

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

18 February 1965

SPECIAL MEMORANDUM NO. 10-65

SUBJECT: Prospects for Independence in Eastern Europe

Since the publication of our last estimate on the subject (NIE 12-64, "Changing Patterns in Eastern Europe," dated 22 July 1964), the trend toward independence in Eastern Europe has survived the overthrow of Khrushchev and has continued to gather momentum. In the paper that follows, we bring this story up to date and extend our judgments as to its likely outcome.

\* \* \* \* \*

SUMMARY

Soviet control of Eastern Europe is gradually being whittled away. Changes within the USSR itself, a surge of Eastern European nationalism, a general disenchantment with traditional forms of Marxist economics and harsh Soviet-style politics, and the growing attraction of the West have all combined to give the states of Eastern Europe both the incentive and the opportunity for striking out on their own. Rumania, the most daring exemplar of the new trends, has made especially telling use of the force of nationalism and is fast approaching a degree of independence comparable to that enjoyed by Yugoslavia. Others -- except for East Germany and perhaps Bulgaria -- in their own way are likely over the long term to follow suit. The Soviets, for their part, will find it difficult to arrest the process, and though crises are an everpresent danger, we believe that these countries will be able successfully to assert their own

APPROVED FOR RELEASE

AUG 2000

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

~~GROUP 1~~  
Excluded from automatic  
downgrading and  
declassification

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

national interests gradually and without provoking Soviet intervention. In ways unforeseen by both the Soviet Union and the West, communism is taking firmer root in Eastern Europe, but it is a truly national communism which is doing so. It is, in fact, much closer to the traditional interests of the individual countries involved and much more remote from the interests and the ambitions of the USSR.

- ii -

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. GENERAL TRENDS	1
A. Factors Leading to Change	1
B. The Levers of Soviet Power	7
III. COUNTRY SURVEY: THE SPECTRUM OF SOVEREIGNTY	11
A. Rumania	13
B. Poland	18
C. Hungary	21
D. Czechoslovakia	22
E. Bulgaria	24
F. East Germany	25
G. Albania	26
H. Yugoslavia	27
IV. THE OUTLOOK	28
A. The Growing Trend	28
B. Soviet Policy	35
C. Eastern European Attitudes Toward Specific Soviet Policies	38
D. Impact of the Soviet Political Scene	41

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. Twenty years after the end of the war and the occupation of Eastern Europe by Soviet armies, Stalin's empire has begun to show signs of considerable dissaray. Unlike the first national defection from the Bloc, Yugoslavia in 1948, and the violent eruptions in Hungary in 1956, the current process of withdrawal from Soviet dominance is gradual and unspectacular. It lacks the drama of sudden political upheavals, and thus does not challenge the USSR with provocative acts sufficient to justify armed intervention. It lacks the finality of a complete severance of the bonds between protectorate and overlord, and thus it is sometimes difficult to know precisely where relations stand and in what direction they are likely to go. But it does not lack for a potential fully as meaningful as that inherent in previous, more vivid crises in Soviet-Eastern European relations.

## II. GENERAL TRENDS

### A. Factors Leading to Change

2. The states of Eastern Europe remain generally within the Soviet sphere of influence, and each is affected -- though not in equal degree -- by the policies and interests of Moscow. But these countries now move in increasingly eccentric orbits around

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

the center, and their responses to Soviet demands and their abilities to pursue their own national interests vary widely from state to state.

3. Khrushchev's decisions to de-Stalinize and to improve relations with Tito's Yugoslavia were probably the prime movers in this process. The rulers of these countries soon found that without Stalin, his apparatus of terror, and his awesome mystique, they could no longer reign in the grand and arbitrary manner of Stalin. Even more important, the Soviets themselves discovered that, without Stalin, they could no longer operate at will within his empire. Stalin had been able to appoint the Satellite leaders, purge them at will, and control all the vital levers of power within each state. Not so his successors.

4. Gradually, perhaps so slowly as to defy even Moscow's awareness of what was taking place, Soviet means of control were whittled away, both by happenstance and by design. The Soviets could not stop Gomulka's accession to power in Poland, and, having failed in this, they could not reassert their dominance over his party. It was much the same story for a time in Hungary, where the appointment of Gero to succeed Rakosi was intended to insure continued Soviet dominance but led in fact to the opposite.

5. There was some reconsolidation in the years which immediately followed the Hungarian Revolution, but this was a transitory phenomenon which rested as much on the dispositions of the Satellite parties themselves -- especially their fears of insurrection -- as on the actual instruments of Soviet power. But Moscow had apparently forgotten its lesson, for its crude attempts in 1961 to bring a Soviet faction to power in Albania met with complete, humiliating failure.

6. It fell to the Rumanians to recognize and exploit the new situation. They saw the opportunity, had the motive, and gathered the means. The opportunity was the Sino-Soviet dispute and the USSR's growing warmth toward the West; the means were both economic (oil and corn and timber) and political (a unified leadership); and the motive was nationalism and the desire of the regime to seize this fervor to bolster its own position.

7. In addition to these reasons underlying change in Eastern Europe -- the surge of nationalism, evolution in the USSR -- are a number of factors that grew of their own accord within the area itself. In economics, adversity in effect bred diversity. The slowdown in growth and other severe shortcomings in the economies of most of these states led to a reexamination of the Soviet way

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

of doing things and to a new look at the tenets of the doctrine which underlay the entire economic scheme of things in each of these countries.

8. It soon occurred to everyone but the most hard bitten and doctrinaire that Soviet methods were obsolete, especially for the more industrialized countries. It was then easy to exaggerate the degree to which these economies had been exploited by the Soviets and to blame current miseries on past Soviet sins. It was also found that Marxism-Leninism was simply inadequate to show the East Europeans the way out of their troubles, and that the Soviet Union was unwilling to devote sufficient resources to bail them out. The East Europeans therefore had to turn elsewhere. They looked at the Yugoslav system, which was a strange, though functioning, amalgam of socialist ownership, state direction, and a market mechanism. They also turned to the West, sometimes only for the tools of better planning and management, but in some cases to seek radical ways of changing the economic system.

