# July 3, 1956

### National Security Council, NSC 5608, Draft of "US Policy toward the Soviet Satellites in Eastern Europe"

## Citation:

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## Summary:

Staff draft of NSC 5608, concluding that ferment in the Communist world provides new opportunities to challenge Soviet control. A draft annex called for "encouraging evolutionary change" and defined as tasks of RFE and RL (and other USG-funded media) "avoiding any incitement to premature revolt" while "seeking to maintain faith in the eventual restoration of freedom." Redacted document 76, FRUS, 1955-1957, XXV, unredacted document 12, Csaba Békés, Malcolm Byrne, and János M. Rainer, The 1956 Hungarian Revolution: A History in Documents (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2002.)

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# **Original Language:**

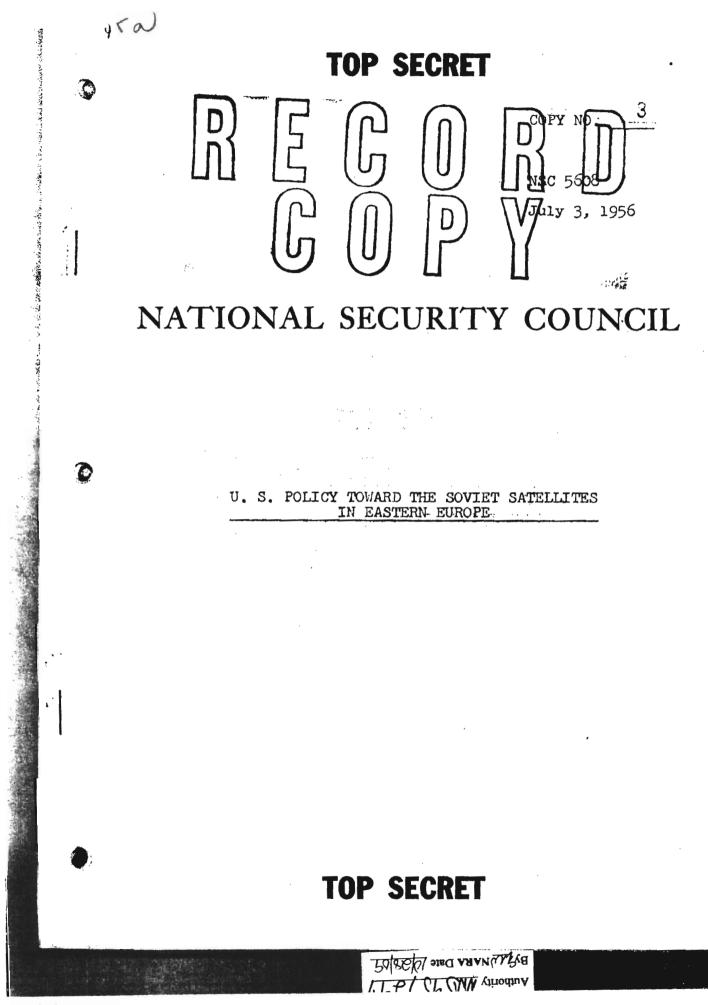
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# **Contents:**

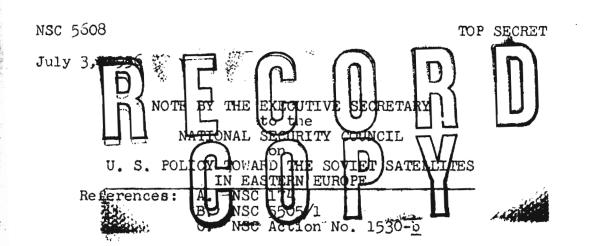
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A Staff Study on the subject is being prepared, and will be circulated for Council information in this connection, as an Annex to NSC 5603.

The enclosed policy does not appear to involve any unusual expenditures over or beyond funds which have been appropriated for normal operating programs of the agencies involved. Accordingly, no Financial Appendix is enclosed.

The enclosed statement of policy, if adopted, is intended to supersede NSC 174.

It is recommended that, if the Council adopts the enclosed statement of policy, it be submitted to the President with the recommendation that he approve it, direct its implementation by all appropriate Executive departments and agencies of the U. S. Government, and designate the Operations Coordinating Board as the coordinating agency.

