

The following is a translation of a major news item in the radical left wing magazine "Der Spiegel", no.39, 1987, page 183

KIEW: "FOR FREEDOM AND FOR SDI"

From the press in the Soviet Union: Rockfans in the Ukraine

The Soviet periodical "Literaturna Ukraina" analyzed in July the attitudes of their own fans of Western "Heavy Metal" rock music. Excerpts:

Apparently one knows in the West that some of our young people have an exaggerated preference for "Heavy Metal". These fans listen together to (western) broadcasts, which they record on tape.

They have received information from all kinds of "voices" (Voice of America, BBC, German Wave) and it is now difficult to convince them that "Heavy Metal" is not one of the better things of life. And what can we develop to counter this massive pressure of Western propaganda?

We fall further and further behind. First we allowed that the West confused our youth with jeans. While we were deliberating on what to do about these perfidious jeans, it turns out that a new strike against us was being prepared - this time the "Video" system.

Our feverish attempts to fill this vacuum sometimes result in naive countermeasures and this all the more so since the music machine has been running full blast. We were not prepared for the "jeans attack"; when the first drug addicts turned up we did not notice.

And now we find that all these negative groups have been reinforced through unofficial youth associations. What shall we do with these youth groups? Fight them? Co-operate with them?

In March of this year a sociological survey was conducted in Moscow. Result: 52.7 percent of young scientists and engineers admitted membership in such unofficial associations, 65.1 percent of young workers, 71.4 percent of all students, 71.4 percent of all tenth graders, and 89.4 percent of all students at technical colleges. This compares to 60 percent membership among those surveyed in Komsomol (the party youth organization).

And how are matters in the Ukraine? Is somebody researching this problem here?

In the fall of 1986 drunk "Rockers" and "Fanatics" started to dance on parked cars after a rock concert in Ivano-Frankovsk. After the latest concert of the group "Cruise" the results would have been similar if not all the law enforcement organizations had been prepared and resdy; their representatives succeeded in sidelining the crazed "Heavy Metal" fans.

They were prepared for all eventualities after a regrettable incident in Cherson. A month ago I visited Cherson, where I was shown the demolished theater "Jubilejny". All this happened at the latest concert of the group "August".

The leader of the band had asked to turn off the airconditioning system. Within 30 minutes temperatures rose to above 100 degrees. The lights were turned off to increase the effect of the stage lights. The auditorium filled with smoke.

The audience was litterally close to suffocating, but there was no possibility to leave the hall, as the exits were crammed with people trying to leave. And rock rythms continued to blare from the stage. One lit his lighter. Somebody else burned a piece of paper. And then they began to demolish the chairs.

As a rule all "Heavy Metal" fans come from families with low incomes. Their reaction to any manifestation of societal injustice is particularly strong.

After some analogies were drawn to certain Western countries, it was surprisingly discovered that they favored the SDI system. They all have concluded that SDI is a great enterprise, after listening to certain "voices".

Our own broadcasts to the effect that SDI represents a threat to peace are not convincing to them. The "Heavy Metal" fans can be of no use to the state in their present behaviour. What are they protesting against without a program of their own? During the celebrations of "Kiev Day" they assembled in groups and shouted "Freedom, Freedom"! What freedom do they have in mind?

PS from Klaus: Never has there been written a more convincing report about the profound need for SDI and the implications not just for the future of American youth, but that of Soviet people and people world wide: Freedom from nuclear MAD blackmail, the root cause of the persistence of totalitarian controls and suppression. Maybe some mebers of the US academic "intelligenza" have difficulty seeing the values of SDI - but Soviet youth knows the promise of SDI: Freedom.