9. Here the great successes of the Germans and the French and the faraway technological spectacular of the US told them that, far from collapsing from its own crises, the capitalist world was booming as never before. The Eastern Europeans travelled to the

- 4 -

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

West and sought information and help, and they encouraged visitations of Western economic officials and businessmen to their own plants. Homegrown economists began to do without the shibboleths of Marxism and abandoned the jargon as well. In its place they began to talk among themselves, and then to party functionaries, about interest charges on capital, the market, supply and demand, and even the role of profits.

10. While the official outlook was thus being transformed, the popular mood was growing more restive. Years of doing without -- of poor housing, starchy diets, few consumer goods -- and of hard work for low pay had begun to take their toll. The very gradual improvements in living standards merely whetted appetites for more, and soon public discontent transmitted itself to the leaderships in general and to reform-minded elements within the leaderships in particular. Clearly, if labor were to perform as asked and if the people as a whole were to cooperate at all with the regime's programs, improvements had to be made. And to allow such improvements, the economies themselves had to become stronger and grow faster.

11. These changes in attitude led, though at a varying pace, to efforts to reform the economies, to make them more responsive to popular demands, and to get them on the move again. Doctrine



inevitably suffered in the process. It was as if, beginning with the economy, ideology were being chipped away piece by piece. But quite clearly, Marxism-Leninism was never meant to be applied -- or even believed in -- as a selective philosophy. It may change, but it is intended to be a coherent doctrine not subject to the erosion of its fundamentals.

12. Encouraged by Khrushchev's "revisionism", by the sanctioning of the Yugoslav "road to socialism," and by the split between the USSR and China, changes were made in Eastern Europe which only a few years before would have been quite unthinkable. Some of these innovations were solely political in concept, such as the Hungarian regime's public judgment that those not actively against it would henceforth be considered for it. Some were mainly economic, though with political implications, such as the spirited debate over economics waged in official publications, especially in Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria. And some were purely economic in origin, but even here -- as is the case with the turn toward "market socialism" in Czechoslovakia -- there will be important political repercussions.

13. Changes in economic thought and in ideology were paralleled by a relaxation of political controls and a generally more permissive attitude on the part of the regimes. The knock on the door in the

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

early morning was done away with, conversation became considerably freer, and barriers against the intrusion of Western ideas into the closed societies were penetrated, sometimes with official encouragement, sometimes despite official discouragement. European culture -- books, plays, movies -- received widespread distribution in most of the area. The move toward European unity appealed to many in Eastern Europe who saw in it a way of escaping Soviet domination. Intellectual ferment once more became widespread and authors began again to write of contemporary problems with more realism than socialism. Such "radical" and antitotalitarian authors as Franz Kafka were taken off the index everywhere except in East Germany, and the population at large was exposed to Western radio broadcasts without jamming. All in all, the life of the average man became both more comfortable and freer; if the regimes were looked upon with no less contempt, they could nonetheless be suffered without the overriding anxiety and fear produced by the Stalinist insistence on absolute conformity.

B. The Levers of Soviet Power

14. The Soviet ability to help chart the course of history in Eastern Europe rests ultimately on its proximity and the preponderance of its military power. The USSR's invasion of Hungary in 1956

- 7 -

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

demonstrated forcefully for all of Eastern Europe this ultimate means of Soviet control. But military power has traditionally been used by the Soviets in quite another sense, as a prop for the local regimes against trouble at home or threats from abroad. But time and international change have tended to diminish the value of the Soviet protective umbrella for the individual East European regimes. Only in the ultimate sense of survival under the threat of an actual invasion from the West or internal insurrection which cannot be handled by local forces do these regimes look to the USSR for support. Even in these instances, the situation has changed appreciably, for the West no longer professes a policy of rollback and "liberation" and the people no longer consider revolt to be a feasible or even desirable course of action.

15. After the initial period of occupation and the establishment of lines of control, Stalin did not depend heavily on the USSR's military power. Rather, he relied principally on his direct control of the indigenous parties and their leaders. These organizations and these men were almost wholly dependent on the USSR for their very existence; certainly they had few local strengths and few resources with which to confront the USSR. But this situation has

- 8 -

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

since changed radically. After some twenty years in power, these regimes have been able to one degree or another to build up indigenous sources of strength. A good deal of their power now rests on the local parties themselves.

16. Thus Moscow's influence on these parties now depends not on direct control but an indirect influence. It may persuade and bribe, but it can no longer merely issue instructions with any degree of confidence that they will be followed. As the first governing Communist party in history and as the fount of Communist wisdom, it commands considerable respect and some degree of loyalty from its former client parties. Certainly it will be listened to, if not obeyed, and in at least one respect, the Sino-Soviet dispute has increased Soviet prestige and mellowed Soviet doctrine -- almost all the Eastern European countries are horrified by the Chinese version of the ideology. Otherwise, however, this reservoir of respect and loyalty has been diminished by the acts of the Soviets themselves, their juggling of doctrine, their denunciation of Stalin and his works, their inability to provide firm leadership to the international movement, and, most recently their overthrow and criticism of Khrushchev.

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

17. Soviet foreign policies form another means of guiding Eastern European destinies. Soviet policy toward Germany, for example, conforms well with the fears, aspirations, and prejudices of many of the Eastern European governments and peoples, especially those that suffered most acutely during World War II. Further, to the extent that disputes erupt between these states, Moscow plays an influential role in its capacity as adjudicator and referee. It can use traditional hostilities between them for its own purposes and, by siding with one country or another, can use these enmities to barter and to threaten. The Rumanians, for example, are convinced that the Soviets have privately encouraged Hungary to agitate over Rumania's policies in Transylvania.

