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Cold War Eastern Europe 1946-1982

Stephen Rhind-Tutt
July 2022

rhindtutt@coherentdigital.net

<https://coldwareasterneurope.com>



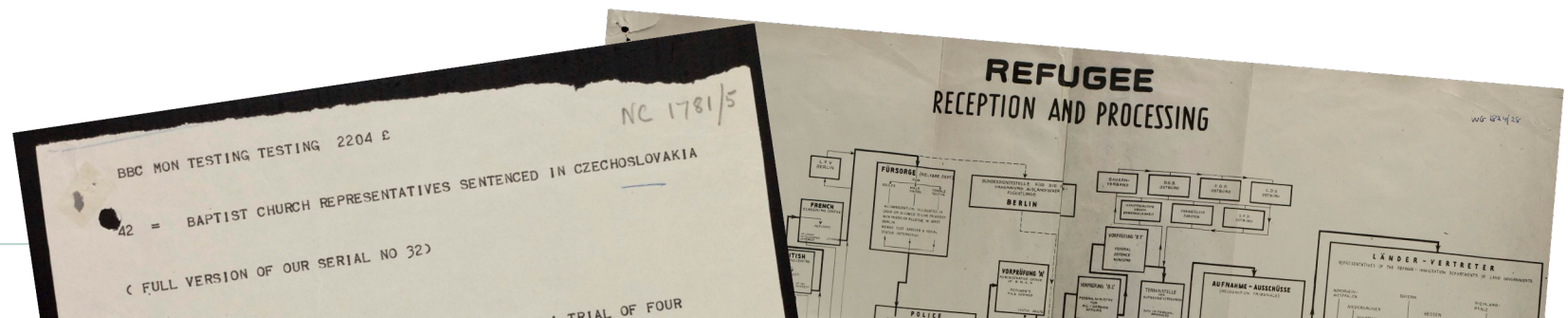
What is it?



- The definitive file for studying the Cold War - provides the missing Eastern perspective
- 1.4m pages of declassified, exclusive, previously undigitized files sent to the UK Foreign Office from embassies, covert contacts, and other sources from 1946-1982
 - More comprehensive (spans all regions, and almost the whole war)
 - More accessible (summaries, reports and 80%+ in English)
 - Largely unresearched (some files only declassified in 2015)
 - Series FO 731, FCO 28, FCO 33,
- Renewed interest in the light of contemporary events

Broad themes

- Border Security and Migration
- Dissent, Resistance, and Human Rights
- Domestic Politics
- Economics and Trade
- Embassy and Consulate Administration
- Industry and Agriculture
- International Relations
- Media and Culture
- Military
- Populations and Social Policy
- Religion
- Science and Technology
- Second World War Aftermath
- Secret Intelligence and Espionage
- Sport, Leisure, and Tourism
- Youth and Education



Types of content

- Correspondence
- Reports
- Press and Media
- Memoranda
- Meeting Minutes
- Speeches & Public Statements
- Legal and Treaty Material
- Official Gov't Material
- Print Publications
- Administrative Records
- Financial Records



BRITISH EMBASSY,
BUDAPEST,
November 12, 1953.

Dear Ted,

I enclose a British press report which we have drawn up on the basis of the statements of the participants of the London Military Operations. On this occasion there is a good deal of confidence as far as the central core is concerned. This prompts us to draw the following conclusions, which we offer with reservations but there superficiality and the obviousness possibility that the Hungarians are misleading us.

2. First, it seems that Breznev, Kadar, Mikoyan and Bulow are pleased to show us, and in that order. This creates the impression that Kadar, in spite of his disfigure and withdrawal from public life, will enjoy considerable respect, though possibly in some quarters. Second, it would seem that the general programme which Polgorny has presented recently is to quit within six months and a disengagement of the fact that he is deputizing for Bulow in international communist matters.

3. I am sending a copy of this letter to Heath Mason in Washington.

Yours,
Ted Barkand

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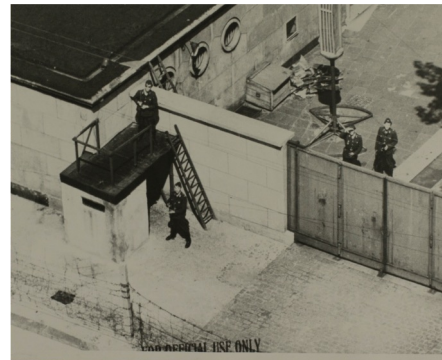
CONFIDENTIAL / REL TO HQ

INFO: IN 2 219 0147 02/POLAND/GENERAL STRIKE PLANNED FOR 12 JUN 52 (C)

