfying the population's demand for a number of periodicals, owing to the shortage of paper. The XXVth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union drew attention to the need for measures to overcome these difficulties and also proposed ways and means of expediting the renewal of the material and technical basis for mass information media such as newspapers, periodicals, and sound and television broadcasting.