

Activities of the Czechoslovak intelligence services in Austria in a Central European context 1948–1960

Networks – Operations – Impact

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Immediately after the end of the Second World War, the newly formed Czechoslovak intelligence service began to operate in neighbouring Austria. Shortly after the communist takeover in February 1948, these activities intensified – Austria became an important hub for operations against "the West". In the 1950s, during the occupation of Austria, many of Moscow's crucial operations in Austria were carried out using Czechoslovak networks and operatives. According to the American Counterintelligence Corps (CIC), the Czechoslovakian services were among the "most active" of all Eastern European intelligence services, playing an important role on Austrian soil during the dawning of the Cold War.

The activities of Czechoslovak intelligence in Austria have so far attracted little in the way of research. Funded by the Austrian Science Fund FWF, this project aims to produce a systematic analysis of the operations and personnel in the Czechoslovak *rezidentury* (intelligence stations) in Vienna and Salzburg during the first half of the Cold War, comparing them with what was going on in other important stations of the Czechoslovak services. It will deal with questions such as how these clandestine networks were created, maintained and secured, what operational methods were applied and what tasks were pursued. The results will therefore make an important contribution to Cold War Studies and will help to EINSCHÄTZEN to what extent these operations had a significant impact on political, economic, military and scientific developments both in Austria and Czechoslovakia in particular and on the overall progress of the Cold War in Central Europe.

Interpretation of a broad combination of sources attesting the roles played by all the parties involved in this "hidden conflict" will, it is hoped, throw light on these activities and serve to clarify the general policy of Czechoslovak (and Eastern European) intelligence in Austria.

Barbara Stelzl-Marx, Director of the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Research on Consequences of War and Professor of European History at the University of Graz, will oversee this project, drawing on her experience in the study of the Soviet presence and counterintelligence in Austria. Dieter Bacher will be responsible for coordination and the input of US and British materials, and Philipp Lesiak will add his expertise on Czechoslovak and Austrian archives.

The three-year project will be based at the Institut für Geschichte of the Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz in collaboration with the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Consequences of War, Graz – Vienna – Raabs, and the City of Graz.