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NUMBER 11-8-56

LIKELIHOOD OF SOVIET VIOLATION
OF AUSTRIAN NEUTRALITY

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
RELEASE IN FULL

Submitted by the

DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

The following intelligence organizations participated in the preparation of this estimate: The Central Intelligence Agency and the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and The Joint Staff.

Concurred in by the

INTELLIGENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

on 6 November 1956. Concurring were the Special Assistant, Intelligence, Department of State; the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Department of the Army; the Director of Naval Intelligence; the Director of Intelligence, USAF; and the Deputy Director for Intelligence, The Joint Staff. The Atomic Energy Commission Representative to the IAC, and the Assistant Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, abstained, the subject being outside of their jurisdiction.

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LIKELIHOOD OF SOVIET VIOLATION OF AUSTRIAN NEUTRALITY

THE PROBLEM

To assess the likelihood of Soviet violation of Austrian neutrality in connection with developments in Hungary.

THE ESTIMATE

1. The possibility that Austrian neutrality might be violated by Soviet forces is raised by the following considerations:

a. According to reliable information, the Soviet Embassy in Vienna burned large amounts of paper on 2 November.

b. High Austrian officials have expressed concern, although they do not appear to be seriously worried, over the possibility that Soviet forces will not stop at the Austrian-Hungarian frontier.

c. There have been Communist allegations that the Austrians are violating their own pledge of neutrality.

2. There has been considerable movement of Hungarian nationals across the border from Austria, despite Austrian measures to prevent Hungarians from re-entering Hungary. Refugees in large numbers apparently fled into Austria and these almost certainly included military personnel. These circumstances might in Soviet eyes provide a justification for Soviet violation of Austrian neutrality.

3. Austrian neutrality has not been guaranteed by the four Great Powers which signed the Austrian State Treaty. Austrian neutrality has been proclaimed by the Austrian gov-

ernment by constitutional proviso, and the signatory powers have formally taken note of the Austrian declaration. Thus, the USSR could allege that the Austrians had violated their own declaration by giving aid and comfort to the Hungarian rebels and by permitting Western organizations to use Austria as a base for providing assistance to the rebel forces. Under such a pretext, or in alleged "hot pursuit" of retreating rebel forces, Soviet armed units might penetrate Austrian territory.

4. We believe it improbable that the USSR presently intends any substantial military movement into Austria, although some border incidents or minor incursions into Austrian territory may occur. We think that the Soviet leaders would recognize a great distinction between preserving Communist control over a country in which their forces were present and the outright invasion of a free country. They almost certainly would recognize that any major violation of Austrian neutrality would tend to reunite the Western Alliance and would greatly increase the risk of general war. The possible advantages which the USSR might see in a seizure of Austrian territory do not seem to us sufficient to offset these disadvantages.

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