18. In more general terms, the size, prestige, and awesome political and economic power of the USSR provide it with still another lever, distinct from that provided by sheer military strength. As has always been the case in relations between large and small states, the power of the larger can be used as a form of pressure against the smaller. This is particularly useful in seeking to curb policies which are specifically hostile in intent, and thus helps to define the limits of independent action for the smaller states; it constitutes a barrier of sorts against radical forms of defiance.

- 10 -

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

19. Finally, the Soviets maintain a method of influencing Eastern Europe through a variety of economic devices. But, if they have learned their lessons, they must realize that the use of economic pressure frequently has disappointing results; Yugoslavia, Communist China, and Albania failed to succumb to it -- indeed, they actually accelerated their anti-Soviet policies as a direct consequence of its use. Nonetheless, the Soviets almost certainly consider it one of the major weapons in their arsenal. The Eastern European states depend for close to half their total trade on the Soviet Union, and most of them certainly realize that their industrial exports have little demand in the West.

20. Most of these countries are seeking to reduce this dependence on the USSR. They are trying to improve the quality and the mix of their export trade, attempting vigorously to expand exchanges with the West, and seeking out Western credits with which to improve domestic performance. It is not inconceivable that, with time and luck, they could materially reduce their dependence on the USSR and at least develop a potential for trade with other states should the need suddenly arise.

### III. COUNTRY SURVEY: THE SPECTRUM OF SOVEREIGNTY

21. While for most purposes the countries of Eastern Europe should not be considered as a whole, should be examined in the

- 11 -

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

light of their diversity, in one important way they may now be viewed in terms of their collective impact. From the point of view of Moscow, and in terms of their influence on Soviet policies, these states can be seen as an autonomous political force. Increasingly over the past several years, and with Rumania showing the way, the course of political action and the direction of political pressure in this area now run, from East to West. These countries are gradually chipping away at Soviet dominance, asserting individual national interests, and turning increasingly to the West as an alternative to Soviet dominance.

22. Nationalism is now a strong factor throughout the area, most of it strongly laced with anti-Russianism, and it must appear to many of these leaderships to be an attractive prelude or even alternative to genuine liberalization. It is finely calculated to maximize popular support for otherwise highly unpopular governments; by itself, liberalization appears quite unable to do a comparable job. Indeed, unless its economy is able to sustain fairly consistent and impressive rises in the standard of living -- as is nowhere the case in this area -- the regime which embarks on liberalization runs the risk of actually increasing popular discontent by allowing its more vocal expression.

- 12 -

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

23. It may be that some of these regimes -- Bulgaria comes immediately to mind -- are so compromised and conditioned by their history of abject subservience to the Soviets, or so blinded by the myths of their ideology, that they will not be able to introduce a policy designed to appeal to nationalistic sentiments. But others will surely see the benefits of such a course, especially in terms of their own interests and positions of power, and will be strongly tempted to travel the Rumanian road.

A. Rumania

24. Rumania has formally declared its independence and has acted generally in accordance with that declaration. It has developed good contacts with other major states, has rebuffed its dominant neighbor on more than one occasion, and has adopted a domestic program consistent with its own national interests. Economically, 40 percent of its trade is still with the USSR but it has revised the trend by expanding as rapidly as possibly its relations with non-Communist countries. Further, it has the economic potential to resist any Soviet attempts to arrest this trend through economic pressures. Militarily, though it is still bound in an alliance with the USSR, there are signs that Bucharest is intent on loosening this tie. It seems determined to play an

- 13 -

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~



independent role within the alliance and to give it as much or as little meaning as it wishes to, thus to place it on a basis common to alliances elsewhere in the world. Psychologically, Rumania has overcome the apathy of subservience and has actively cultivated the growth of a full-blown nationalism which is not only independent in spirit but is even militantly and chauvinistically assertive. It is perhaps not too much to say that Bucharest is close to achieving a degree of independence not notably different from that attained some time ago by its Communist neighbor, Yugoslavia.

25. It could be that even the Rumanians themselves were surprised at how far and how fast they were going. The leaders, though essentially opportunistic in character, proved that they were far from immune to nationalism. Indeed, once their campaign had achieved initial success, they appear to have joined in with, and to have been captured by, the momentum of a sweet and heady emotionalism. A sense of historical identity has been awakened by the Rumanian Communists themselves, and now they are a part of it and probably could not arrest its resurrection even if they were to try.

26. Until Rumania began its drive for independence, comparable movements in Eastern Europe which preceded it, as in

Poland and Hungary, tended to be "revisionist" across the board. Factions which identified themselves with national aspirations were also inclined to look with favor on a loosening of internal political and cultural reins and a relaxation of central economic controls. This was not the case in Rumania. On the contrary, the Rumanian regime -- though it has since modified its position -- was one of the most traditionalist, de-Stalinizing only to a very limited extent. Partly as a consequence of this, and partly because the Rumanian party was the first to purge itself of "Muscovite" and "non-national" (i.e., Jewish) elements, the regime was not seriously bothered by the development of the left, right, and center varieties of factionalism common to most other Eastern European parties.

27. Despite the continuing oppressive nature of official policies, the Gheorghiu-Dej leadership was able rapidly and effectively to gain a considerable measure of genuine popular support. It was not simply that the economy was growing rapidly and that the life of the common man was as a result being improved (though at an appreciably slower pace). More important, through such means as the almost complete de-Russification of Rumanian culture and new attention devoted, with official encouragement, to the purely Rumanian (and Latin) roots of that

culture -- an effort which worked to the detriment not only of the Russians but to indigenous ethnic minorities, such as the Hungarians, as well -- the regime was able to exploit the strong nationalist sentiments of the Rumanian people. The Rumanian "declaration of independence" issued in April 1964 was greeted with great enthusiasm by the public, which was then in a receptive mood for the overt anti-Soviet campaign which followed.

