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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
THE DIRECTOR OF INTELLIGENCE AND RESEARCH

Research Memorandum
RSB-159, December 16,

TO : The Acting Secretary
THROUGH: S/S
FROM : INR - Thomas L. Hughes *Thomas L. Hughes*

SUBJECT : East European Reaction to President Kennedy's Assassination

- Mr. Tolson _____
- Mr. Belmont _____
- Mr. Mohr _____
- Mr. Casper _____
- Mr. Callahan _____
- Mr. Conrad _____
- Mr. DeLoach _____
- Mr. Evans _____
- Mr. Gale _____
- Mr. Rosen _____
- Mr. Sullivan _____
- Mr. Tavel _____
- Mr. Trotter _____
- Tele. Room _____
- Miss Holmes _____
- Miss Gandy _____

The considerable variation in reaction in individual East European countries to President Kennedy's assassination prompted this survey, made at the request of the Bureau of European Affairs. An annex makes a tabular comparison by country.

ABSTRACT

The official East European reaction to President Kennedy's assassination varied somewhat in accordance with the fundamental quality of each country's relations with the United States. Expressions of official sympathy were particularly notable in Yugoslavia and particularly restrained in Hungary. Popular reaction, though obviously great everywhere, to some extent followed official cues, particularly in Hungary where caution and fear on the part of the population evidently served to restrain direct expressions of sympathy to the US Legation. Yugoslavia and Poland, which observed national mourning for the President, were also the countries in which the greatest outpouring of popular grief was evident. In the deeply Catholic Polish city of Poznan popular expressions of sympathy to the US Consulate were so great that the normally reserved officialdom was obliged to follow suit to an extent which could not have been anticipated.

R. Smith
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Media coverage was generally prompt and prominent except in Hungary where Gomulka's visit, which ended on November 22, continued to occupy the front pages until the 25th. As factual reporting gave way to commentary, an essentially similar line blaming reactionaries for the President's assassination developed. Polish press commentary became particularly virulent along those lines.

Media coverage was minimal but prompt in Albania.

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