> S. EVERETT GLEASON Acting Executive Secretary

cc: The Secretary of the Treasury The Attorney General The Special Assistant to the President for Disarmament The Director, Bureau of the Budget The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff The Director of Central Intelligence

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### DRAFT

STATEMENT OF POLICY by the NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL on UNITED STATES POLICY TOWARD THE SOVIET SATELLITES IN EASTERN EUROPE

#### GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. Soviet control over the Soviet satellites in Eastern Europe (Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, Albania and East Germany\*) has contributed importantly to the power disequilibrium in Europe and to the threat to the security of the United States. Despite economic dislocation and administrative difficulties, the Kremlin has made considerable progress in exploiting the industrial capacity of the satellites and expanding their military capabilities for use as a coordinated whole with those of the Soviet Union. Formation of the Warsaw Pact in May 1955 as a counter to NATO, which had just admitted Vest Germany, institutionalized and extended existing Soviet coordination and control over the military potential of the Eastern European bloc. The Soviet

While many of the considerations set forth in this paper with respect to the Eastern European satellite area as a whole also apply to East Germany, the specific problems of East Germany and Berlin are treated respectively in a supplement to NSC 160/1, being prepared pursuant to Council action on June 15, 1956, and in NSC 5404/1.

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military position in Europe was affected little, if at all, by the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Austria in October 1955.

2. Impediments to the consolidation of Soviet control over the Eastern European satellites are:

<u>a</u>. The anti-Communist attitude of the great majority of the population in each satellite. This anti-Communism is intensified particularly by loss of personal freedom and a reduced standard of living, as well as by outraged religious and national feelings; but its undiminished survival over the long run is jeopardized by Communist control over every aspect of the lives of the people, particularly the young, as well as by the new Moscow policy of allowing the satellites greater latitude in the conduct of their own affairs.

b. The continued presence of nationist sentiment among the people and even within the satellite Communist parties themselves.

<u>c</u>. The continued refusal of the West to accept the permanence of the imposed satellite regimes as compatible with the freedom and self-determination of nations.

3. Despite these impediments, Soviet domination of the Eastern European satellites remains firm and there appears 11ttle immediate prospect of basic change in this regard. While the satellite regimes have not been able to overcome widespread

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popular dissatisfaction with their Communistic program and with their inclusion within the Soviet world, nevertheless there are no known underground groups capable of coordinated, sustained resistance activities to the governments in power in any of the countries concerned. As long as a Moscow-dominated Communist leadership remains in power in these countries and is backed by Soviet military force or threat of force, it is unlikely that Soviet ability to exercise effective control over and to exploit the resources of the European satellites can be appreciably reduced.

4. On the other hand, the many changes in the USSR since the death of Stalin--particularly the introduction of col-Lective leadership, Moscow's acceptance of Titoism and acknowledgement that there are "difference roads to Socialism", and the denigration of Stalin--are being reflected in current tellite developments. These developments have varied in bace and scope in each of the satellites and are continuing, but common to them all are a reduction in the role of the secret police embodied in the emphasis on the need for socialist legality" and the admission of past errors atwributed to the "cult of personality". Some personnel changes we occurred at the top in certain satellite governments and others may follow. Although the basic political and economic molicies and objectives have not been successfully challenged for the fundamental subjection of the satellites to the Soviet Union effectively threatened, there are indications that

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Moscow now recognizes the advantage of using greater flexibility as well as more camouflage in its control of the satellites, and of giving them certain latitude or responsibility of decision on matters of local detail within the general framework of Soviet bloc policy.

5. Nationalism in the satellites, even within the Communist movement itself, remains a disruptive force in Sovietsatellite relations. There is a real and growing split in most satellite parties between those amenable to close Soviet control and the "national Communists". However, since the combination of basic factors which made possible the successful Yugoslav break with Moscow is lacking in the satellites, it is unlikely that the Yugoslav experience will be repeated in any of them. Moreover, by its reconciliation with Tito, Moscow has sought with some success to neutralize the comments by Belgrade's independent position and policies.