28. The Rumanian party, having gained this important and enthusiastic support, was then able to afford a controlled relaxation of political controls, through, for example, a large scale release of political prisoners and a loosening of the ban on the dissemination and discussion of Western art and thought. Through such measures it sought to gain even greater popular favor. It can probably now count on a popular temper which would brand the development of any pro-Soviet opposition as an unpatriotic, even treasonous, force.

29. The determination of the Rumanian leadership to pursue independent policies across the board and to assume its place among the ranks of fully sovereign states is much more likely to grow than to wane in the years ahead. The USSR can do very little to halt the erosion of its influence in Bucharest.

It can with some reason hope that communism as a form of government, rather than as an extension of Soviet power, will survive and that Rumanian independence will not become any more hostile to the interests of the USSR.

30. That Rumania has been so successful in this highly original program, carried out without cost at home and with signal success abroad, could not have escaped the attention of the other Eastern European regimes. Rumanian moves have revealed for all to see that a feasible alternative to Soviet domination exists in a policy of independence backed by the moral and economic support of the West. The Rumanians have also shown that even a small country has some strong psychological weapons in its arsenal, weapons which have already proved their effectiveness against a great power. Bucharest's willingness to mount a public propaganda campaign against the USSR and its brazenness in opening up the sensitive issue of Bessarabia were clearly intended as trump cards in the game and as warnings to the USSR. As Communist China points out, terra irredenta can be an issue in most of the states of Eastern Europe. Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Rumania all lost territory to the Soviets after the war and Hungary, on the basis of pre-World War I claims, probably feels that it too has suffered. Claims between many of these countries could also be revived as contentious issues: the Oder-Neisse line, Transylvania, Macedonia among them.

B. Poland

31. Poland gained a large measure of freedom from Soviet intervention in 1956. But it now chooses to concentrate almost exclusively on its own severe domestic problems, still without Soviet interference, but at the cost of surrendering some of its initiative in foreign affairs. It occasionally demonstrates its concern over Soviet policy toward China but does so privately and cautiously.

32. The encouragement of nationalism was adopted by the Rumanian regime as an official policy, but in Poland the situation has been quite the reverse. Nationalism has welled up from below and has been used as an instrument of popular pressure on the regime. Thus the regime, though Polish in character, has found itself in the difficult position of seeking to curb most expressions of Polish nationalism. And, again in contrast to the situation in Rumania, it had already managed to secure for itself a fair measure of independence from Soviet controls which it has used to bargain with Moscow, and thus did not feel that it needed to pressure Moscow into granting further autonomy.

33. Another fundamental difference between Poland and Rumania, and, indeed, between Poland and all the other states

of the area, lies in the peculiar relationship between church and state. The Roman Catholic hierarchy in Poland commands the respect and at least the moral support of a vast majority of the population, and the church believes -- and has always believed -- that it is inseparable from the nation and the state. It offers the people an alternative to Communist rule and constitutes, in effect, an organized political opposition to the regime which is inherently anti-Communist. The strong identity of Polish nationalism with the church offers the leadership little choice; if it opposes the church, as of course it does, in the minds of Polish patriots it thus ipso facto opposes Polish nationalism.

34. On the other hand, Soviet and Communist attitudes toward Germany coincide with an important manifestation of Polish nationalism, a hatred of Germans and a fear of German aspirations. A considerable portion of Poland, the so-called Western Territories, was formerly German, and all Poles -- including the Church hierarchy -- are determined that these lands shall remain within Poland. Except perhaps in times of crisis, however, this attitude is insufficient to counterbalance the hostility of the people and the church for communism and the USSR.

35. While thus united on questions affecting Germany, both the people and the party are otherwise badly fragmented. The party

consists of diffuse elements with differing backgrounds, interests, and desires. Some remain more or less pro-Soviet, others are fiercely independent; some favor a general relaxation of the regime's domestic policies, political, cultural, and economic, others seek a tightening of the party's controls and further repression of the populace. The people, while for the most part apathetic and concerned primarily with individual well-being, remain essentially hostile to Communism, suspicious of most of their leaders, and strongly anti-Russian. They neither seek nor foresee any sort of meaningful identification with the party. It may be, however, that Gomulka retains some measure of grudging popular respect and he almost certainly continues to command the allegiance of most party members. He thus is the one factor which keeps these various elements together. His death or removal might lead to great contention between the leaders and considerable concern and unrest among the people.

36. The Soviets are likely to be especially sensitive to manifestations of Polish nationalism, in large part because of the country's strategic position, lying as it does athwart Soviet lines of communication and supply to East Germany. To some extent, then, Poland's fate as a sovereign state depends on the East-West struggle in general and the problem of Germany in particular. Another lesser factor here may be the USSR's realization that Poland is by far

the largest of all the Eastern European countries -- its population is equal to that of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Bulgaria combined -- and should Poland desert the fold its example would almost certainly have a particularly telling effect throughout the area.

C. Hungary

37. Hungary, crushed by the Soviets in 1956, has nonetheless gained a degree of independence comparable to that enjoyed by Poland. Moreover, Kadar has successfully dissipated the virulent hostility of the people through a combination of economic improvements and political concessions. It has done so without Soviet tutelage, but -- despite some apparently independent effort to move more toward the US and the West -- has chosed for the most part to remain mute, or actively cooperative, in foreign affairs.

38. Hungary may be the prime example of a people's coming to terms with Communist overlordship. Perhaps emotionally exhausted by the trauma of 1956, convinced that they can no longer look to the West for salvation, and enjoying a certain degree of prosperity under the relatively benevolent hand of the Kadar leadership, the Hungarians are in no mood to combat the



regime or to assert their nationalism. The regime has of course recognized all this and is in no mood to seek to disrupt this relative tranquillity. Indeed, it has sought to preserve it, not only through economic concessions but also through a unique policy of enlisting the support of non-Communists who are regularly appointed to positions of both influence and affluence. The "popular front" in Hungary is, in fact, a functioning system, and though the Communists retain full control, its benefits accrue to many.

