


## Monitoring Short Wave Radio for Tactical Advantage -- spying on us!!

This photo shows a lady Laotian (Pathet Lao) radio operator purportedly listening to our military radio traffic during the Viet Nam War.



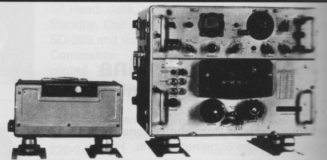
Laotian (Pathet Lao) radio operator on intercept duty, 1970s.

She is using what looks like a Soviet receiver R-250 Kit (Whale) comparable to our R-390, covering 1.5 MHz to 25.5 MHz.



### R-250 Kit (Whale)

General Coverage Communications Receiver  
Double Conversion Superheterodyne. 20 Tubes



**Features:**


- Head Jack
- Rack Handles
- RF Gain
- Spinner Knobs
- BITE Meter
- Speaker

**Specifications:**

Coverage ..... 1500-25500 kHz      Modes ..... AM/CW/SSB  
Selectivity ..... 6/5/2.5/3 kHz      Antenna Input    200 ohms

**Comments:** Ranges: 1.5-13.5, 13.5-15.5, 15.5-17.5, 17.5-19.5, 19.5-21.5, 21.5-23.5, 23.5-25.5 MHz. The successor of the similar AS-2, shown later. A superior receiver design that was used and enhanced from 1941 into the early 1980s. A Cold War work horse.


**Variants:** R-250M modernized with 2 kHz optical dial and smaller power supply. KMPU two R-250M mounted in case. KRAB similar R-670 Soviet Navy version of R-250M. R-250M2 (shown right) 1969 many internal changes and new miniature tubes plus different power supply voltages and plugs. Optical freq. dial to 1 kHz. R-670M Soviet Navy version of R-250M2. KMPU-M two R-250M2 mounted in case. Black panel variety with German lettering, made and used in East Germany. R-250M2 clone also made in Czechoslovakia.



**Made In:** Russia

**Plant:** Lenins Plant  
Leningrad, Russia  
  
Kharkov Radio Plant  
Ukraine  
  
KMPU made at  
Barnaul Radio Plant  
with subassemblies  
from Kharkov Proton  
Radio Plant, Ukraine

**Voltages:** 127/220 VAC 50 Hz

**Readout:**  Analog Lin.

**Physical:** 26 x 21.3 x 20" 210 lbs.  
660x540x510mm 95 kg

**Status:** Discontinued Model

Image from Fred Osterman, SHORTWAVE RECEIVERS (4<sup>th</sup>) (2014) p.774.

The “legendary” R-250 derives from the AS-2 model prototype by designer Anton Saveliev. The radio in the photo of the operator appears to have been modified but shares some features with the AS-2 (see Osterman, *SHORTWAVE RECEIVERS*, above, at p. 749). The R-250 may have been as good as the U.S. R-390. (CHRS has a fully restored R-390 in its museum). The operator’s headphones are plugged into the (audio?) deck above the receiver.

The extent to which this image is merely a simulation for propaganda purposes is not known, but it is authentic and in the era. One would, however, expect that such intercept operations would be kept secret, so the release of this photo may post date 1975. A NSA communications security study, *Working Against the Tide COMSEC Monitoring and Analysis (CRYPTOLOGIC HISTORY SERIES SOUTHEAST ASIA, Two Vols. 1970)* makes clear the extent of intercept operations against U.S. forces in Vietnam. (de K6VK).