5. Tito's establishment of an independent Communist regime provides a standing example of successful defiance of the Kremlin and a demonstration that the West is prepared to essist nationalistic Communist leaders to assert their indeendence of Moscow. Despite Moscow's apparent reconciliation with Belgrade, it may be still possible to exploit Yugoelavia's unique position in promoting future changes in the Soviet satellite relationship. Any diminution of Yugoslavia's independence of the Kremlin will limit its usefulness in this

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regard. On the other hand, a Yugoslavia which maintains a position of independence between East and West, would be an important asset in promoting possible future changes in the Soviet-satellite relationship.

7. U. S. strategy and policy with respect to the German problem and the satellite issue are so closely interrelated that each must be considered in the light of its effect on the other. The intransigence of the Soviets on German reunification, at Geneva and subsequently, arises in part from their German policy and in part from their regard for Eastern Germany as an advanced position for control of the satellite area. These considerations provide strong Soviet incentives for postponing an agreement on German reunification. The inability of the West to make the satellite issue an agenda item at the megotiating table or to offer substantial promise of the early simination of Soviet control depresses the hopes of the atellite peoples for freedom and reduces their will to resist, hereby increasing the tendency to accept accommodation with bscow.

8. Nevertheless, Eastern Germany poses a special and more efficult problem of control for the USSR than do the other entellites. While the Eastern German regime has made some engress with the program of basic industrial development and egalization, and while there are various factors operating weaken resistance of the Eastern German population to the emmunist regime, there is little likelihood that the East

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dermans can be brought to accept the Communist system imposed on them. The fact that the main body of the German nation in the Federal Republic has made considerable advances in freedom and well-being, and the fact that West Berlin provides a means of contact with the Free World, serve to keep alive in Eastern dermany the hope for an escape from Soviet domination. The situation in East Germany provides opportunities for the West to continue to exploit strong popular anti-Communism, to maintain East Germany as a focal point and example of disaffection for the rest of the Soviet satellites, and to make difficult ull utilization by the Soviet Union of East Germany's economic resources.

9. The denigration of Stalin and Moscow's acceptance of toism have created difficulties in Soviet relations with the tellites; they have raised questions as to the infallibility Soviet leadership among important elements of the satellite ommunist parties; they have aroused to varying degrees latent pular aspirations for relaxation of oppression, restoration national independence, and the establishment of governments seponsive to popular will. This fluid situation in the tellites has increased the previously limited U. S. capalities to influence a basic change in Soviet domination of the satellites. Although the Eastern European peoples coninue to feel that liberation is remote, they remain responsive of our interest in their independence, provided it is expressed arsistently and in terms which make it clear that this is our

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basic objective. There is a possibility that an internal relaxation might result in the long run in the development of forces and pressures leading to fundamental changes of the satellite system in the direction of national independence and individual freedom and security.

### POLICY CONCLUSIONS

10. It is in the national security interests of the Inited States to oppose Soviet control of the satellites in Restern Europe and to seek the eventual elimination of that control. At the same time it must be recognized that the attainment by any of the present satellites of national indeendence free of Soviet domination is remote, and that whatver degree of independence may be granted from Moscow or may ovolve in differing circumstances in individual satellites, oviet Russia by reason of its power status and its georephical position is bound to possess and exercise strong influence in the Eastern European area.

11. The United States is not prepared to resort to war e eliminate Soviet domination of the satellites, nor does tainment of this goal through internal revolutionary means opear likely or practicable. Therefore, the principal mbasis of our efforts should be directed to the encourageent of evolutionary change resulting in the weakening of oviet controls and the attainment of national independence by the countries concerned, even though there may be no immediate energy in their internal political structure. While some

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policies and actions may be applicable for the Soviet bloc as a whole, others may be suitable only for one or more of the satellites. Treatment of the satellites as a bloc without regard for significant differences among them may support and encourage Moscow's dominating position.

12. Flexible courses of action involving inducements as ell as pressures are required to create and exploit troubleone problems for the USSR, complicate Soviet control in the atellites, and retard the growth of the military and economic otential of the Soviet bloc while encouraging the growth of orces in the satellites tending to assert national indepenence aims. This policy should be carried out in the light fourient estimates of the Soviet Government's reactions and the situation in the satellite states concerned.

### BASIC OBJECTIVES

13. Long-range: The eventual fulfillment of the rights the peoples in the Soviet satellites to enjoy representawe governments resting upon the consent of the governed, we of Soviet domination and participating as peaceful memers in the free world community.