39. The Kadar regime will probably strive to keep relations with the USSR unruffled and will be likely to continue its close support of Soviet foreign policies. Nonetheless, we expect the regime to guard its domestic autonomy zealously, and to move to reduce its heavy economic dependence on the USSR. Further, at specific times and on specific issues, it will probably move gradually to expand the degree of independence it has already won. Before very long, for example, Kadar is likely to press again for a reduction or even withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary.

D. Czechoslovakia

40. Czechoslovakia has emerged gradually from the chrysalis of perfect subservience, from the painful status of the "model

satellite." It now gives every sign of preferring to strike out on its own in domestic affairs and, since the downfall of Khrushchev, has hinted that it would like to play a more independent role in international affairs as well. The party leader and president, Antonin Novotny, apparently has had to give up his stiff-necked opposition to internal and external change in the face of mounting pressures from younger, more objective elements in the party. In fact, he seems to have decided, in order to preserve his own political hide, to join with them in a general swing to the "revisionist" right.

41. Like the Polish, then, the Czechoslovak regime has had to deal with a nationalism rising from below. Unlike Poland, however, it seems in large measure to have sought to identify with it, though a distinct and essentially anti-Czech nationalism in Slovakia complicates the regime's task. But many in both the Czech lands and in Slovakia -- students, intellectuals, more liberal-minded elements within the party -- seem determined to push an independent line and to free the country from Soviet dominance. Czechoslovakia thus gives the appearance of a country on the move toward sovereignty; it has a longer way to go than some of its neighbors, but the beginnings augur well for the future.

E. Bulgaria

42. Bulgaria is dependent for its economic well-being on massive injections of Soviet aid, over \$700 million extended in the past two years, more than any other Communist state. Economically, it has begun to experiment and to decentralize somewhat, and politically it has purged the old Stalinist leadership. But otherwise it remains a backward, coercive Communist state. Further, its present regime is divided and weak and the top leader, Todor Zhivkov, can only be described as a voluntary captive of the CPSU.

43. Alone among Eastern European states, Bulgaria has a long tradition of friendly feelings toward Russia and the Soviet Union. The concept of pan-Slavism, and of a "Greater Bulgaria" within a general Slavic confederation of sorts, has long appealed to Bulgarian politicians and intellectuals alike. Further, Bulgaria, while having no territorial grudges against the USSR, does have territorial claims against Greece and Yugoslavia. Thus on both current political grounds and on the basis of historical ties and enmities, the prospect for significantly greater Bulgarian independence is particularly gloomy. We cannot preclude changes over the longer term, but they do not seem likely within the foreseeable future.

F. East Germany

44. East Germany is the obvious special case. It was the ersatz creation of Stalin, sustained by his heirs, and its will to survive is simply a Soviet will, buttressed by the presence of some 200,000 Soviet troops. The GDR has no fate of its own, no national tradition, no nationalism exploitable by the regime. Indeed, the nationalism which does exist is unalterably inimical to the purposes of the regime and its Soviet mentors.

45. Only the forces of the East-West struggle, particularly those related to policies toward Germany, and of Soviet policy toward Germany as a whole are likely to have a meaningful impact on East Germany. Changes in these forces and policies are certainly not out of the question, if only because Ulbricht is not immortal, Soviet designs are not immutable, and East Germany in many respects constitutes a Soviet liability, not an asset. Moreover, in the longer term developments elsewhere are sure to have an impact in East Germany, which cannot forever remain isolated from the strong political winds blowing throughout the remainder of Eastern Europe. Signs of cultural ferment and pressures from "revisionist" elements within the SED have already appeared, and the regime has seen fit to grant some concessions

to the intellectuals and the pragmatists. Moreover, trouble breaks out periodically in East Germany; the 1953 riots, the Schirdewan affair in 1955-1956, and more recently the Havemann affair all suggest that the regime will face similar problems in the future. The erection of the Wall reinforced both the economic and political stability of the regime and has presumably strengthened its hand in coping with resistance, but its ability to do so is not ensured in perpetuity. But over the short term, as we have estimated elsewhere, important changes in Soviet German policy do not now appear likely.\*

G. Albania

46. Two Balkan states, Albania and Yugoslavia, are in special categories of their own and are moving in opposite directions in their relations with the USSR. They share one thing, however: both have established their full independence without giving up Communist one-party rule.

47. Albania was excluded from the Bloc by the Soviet Union in 1961. But this merely set the seal on an already apparent split which became irreparable after the failure of a Soviet-supported effort to unseat Hoxha. Doctrinal differences, especially

\* See NIE 11-9-65, "Soviet Foreign Policy," dated 27 January 1965, SECRET.

concerning the issue of Stalin and his works, became pronounced after 1956, but the prime reason for Albania's defection was its constant and growing -- and, indeed, largely justified -- fear of a Soviet-sanctioned absorption by a greater Yugoslavia.

48. The Albanians have turned to Communist China for doctrinal and material support, but they have nonetheless managed to guide their own destinies with a minimum of outside interference from any quarter. There is no prospect that relations with the USSR will be healed unless the Albanian leadership is somehow overthrown -- and there is almost no chance of this -- or unless the USSR revises its doctrines and in effect capitulates to the Chinese -- which is even more unlikely. There is some prospect, however, that relations with China might become strained because of disputes over the degree of permissible Chinese influence or the adequacy of Chinese aid, and that Albania will be forced to turn more and more to the West, notably Italy.

#### H. Yugoslavia

49. Yugoslavia has enjoyed better relations with the USSR for the past several years. Anxious for Belgrade's support in international affairs, and casting about for allies to support Soviet leadership of the Communist movement, Moscow conceded to

Tito and his party the right to its own road to socialism and to full national independence. Relations, while good, are not, however, as close as those of the USSR with other Eastern European states, especially on the party level. Elements of friction as yet potentially explosive include doctrinal issues and Yugoslavia's continued desire for autonomy for all the states of Eastern Europe. But Tito does not wish to provoke the USSR into precipitous actions and, indeed, has apparently cautioned the Rumanian leaders to be circumspect in their campaign for independence.