THIS IS AN INFO REPORT, NOT FINALLY EVALUATED INTEL

1. (C) CTRY: POLAND (P)
2. (C) IN NO TWO, TWO ONE NINE, ZERO ONE FOUR SEVEN, EIGHT TWO
3. (C) TITLE: GENERAL STRIKE PLANNED FOR 12 JUN 52
4. (C) DATE OF INFO: 020513
5. (C) ORIG: JAROCIN, 18TH ME BR, 66TH ME CP, 165 (PROV), AND NY 0742
6. (C) REF REFS: D-092-05400, U-008-09403 (UK REF); CFP-P SECT 2, IIA AND WIA2)
7. (C) SOURCE: REF NO 204755

SOURCE: AGE 38, POLISH NATIONAL PAINTING CONTRACTOR. POLITICAL ACTIVIST. WAS INTERVIEWED FROM 15 DEC 51 TO 18 FEB 52 AND SUBSEQUENTLY



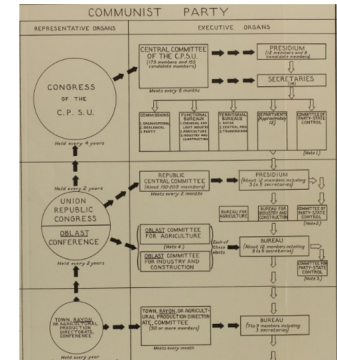
FOREIGN TRADE OF ROMANIA BY COUNTRIES (million lei)

SUMMARY

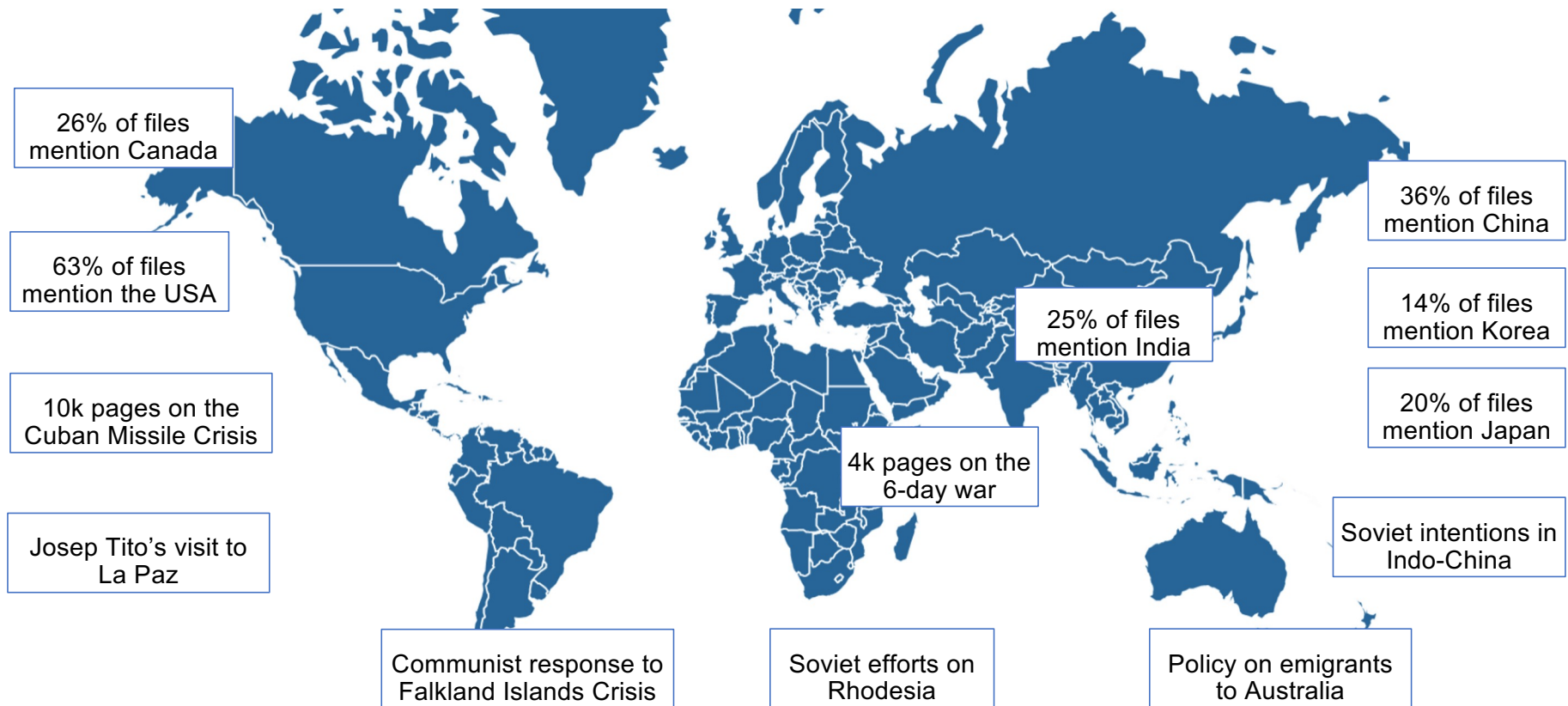
	1958	1959	1960	1961
Foreign trade, total	5700.2	6146.4	6189.4	9643.8
Exports	2810.0	3134.6	4302.7	4757.1
Imports	2890.2	3011.8	3886.7	4886.7
Balance of trade	- 80.2	+ 122.8	+ 416	- 129.6

