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## Opportunity for U.S. in Stirrings Of Independence in East Europe

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WASHINGTON, May 30—Stirrings of national independence in the Communist nations of Eastern Europe received fresh encouragement from the United States in President Lyndon B. Johnson's speech at Lexington, Va., last week.

Mr. Johnson's address at the dedication of the George C. Marshall Research Library was the latest step in a quiet but continuing United States effort to extend a helping hand to the fledgling spirit of autonomy in the eastern European nations, particularly Poland, Hungary, Romania and Czechoslovakia.

It was more than coincidence that, as the President was speaking of this country's intention "to build bridges across the gulf which has divided us from Eastern Europe," a Romanian delegation headed by a deputy prime minister was in Washington discussing a wide range of economic and political issues with United States officials.

### Opportunity For U.S.

Few authorities believe that the situation in eastern Europe presages a significant realignment of power on the continent in the foreseeable future. Most observers here agree, however, that the ferment in some of the satellite nations at least offers the United States an opportunity for a new foreign policy initiative.

The President's speech was viewed by some as a cautious move toward taking the initiative in Europe away from French President Charles de Gaulle. Others held a more limited view, pointing out that some mention of eastern Europe, which many Americans trace their origins, was to be expected from a United States Chief Executive in an election year.

"Bearing in mind the diversity of the conditions of socialist construction, there are not and there can be no unique patterns and recipes; no one can decide what is and what is not correct for other countries or parties. It is up to every Marxist-Leninist party it is a sovereign right of each socialist state, to elaborate, choose or change the forms and

methods of socialist construction."

Observers in Washington have derived wry satisfaction in comparing this with the American Declaration of Independence, with its assertion of "the right of the people to alter or abolish (government), and to institute new government."

### Economic Effort Resisted

Another encouraging development, from the western viewpoint, has been the failure of COMECON, the Communist economic council, which has been unable to co-ordinate and direct the economies of the eastern European nations. Romania, in particular, has resisted Russian proposals that it concentrate on oil, gas and agricultural products to the exclusion of steel and other heavy industry.

United States policy-makers are encouraged also because Romania stopped jamming Voice of America broadcasts last June. Hungary stopped jamming the broadcasts on Feb. 1 of this year, Czechoslovakia on April 1. Poland has not jammed them since 1957, leaving East Germany and Bulgaria as the only eastern European nations that still try to prevent the Voice programs from getting through. Russia stopped jamming the broadcasts last June.

In his speech at Lexington, Mr. Johnson pointed out that the Marshall Plan, as originally conceived, would have covered all of Europe. When the Paris meeting of July 1947 was convened to set the plan in motion, the Communist government of Czechoslovakia accepted an invitation to participate. Poland and Hungary wanted to take part also.

### Order by Stalin

In one of the first portents of the Iron Curtain, Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin ordered the eastern European nations to stay away from the Paris conference. In 1948, the Cominform, Communist information bureau, was created for the express purpose of thwarting the Marshall Plan.

Officials here pointed out, however, that there are signs that some eastern European nations are taking a more independent line and that these developments could be of great potential value to the West. This, they said, fully justifies Mr. Johnson's increased attention to the area.

### Need For Education

It must be accompanied, they said, by an educational campaign in the United States, aimed at making Americans aware that the Communist bloc is no longer as monolithic as it once was. "These countries are different," one official said. "They cannot be treated alike and when one shows signs of breaking out of the mold, we want to encourage it."

The educational campaign figured in last year's successful effort to restore the President's authority to grant nondiscriminatory tariff treatment to Poland and Yugoslavia. It will have to be intensified if the Administration decides later to seek similar authority for other eastern European nations.

The Romanian delegation headed by Deputy Prime Minister Gheorghe Gaston-Marin was interested in obtaining this arrangement, commonly but erroneously known as "most favored nation" status, but did not get it.

### Romanian Declaration

Among the evidences of restlessness behind the Iron Curtain, the one that has caused the greatest interest in western capitals in recent months was a policy statement adopted at the Romanian Workers party plenum last month. The statement, which is being referred to as the "Romanian declaration of independence," said in part:

Mr. Johnson's statement that the United States would seek to carry out Marshall's original concept reflected the changes that have taken place in eastern Europe since 1947, officials said. The pressure for autonomy in some of the bloc nations is so pronounced now that the State Department, as a matter of policy, no longer refers to them as satellites of Russia.

In terms of internal liberalization, United States officials consider Hungary the most striking recent example, with some signs of internal improvement noted in Czechoslovakia as well. In terms of independence from Soviet policy direction, the most encouraging recent evidence has come from Romania.

### Countries Evaluated

As evaluated in Washington, the country-by-country situation in eastern Europe is as follows:

Yugoslavia—Broke completely away from Moscow in 1948. Still a Communist country but strongly oriented toward the West. Accepted United States economic and military assistance after World War II, and more than three fourths of its trade now is with the West.

most independent of the eastern European nations. Under Wladyslaw Gomulka, who came to power in 1956 despite strong objections from Moscow, Poland has returned its farms to private ownership and has permitted a considerable degree of intellectual freedom. United States officials believe, however, that Poland has reached a plateau in internal liberalization and that there has been some retrogression recently.

Hungary — Budapest has the freest atmosphere of any bloc capital except Warsaw. Farming has not been decollectivized, but there have been some reforms to encourage individual initiative. Last year, 150,000 Hungarians were permitted to travel to western Europe and Yugoslavia. Most of the political prisoners jailed after the unsuccessful revolution of 1956 have been freed.

Romania — An intensive "de-russification" drive has begun in Romania. The Russian language no longer is obligatory in Romanian schools, Russian street names have been changed to Romanian names, and the Russian publication in Romania, New Times, has been discontinued. Over Soviet objections, Romania has started developing its own steel industry in the Galati region near the Black Sea and has ordered equipment from West Germany, Britain and France. Romania recently began granting amnesty to thousands of political prisoners.

Czechoslovakia — A little evidence of internal liberalization, manifesting itself chiefly in increased criticism of the government and, United States officials report, "a certain amount of intellectual ferment." A limited amount of travel outside the country is permitted.

Bulgaria — Virtually no progress toward independence from Russia, although Bulgaria did re-establish diplomatic relations with the United States in 1960. The United States minister in Sofia, Mrs. Eugenie Anderson, is popular and has appeared twice on Bulgarian national television.

East Germany—No possibility of any relations between the United States and East Germany in the foreseeable future. Officials say that East Germany is "outside the whole framework of the United States approach to eastern Europe."