50. The prospects for this relationship appear to be quite good so long as Khrushchev's successors continue to respect his willingness to honor Yugoslav pride and sovereignty. To date they have indicated their intention to do so. For its part, Yugoslavia is likely to seek better relations with the USSR and the Bloc as a whole, though it will remain wary of any Soviet effort at domination and will almost certainly seek to keep its economic and political relations with the West in good repair.

#### IV. THE OUTLOOK

##### A. The Growing Trend

51. It is not possible to predict the specifics of future change in Eastern Europe. These will be the result of individual

choice, the consequence of events yet to come, the product of factors and movements essentially unpredictable, and, of course, the policies and actions of the great powers. But of this we are sure -- there will be change, and it may come faster than we had generally anticipated and in ways we do not expect. We have learned from experience -- from, for example, Albania and Rumania -- to be wary of generalizations about this area. As time goes by and as the trend toward independence in Eastern Europe gathers momentum, diversity will increase and chances for the unexpected may grow apace.

52. The initiative of political movement in Eastern Europe now rests largely with these states themselves, rather than with the USSR. Each of these states, with the exception of East Germany, is led by a group of men and a political institution which now depend for their very existence primarily on domestic sources of strength and domestic attitudes and traditions. In several states, communism is perhaps taking firm root, but in a way quite unforeseen in both Moscow and the West. It is a variety of national communism which has established itself in Rumania and bids fair to do so elsewhere.

53. We would not expect these regimes to become national Communist in character on similar schedules, in equal degree, or in identical form. Common to them, however, would be full control over



~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

domestic policies and a meaningful degree of independence in foreign affairs. Their allegiance to Marxism-Leninism would probably vary but at least in some this would be a question of public image rather than true adherence to doctrine. Some might retain a fairly unified and disciplined one-party structure; others, though operating through only one party, might see the development of important and diverse political forces within a Communist party framework and the gradual growth of extra-party and even popular influences. Nowhere, however, would we anticipate the development of a genuine multi-party system, though almost certainly pressure for this would grow. In the last analysis, each regime would determine for itself what in fact constituted "socialism" and each regime would remain "communist" so long as it declared itself to be so.

54. As its efforts to convert CEMA into a Soviet-dominated supranational force would seem to testify, the USSR is almost foredoomed to failure when it does seek to innovate and expand its controls. Moreover, the failure of Soviet initiatives tends to produce a chain reaction, for each instance of successful Eastern European opposition contains within it the seeds of even stronger resistance for the next round. The USSR thus is forced to choose

- 30 -

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

between making concessions, following more permissive policies, or finding itself more and more in the position of a power seeking to restrain change rather than trying, as it once did, to impose it. In a sense then, each of these regimes can choose the time, the place, and the issue with which to apply pressure on Moscow. And nothing now seems more inevitable than a gradually increasing interest in and desire for greater independence on the part of most or all of these countries. The replacement of the present, aging leaderships with younger, more vigorous, and probably less doctrinaire officials is much more likely to hasten this process than to retard it.

55. It is thus possible, as it has been in the past, to discern the general outlines of this trend and to ascertain its direction. The movement is not of its own accord toward the West, nor does it appear necessarily to be heading toward Westernized concepts of democracy. Rather, these states are acting in what they conceive to be their own national interests, and they look to the West principally in order to strengthen precisely those interests. True, this in many instances has the effect of moving them away from the East and in this manner toward the West. It is also true that most of these states looked westward before they were forced by Moscow to about face. And a few of these countries, notably Czechoslovakia,

- 31 -

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

to a lesser extent Hungary and Poland, had at least some tradition of democracy before they were compelled to surrender to communism. But, while they may move only partway toward the West and its ideas, from the perspective of Moscow the trend is highly dangerous. This was the great fear of Moscow during the Hungarian Revolution; it was genuinely concerned that Hungary would rejoin the West of its own accord, whether the West desired it or not, and, ultimately, it was this fear that led Moscow to intervene militarily. The same concern could bring about a repetition of that event.

56. For the most part we do not foresee crises in Eastern Europe. These regimes are likely to move with relative caution, to test and probe for Soviet reactions before adopting new policies of their own, and, in general, to avoid acts which might provoke the Soviets into intervention. But this does not mean that precipitous Soviet action can be ruled out of the question. The Soviets could fear the overthrow of an Eastern European regime, or its submission to non-Communist forces, and intervene to forestall it. They could, in addition, badly misjudge a given situation, see threats to their vital interests where in fact none existed, or become overly frightened about specific events and move accordingly. Or it is always possible that a change in the Soviet leadership could lead to

a determination to restore Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe through whatever means proved necessary. For their part, the Eastern European regimes might provoke severe Soviet moves by capitulating to strong popular pressures and pursuing nationalistic policies overtly and virulently hostile to the USSR and Soviet interests. They could also miscalculate Soviet responses to specific moves and provoke Moscow without actually meaning to do so.

57. It may be that it is already too late to speak of the relations between Moscow and the Eastern European states in terms of the formal instruments of Soviet hegemony. The Cominform is long gone; CEMA functions, but not well.

58. Concerning the Warsaw Pact, two distinct trends are visible. The USSR has seen fit to provide these countries with at least the potential for more independent military action. The Eastern Europeans have, in fact, assumed greater control over their own forces, a trend consonant with developments in the political sphere. On the other hand, the Soviets seem to be placing greater reliance on the Eastern European forces in the formulation of their military strategy. It may be that the Soviets no longer look upon the Pact as an important means to ensure political control but primarily as a more or less conventional military alliance, dominated,

of course, by the supplier of arms, Moscow. If so, it would certainly accord with the Soviet effort to improve the military capabilities of these forces.