FACTORS' SHARES IN THE SOVIET UNION

	1959		1960		1961	
	Total	Total	Total	Total	Import	Export
Albania	10	16	10	8	2	
Bulgaria	70	106	140	54	85	
Czechoslovakia	595	759	798	341	458	
East Germany	482	635	670	518	352	
Hungary	247	407	327	150	177	
Poland	239	264	339	147	192	
Soviet Union	2,909	3,285	3,901	2,109	1,792	



Global coverage



Key events



"Ich bin ein Berliner!" "It was a great day for us all, for naturally almost everybody here knows what went on on the 26th. Some people sat at their sets all day; so you can say without exaggeration that all Berlin took part .."

"Yesterday I heard the summary of K's Berlin visit. It was terrific when he said, "Ich bin ein Berliner"."

"We watched the TV for 8 hours and saw Kennedy's visit from start to finish. We were quite intoxicated by the great event. It gave us new courage."

"I saw Kennedy on TV. Our set almost went up in smoke: we had it on from 9.45 till 5.45. I had to see everything. It was a real experience .."

"On Wednesday last we watched TV all day, and wept. What we suffer here is unimaginable. You should have seen the spectacle when JOHNNY's plane flew over our house. Everybody waved; even cars stopped."

"Here all public cheering, etc. is managed by the Bolsheviks (sic). Nobody can efface the impression of last Wednesday. "Ich bin ein Berliner"."

- The Berlin Wall: construction and escape attempts
- Yuri Gagarin orbits the earth
- The Sino-Soviet Split
- Detonation of the "Tsar Bomba"
- Kennedy's "Ich bin ein Berliner" speech
- The 1963 Partial Test Ban Treaty
- Replacement of Nikita Khrushchev by Leonid Brezhnev as Soviet leader
- Soviet economic reform of 1965
- Visits by Lyndon Johnson, Charles de Gaulle and Harold Macmillan to the Soviet Union

FO 371/169171, 1960 Reactions from Berliners to JFK's speech

Key events



SECRET

2 - NOV 1960

NH1151/16.

NOTE

My wife, my son and I were invited on the 17th November to a family dinner party at the flat of the Hungarian Commercial Counsellor, Mr. Biro, who is returning to Budapest permanently in the middle of December. Mr. Biro and I have visited each other's homes on several occasions in the past eighteen months and I have always found, he and his family are very pleasant and charming and that he has never raised business or political questions at these social meetings. The other night, however, for the first time, he did refer to the October, 1956, uprising. The conversation turned from the death of a friend of his during the war in the bombing of Budapest to the more recent violence there. Mr. Biro said that this revolution was not really a revolution at all. A great many young boys of 14 or 15 years of age had been incited by owners of factories and such like to kill and murder indiscriminately. Anyone who wore brown shoes (even by complete inadvertence) was branded as a member of the AVG (whatever that is) and summarily executed. In many cases this happened for the sake of private grudges only. He, himself, had been returning to Budapest at the time from Vienna and was unable to get across the border because the driver of the coach had deserted. He thereupon took the coach himself with its passengers through Czechoslovakia into Hungary. He was afraid for his family and when he eventually entered Budapest he was stopped by some armed people who asked for his credentials. Fortunately, he said, these were counter-revolutionaries and when they saw from his card that he was a director of a Government Trading Organisation, he was saved. He learned afterwards that the revolutionaries had prepared a list of 7,000 "Communists and senior Government representatives" whom they were going to execute and his name was amongst these Communists. Mr. Biro, for the first time, indicated to me in this way that he is an active Communist. Meanwhile I overheard his wife describing the position similarly to my wife and saying that many of the boys were so young that, when they got back from their killings, their parents slapped them for what they had done and they cried like children. My wife and I obviously did not wish to enter into argument about Hungarian domestic politics. All we said was that we deplored violence and

