

March 7, 1989

Hungary: Discussing the Possibility of Neutrality

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Summary:

An analysis of the changing relationship between Budapest and Moscow.

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English

Contents:

Original Scan

~~Top Secret~~

6.2(d)

HUNGARY:

Discussing the Possibility of Neutrality

General Secretary Gorbachev's recent qualified endorsement of Hungary's decision to introduce a multiparty system will stimulate the discussion of Hungarian neutrality already evident in official circles in Budapest.

6.2(d)

[redacted]

3.3(b)(1)

[redacted] Hungary wants a relationship with the USSR similar to that of Finland—friendly but outside the Warsaw Pact and economically integrated with Western Europe.

3.3(b)(1)

[redacted] Budapest has permission from senior Soviet officials to withdraw from the Pact and CEMA.

3.3(b)(1)

6.2(d)

Gorbachev said publicly last week that Moscow has "respect for and great confidence in" Budapest's decision to introduce a multiparty system, adding that he hopes Hungary is ready for it.

3.3(b)(1)

[redacted] Gorbachev's cautious endorsement follows controversial comments by his adviser Oleg Bogomolov allowing for the possibility of Hungarian neutrality—comments that Bogomolov later said were not authoritative.

6.2(d)

Comment: Several Hungarian officials recently have publicly expressed their hopes for the eventual elimination of both NATO and the Pact.

3.3(b)(1)

[redacted]

[redacted] Hungary's ultimate objective is the elimination of both alliance systems.

6.2(d)

Although the Pact has always called officially for the dismantling of both alliances, Moscow almost certainly would not condone a Hungarian move to leave the Pact or CEMA under current circumstances. Nonetheless, Gorbachev himself has alluded to the eventual dissolution of the Pact and NATO as part of a protracted process of European disarmament. He probably would view Hungarian neutrality only as part of such a process.

6.2(d)

Some in Budapest may be testing the limits of Hungary's ties to the USSR by raising the neutrality issue. Many Hungarians, including some in the leadership, want Hungary to become a neutral social democracy and believe that the Soviets would not intervene militarily to stop this evolution. The statements of Bogomolov and Gorbachev and the announced partial Soviet troop withdrawal from Eastern Europe are leading some Hungarians to believe the formerly unthinkable is now possible.

6.2(d)

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