59. In any case, the Rumanians seem to have cast a dubious eye on the value of the Pact to Rumanian purposes, have publicly deplored all military pacts as anachronistic, and have privately informed US authorities that Rumanian troops will defend only Rumania. They have also privately indicated that, left to their own devices, they would pull out of the Pact. It is probable that the Rumanians are bent on reducing their role within this organization to a purely formal level.

60. But these countries remain under firm, one-party Communist control, as Hungary did not, and, in the last analysis, they can remain at least nominal allies of the USSR so long as they remain avowedly Communist. It is for the Soviet Union to decide whether this is enough. In the event that one or more of these states severed even that one last tie, military intervention would be the only avenue open to the USSR to enforce its will on the defecting country. Whether this would then be judged a feasible course of action, whether the gains in Eastern Europe would balance the risks and losses elsewhere in the world, only Moscow could decide. And Moscow is not good at solving this sort of dilemma.

B. Soviet Policy

61. Moscow has sought in fits and starts, and for the most part ineffectually, to arrest the drive for independence in Eastern Europe. For one thing, the USSR does not fully understand the emotional force of nationalism and thus can frame no clear policy to combat it. For another, the Soviets have themselves facilitated the process by a general loosening of policies toward the area, aided and abetted by their moves against China and toward the West. We believe that, unless the Soviets are willing to resort to military intervention, the momentum of this movement toward independence will gather force and become highly contagious.

62. The USSR sees Eastern Europe as vital to its strategic needs. Not only does it provide a forward area for defense and offense, it serves generally as a buffer zone between the Soviet Union and West Germany and the other "hostile" status of Western Europe. The USSR also sees in Eastern Europe a vindication of Communist doctrine, a proof of the inevitable advance of socialism; conversely, it would view the defection of any of these states as a refutation of that doctrine. Finally, the USSR sees Eastern Europe as an integral part of its empire, a source of actual and potential economic, political, and military support.

63. All three of these concepts are, of course, subject to change. The strategic consideration is perhaps the least susceptible to modification, but even here the facts of the nuclear-missile age render the concept considerably less valid than it once was. Nonetheless, long after strategic factors make the area relatively useless for the defense of the homeland, Soviet thinking is likely to reflect more or less traditional military concepts of Eastern Europe's value to the USSR.

64. Greater change may take place in the area of doctrine. The evolution set off by de-Stalinization, and further shaped by the Sino-Soviet conflict, has already altered the concept of a monolithic bloc. As the Eastern Europeans increasingly depart from Soviet practice, as Yugoslavia is welcomed to the club, and as the Soviet definition of "socialism" is further diluted both by domestic changes and by the inclusion of more and more countries, such as the UAR, into the "progressive" camp, the requirements of the doctrine for the individual Eastern European states become vaguer and more permissive. What will constitute a loyal member of the bloc in terms of ideology a decade hence can be but dimly perceived.

65. Inevitably, this sort of ideological erosion will also have an effect on the Soviet concept of empire. The dreams of a tightly

knit organism following a single economic plan, with national boundaries turning into unimportant anachronisms, have surely faded. If this is indeed the way in which the USSR's attitudes and policies toward Eastern Europe are likely to evolve in time, it will be difficult to define the Bloc in the usual way, i.e., as a Bloc. Organizations like CEMA and the Warsaw Pact might be retained only on the basis of a genuine partnership and only to the extent that they served some specifically worthwhile purpose, something comparable, for example, to the European steel community. Or they might become moribund, be scrapped, and then superseded either by a series of bilateral treaties or by an amorphous regional pact of only symbolic import. Some of these states might form various regional associations with each other and even with non-Communist neighbors. Under all such arrangements as these, each member state would be largely free to pursue its own interests at will, presumably so long as these did not involve policies actively hostile toward one another.

66. If the USSR were to recognize clearly the trends in Eastern Europe and to initiate forward-looking policies which sought to encourage and to influence the process, the formation of a harmonious Soviet-East Europe alliance would be greatly eased. The history of their relations to date, however, does not suggest that the Soviets are likely to do this. The Soviets will find it hard to accept a



~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

loose confederation of sovereign countries bound together in traditional ways of alliance and cooperation. This strikes at the Russian sense of great-power status, and herein lie numerous possibilities for ill timed Muscovite heavy-handedness. They are apt to fight the problem as they have in the past, hoping to halt or at least delay the process through a variety of small measures and perhaps large threats, ultimately discovering that they must give in with as much salvaged grace as possible. This, of course, usually has the opposite effect from that intended; not only does it incur the ill will of these countries, which does not surprise Moscow, but it also frequently stimulates further efforts to increase sovereignty, and to Moscow this apparently does come as something of a shock.

C. Eastern European Attitudes Toward Specific Soviet Policies

67. The Eastern European states are not enthusiastic supporters of many facets of Soviet foreign policy. Except when internal exigencies require it, for example, most of these regimes are reluctant to express full-throated Communist hostility toward the West. On the contrary, because of burgeoning hopes for expanded economic relations with the advanced Western countries, the Eastern European countries would like to improve their relations with the West. Rumania, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia have made this intention quite clear in

- 38 -

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

recent months. So long as the USSR's own policy includes an element of detente, it will be difficult for the Soviets to restrain Eastern European movement toward the West. Should Moscow reverse itself, it could expect resistance on the part of its allies, a factor to be taken into account in the formation of Soviet policy.

68. In the Sino-Soviet dispute, the Eastern European states sympathize with the Soviet doctrinal position and some of them, such as Czechoslovakia and East Germany, have been quick to commit themselves publicly to the Soviet side. But Poland has sought to soften the dispute and has counseled the USSR to act cautiously, and Rumania has gone even farther and publicly dissociated itself from the Soviet point of view. In general, the Eastern European regimes have been given added leverage with the USSR because of the dispute and, though none would favor a Chinese victory, or even important Soviet concessions, they welcome the increased maneuverability they have been granted by default and are probably not anxious for a final settlement of the problem.