- The death of Stalin
- The 1953 Balkan Pact
- East Germany Uprising
- The execution of Lavrentiy Beria
- "Big Four" power summits
- The Foundation of the Warsaw Pact
- Nikita Khrushchev's "Secret Speech"
- The Hungarian Revolution
- Polish October
- The U2 spy-plane incident

FO 371/151626: November 1960 – secret report on covert conversations about the Hungarian uprising

Insights into pivotal moments of history



~~SECRET~~

~~President de Gaulle, Prime Minister Macmillan, President Eisenhower.~~

Permit me to address you with the following statement.

~~A provocative act is known to have been committed~~
recently with regard to the Soviet Union by the American Air Force. It consisted in the fact that on May 1 a United States military reconnaissance aircraft invaded the Soviet Union while executing a specific espionage mission to obtain information on military and industrial installations on the territory of the USSR. After the aggressive purpose of its flight became known the aircraft was shot down by units of the Soviet rocket troops. Unfortunately, this was not the only case of aggressive and espionage actions by the United States air force against the Soviet Union.

Naturally, the Soviet Government was compelled to give appropriate qualification to these acts and show up their treacherous nature which is incompatible with the elementary requirements of the maintenance of normal relations between states in time of peace, not to speak of it being in gross contradiction with the task of lessening international tension and creating the necessary conditions for the fruitful work of the Summit Conference. This was done both in my speeches at the Session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and in

- Khrushchev's demand for an apology from Eisenhower for the CIA's U-2 spy plane flight over the U.S.S.R.
- *"A provocative act is known to have been committed recently with regard to the Soviet Union by the American Air Force."*
- The *"treacherous nature"* of U.S. spy plane missions *"is incompatible with the elementary requirements of the maintenance of normal relations between states in time of peace, not to speak of it being in gross contradiction with the task of lessening international tensions"*.

FO 371/153765: Summit Meeting between US, UK, France and Soviet Union Paris, 14-19 May 1960

Learning and research tools

Foreign Office Departments

	Germany & Berlin	Yugoslavia	Albania	Bulgaria Czechoslovakia Hungary Poland Romania	Soviet Union Baltic States																																					
Foreign Office (FO)	Central (C) Denis Allen (1952-53) Patrick Hancock (1953-54)	Western & Southern (W) Nicholas Cheetham (1952-54) Patrick Hancock (1954-55)																																								
	Western (W) Patrick Hancock (1954-55) Charles Johnston (1955-56) Patrick Hancock (1955-56) Edward Tomkins (1959-62)	Eastern (E)																																								
	Central (C) Edward Tomkins (1962-63) Derek Dodson (1963)	Timeline																																								
	Western (R) Bernard Ledwidge (1963-65) Alan Campbell (1965-67) Hugh Morgan (1967)	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Month</th> <th>Event</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td rowspan="6">1953</td> <td>February</td> <td>Formation of the Balkan Pact</td> </tr> <tr> <td>March</td> <td>Death of Josef Stalin</td> </tr> <tr> <td>April</td> <td>Soviet "Peace Offensive"</td> </tr> <tr> <td>June</td> <td>Arrest of Lavrentii Beriya</td> </tr> <tr> <td>June</td> <td>June 17 uprising in East Germany</td> </tr> <tr> <td>July</td> <td>Signature of the Korean Armistice Agreement</td> </tr> <tr> <td>September</td> <td colspan="2">Election of Nikita Khrushchev as First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union</td> </tr> <tr> <td>December</td> <td colspan="2">Execution of Lavrentii Beriya</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="3">1954</td> <td>March</td> <td>Formation of the K.G.B. Soviet recognition of East German sovereignty</td> </tr> <tr> <td>April</td> <td>Defection of Vladimir Petrov from the Soviet Union Geneva Conference</td> </tr> <tr> <td>October</td> <td>Signature of the Paris Accords, allowing the accession of West Germany to NATO and the end of the Allied occupation of West Germany</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="4">1955</td> <td>February</td> <td>Resignation of Georgii Malenkov as Premier of the Soviet Union</td> </tr> <tr> <td>May</td> <td>Formation of the Warsaw Pact</td> </tr> <tr> <td>June</td> <td>Belgrade Declaration</td> </tr> <tr> <td>July</td> <td>Geneva Summit Shooting down of EI Al Flight 402 over Bulgaria</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Year	Month	Event	1953	February	Formation of the Balkan Pact	March	Death of Josef Stalin	April	Soviet "Peace Offensive"	June	Arrest of Lavrentii Beriya	June	June 17 uprising in East Germany	July	Signature of the Korean Armistice Agreement	September	Election of Nikita Khrushchev as First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union		December	Execution of Lavrentii Beriya		1954	March	Formation of the K.G.B. Soviet recognition of East German sovereignty	April	Defection of Vladimir Petrov from the Soviet Union Geneva Conference	October	Signature of the Paris Accords, allowing the accession of West Germany to NATO and the end of the Allied occupation of West Germany	1955	February	Resignation of Georgii Malenkov as Premier of the Soviet Union	May	Formation of the Warsaw Pact	June	Belgrade Declaration	July
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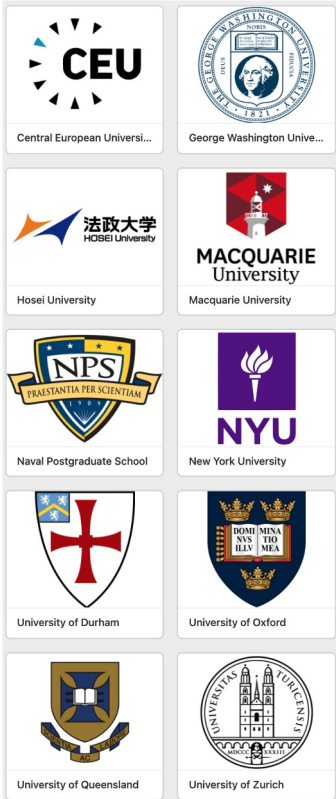
Research Tools