14. Interim:

<u>a</u>. To foster changes in the character and policies of the satellite regimes by influencing them and their peoples toward the choice of those alternative lines of action which, while in their national interests, do not

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conflict with the security interests of the United States.

b. To minimize satellite contributions to Soviet power and to encourage changes in the present Sovietsatellite relationship toward national independence for the individual countries concerned.

<u>c</u>. To conserve and strengthen the assets within the satellites, and among their nationals outside, which may contribute to U. S. interests in peace or war, and to the ultimate freedom of the satellites.

<u>d</u>. To lay the groundwork, as feasible with reasonable risk, for resistance to the Soviets in the event of war.

### GENERAL COURSES OF ACTION

15. Use appropriate means short of military force to oppose, and to contribute to the eventual elimination of, oviet domination over the satellites; including, when appropriate, concert with NATO or other friendly powers, resort o UN procedures, and diplomatic negotiations.

15. Seek to create and increase popular and bureauratic pressures through the exploitation of discontents and other problems to promote evolutionary changes in Sovietsatellite policies and relationships which will advance U. S. objectives.

17. When appropriate, depict the causes of the discontents and other problems which are to be exploited not as conditions reparable only by revolution but as susceptible to

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correction by the satellite regimes if they should choose to take the necessary action.

18. Continue basic opposition to the Soviet-Communist system and continue to state its evils; but stress evolutionary rather than revolutionary change.

19. Seek to cause each satellite regime to occupy itself increasingly with internal problems and to pose diffiult decisions tending to create uncertainty or divisions within the regime.

20. Encourage the satellite peoples in passive reistance to their Soviet-dominated regimes when this will ontribute to minimizing satellite contributions to Soviet ower or to increasing pressures for desirable change. Avoid noitements to violence or to action when the probable rerisals or other results would yield a net loss in terms U. S. objectives.

21. Foster satellite nationalist sentiment as a force weaken and disrupt Soviet domination while avoiding comtments to national territorial ambitions in the Eastern ropean area.

22. Encourage democratic, anti-Communist elements in satellites. Cooperate with other forces--such as ligious, cultural, social--which are natural allies in the nuggle against Soviet imperialism, and seek to revive and italize the centuries-old bonds between these peoples and west.

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23. As a means of encouraging the eventual establishment of ealy elected governments in the satellites and not as an end itself, be prepared on a case-by-case basis to assist "Namal Communist" movements where U. S. and free world cohesion d not be jeopardized thereby. While avoiding the appearance meouraging the export of Tito's Communism, use Yugoslavia's use position in Eastern Europe to promote the weakening of Soviet grip on the satellite countries.

24. When appropriate to achieve the basic objectives set in in this paper, stimulate and exploit conflicts within the unist ruling groups in each satellite, among such groups, between them and the Kremlin.

25. /Seek authority for and/\* use, as appropriate, greater ability in U. S. economic policies (both incentives and re-

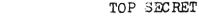
6. Exploit the developing organizations of Western unity OEEC, CSC, etc.) as a force of attraction for the sateland emphasize on appropriate occasions the concept of a European community to include ultimately the Eastern Eurocountries.

Support or make use of those refugees or exile organins which can usefully contribute to the attainment of U. 3. Lives, but do not recognize governments-in-exile. Encourrile unity and combat the Communist campaign to fragment matriate the emigration.

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28. Continue propaganda and special operations by official and unofficial means, with appropriate adjustments as Communist controls and obstructions of communications are relaxed.

29. Be prepared to negotiate issues between the United States and the individual satellite regimes, taking into ecount varying conditions in the different countries with view to:

<u>a.</u> Protecting and advancing the interests of the United States and its citizens.

b. Removing obstacles to communications between the peoples of these countries and the outside world.

<u>c</u>. Encouraging changes in the satellite regimes in line with the objectives set forth in this paper. 30. Emphasize (a) the right of the peoples of Eastern rope to independent governments of their own choosing, and ) the violation of international agreements by the Soviet is satellite Governments, whereby they have been deprived of it right, particularly the Yalta Declaration on liberated rope and the Treaties of Peace with Bulgaria, Hungary and mania.

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