69. In yet another area of Soviet policy, the East European states are important contributors to the Soviet Bloc's program of economic and military aid to underdeveloped nations, adding some \$1.9 billion to the Soviet total of \$7.4 billion. Czechoslovakia and

Poland play by far the most important role -- the Czechoslovak program is much larger per capita than the Soviet -- but the other countries also participate. At its inception, these states had no choice but to carry out the Soviet will, and they often were used to promote strictly Soviet interests. There are signs, however, that the Eastern European aid programs now are being managed in a way that is more consistent with national interests. Recently, these states have participated only rarely in Soviet economic programs, relying instead on bilateral arrangements, and have almost stopped extending military aid.

70. The Eastern European states, except Yugoslavia, have few national political interests in the underdeveloped countries, and they have far less interest in expanding their economic relations with these countries than with the industrial West. Moreover, there is widespread popular resentment of the aid programs in Eastern Europe. Nevertheless, these programs probably will continue, even in the absence of Soviet domination, because some prospective economic benefits are expected from them. By extending credits on liberal terms the East European states gain access for their manufactured goods to markets that might not otherwise be available and to new sources of goods and raw materials. The main exception to

this general rule may be aid to Cuba, where some subsidies may be involved and where prospects for repayment of credits are dubious.

71. Soviet policy toward West Germany may also be at issue between Moscow and some Eastern European regimes. Despite their apprehension and dislike of the Germans, the East Europeans are particularly anxious to expand their economic relations with West Germany and see no good reason why the unresolved question of Berlin should be imposed on them as a hindrance to the development of closer ties. Indeed, the willingness of some of these regimes to sign so-called Berlin clauses as a pre-condition for trade agreements demonstrates their unwillingness to allow the interests of East Germany to intrude. Given a continuation of the West German policy of increasing its presence in Eastern Europe, and of such arrangements as are now under negotiation between Bonn and Warsaw for the establishment of joint industrial enterprises on Polish soil, we consider the expansion of Eastern European-West German ties to be almost certain, and we would expect hostility to diminish.

D. Impact of the Soviet Political Scene

72. The removal of Khrushchev from power destroyed one of the strongest surviving political links between the USSR and the countries

of Eastern Europe. Khrushchev was careful to cultivate good relations with all the Satellite leaders, replacing the iron will and discipline (and contempt) of Stalin with personal force and camaraderie, persuasion, and occasional threats. He developed particularly close working relationships with both Kadar and Gomulka, swallowed his dislike of Ulbricht and cajoled him into cooperation, kept the strings taut on Zhivkov in Bulgaria, and in general treated the Eastern European leaders as fellow politicians in the Bloc club. He even introduced Tito into membership.

73. One result was the sour reaction of these leaders to his downfall. Gomulka, Kadar, Novotny, and even Ulbricht publicly indicated their displeasure by praising Khrushchev when it was quite clearly the Soviet intention only to criticize him. Mainly, we suppose, these leaders were concerned about reactions within their own parties, but we do not discount some genuine attachment to Khrushchev, approval of his policies, and concern and uncertainty over those of the new leaders. In any case, we know of no personal ties between the Eastern European leaders and Khrushchev's successors, and we do not expect any single Soviet leader to gain the stature Khrushchev once enjoyed for some time to come.

74. It seems likely that most or all of these leaders will now take the opportunity afforded by the new situation in the USSR to press their own national interests and to make their voices heard in Moscow. Gheorghiu-Dej has already begun to assert Rumania's interests more vigorously than ever and others will probably follow suit. In any event, should Moscow seek to restore tighter controls over these leaders, it is likely to meet with greater resistance than ever. Only Ulbricht among them was in the top spot at the time of Stalin's death; thus the others have either worked successfully for their own autonomy and are by now accustomed to running the affairs of their own parties, or have worked only in an atmosphere of relative Soviet permissiveness. They are surely aware that the new Soviet leaders have no more means at their disposal -- and probably fewer -- for enforcing Eastern European conformity than Khrushchev had.

75. They are also acutely sensitive to the general political scene in Moscow and are almost certainly convinced that the present collective arrangement is inherently unstable. They will probably be reluctant to support one faction or the other until the outcome of such instability becomes clear, and they will be equally averse to committing themselves to policy except in a

very general way. Some in Eastern Europe -- probably the weaker elements -- may identify themselves with one Soviet faction or the other and seek political support therefrom, but the chances of this do not seem as great as they once were, for example, in Hungary where Nagy clearly identified himself with Malenkov, Rakosi with Khrushchev. For their part, the Soviets, so long as they remain locked in a struggle for power, are unlikely to formulate new and coherent policies for the area, and disputes on this issue are likely to arise. Decisions needed in a crisis may thus be hard to obtain. As with foreign policies in general, Soviet interests in Eastern Europe might be better served by one-man leadership.

76. Of equal import is the question just where and when the USSR can now count on these states for support. Matters have already reached the stage where Moscow cannot assume in advance that its particular policies will receive automatic approval from Eastern Europe; in order to be sure, the Soviets must sound out these governments in advance. They must wheedle and cajole in instances where support is withheld, and in cases where even this fails, they must either alter or abandon their tack or proceed alone. This is particularly true in issues related to the

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

Sino-Soviet dispute, where Rumania has declared its full neutrality and other states, most notably Poland, have exhibited a reluctance to adopt the Soviet line. But to a lesser degree it also applies to Soviet policy toward the West; the President's state of the union message, for example, was blistered in Moscow but praised in some East European capitals. We think the trend is clear: the East European states are no longer willing to adopt as their own whatever foreign policies the USSR sees fit to advance. Before giving their full support, most of these states seem to wish to subject such policies to critical examination in the light of their own burgeoning national interests.

FOR THE BOARD OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES:



ABBOT SMITH  
Acting Chairman

- 45 -

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~