- In-depth subject indexing
- Table-of-contents for each file with detailed abstract.
- Glossary of key government people
- Organizational directory

Learning Tools

- Video introductions
- Subject essays
- Lesson plans
- Reading lists and document-based questions

Value for all research institutions



“A truly indispensable resource for...studying the history of Eastern Europe, Communism and the Cold War. The high quality of British diplomatic reporting... will immensely enhance comparative research of the Soviet Bloc countries’ history.”

Professor Csaba Békés, Centre for Social Sciences, Institute for Political Science, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest

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"This crucial resource provides detailed insight into the internal workings of the communist world and to the dynamic of the Cold War... a wealth of key primary materials which will enrich research work in history, politics and related disciplines and...support student-led learning in higher education." – **Mark Allinson**, University of Bristol

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Document Date

From
To

Document Type

Select all

Administrative Records (306) Parliamentary and Official Government Material (991)

Correspondence (16078) Press and Media (5633)

Module

Select all

Module I: 1953-1960 (6862)

Module II: 1961-1966 (3318)

Module III: 1967-1975 (3444)

Module IV: 1976-1982 (3036)

Theme

Select all

Border Security and Migration (1263)

Dissent, Resistance, and Human Rights (823)

Domestic Politics (2676)

Economics and Trade (4062)

Embassy and Consulate Administration (1055)

Industry and Agriculture (1518)

International Relations (13586)

Media and Culture (1349)

Migration (1166)

Subject Countries

Select all

Albania (355) Hungary (1386)

Berlin (1252) Poland (1742)

Bulgaria (1139) Romania (1350)

Czechoslovakia (1436) Soviet Union (3749)

East Germany (1305) Yugoslavia (1637)

Germany (East and West) (751) Eastern Europe Region (1089)

None (9)

Languages

Select all

Albanian (5) Latvian (2)

Arabic (5) Lithuanian (2)

Armenian (1) Luxembourgish (1)

Bulgarian (43) Malay (1)

Burmese (2) Moldavian (1)

Chinese (6) Norwegian (20)

Czech (102) Polish (138)

Danish (4) Portuguese (6)

- Currently available on the Taylor & Francis platform
- Migration to the *Commons Platform* by Sept 2022
- New tools include
 - Improved performance
 - Modernized design
 - Undergraduate level
 - Advanced search operators

Materials from



- Foreign Office file series FO 371, the most frequently consulted file series at the archives. (Foreign Office: Political Departments: General Correspondence from 1906-1966) includes the files of the FO's Northern, Southern, Central, and Western Departments, responsible for reporting on the socialist states of Eastern Europe.
- FCO 28 (Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Northern Department and East European and Soviet Department) contains the files detailing U.K. political and economic relations with the Soviet Union and the Baltic States, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, Poland, Albania and Yugoslavia.
- FCO 33 (Foreign Office: Western Department and Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Western European Department) contains files of the Western Department of the Foreign Office relevant to U.K. relations with East Germany between January 1967 and October 1968, and the Western European Department of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office dealing with East Germany from 1968 onwards.