

## Summary

Austria's position in post-1945 Europe has often been described as exceptional: according to this interpretation, Austria – unlike Germany – always managed to stand apart from the East-West struggle of the Cold War. This treatment of the Alpine Republic as a “special case” started as early as 1945 and, following the ten years of occupation by the Allied Powers, finally culminated in the country's position of neutrality after 1955. While this view might be flattering to some Austrians, it is not borne out by the facts. In reality, Austria was as much affected by the Cold War as other European countries, possibly even more so due to her geographic position directly in front of the “Iron Curtain”, which before 1955 actually went right through the country.

The articles in this volume describe some relevant aspects of Austria's history after the Second World War, concentrating on the period between 1945 and 1958. While the starting point is obvious – the end of the war was the beginning of the ten-year Allied occupation of the country – the year 1958 was chosen because the Soviet reaction to American transit flights over Austrian air space in connection with the Lebanon Crisis were instrumental in shaping Austria's “neutrality” for years to come. All the articles describe various aspects of Austrian involvement in crises or affairs originating outside the country: the role of Western intelligence organisations using Austria as a basis for operations in Eastern and South-eastern Europe, various Allied war and contingency plans, as well as activities of foreign partisans on Austrian soil, such as the transit of Ukrainian anti-Communist fighters escaping to the West, or terrorist attacks by extremist Jewish groups. This volume does not deal with the Communist-inspired strikes of 1950 (interpreted at the time by many as an attempted coup d'état and Austria's attitude during the Hungarian crisis of 1956. These two events have been dealt with sufficiently elsewhere.

The first article is a “historiographic introduction” to the Cold War and Austria. Its author, **Günter Bischof**, associate professor at the University of New Orleans, is among the most knowledgeable experts on this era – he recently published his fascinating *Austria in the First Cold War 1945–55*.<sup>1</sup> In this paper he presents an overview of the different “schools” of Cold War historians, and attempts to divide the period into “phases”. He himself sees three such phases: the “First Cold War”, that started just after World War II and lasted until the late fifties and early sixties, the age of “détente” which ended with the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, and Ronald Reagan's new – “Second” – Cold War that eventually led to the collapse of the Soviet “Empire” and the end of the Cold War in 1989–90. *Bischof* sees huge deficits in historical research on this period in Austria. This can partly be explained by contemporary History's pre-occupation with the inter-war years and the Third Reich, which meant that the post-war period was mainly left to the political sciences. Only recently has the situation started to change – in fact, this volume is an attempt to present new findings and provide new stimuli for the Post-1945 period.

The next three articles focus on various aspects of intelligence activities in Austria. **Colonel James J. Carafano**, military historian of the U.S. Army and editor of the *Joint Forces Quarterly*, is presently completing his doctoral thesis at Georgetown University on the U.S. Army of occupation in Austria. His contribution to this volume, which deals with U.S. military intelligence at the start of the occupation, throws light upon the early phase of the Cold War that was so often characterised by ambiguity. At first, Nazi sympathisers and war criminals were seen as the main threat, whereas from 1947–48 onwards, the Soviets became “the enemy”. *Carafano* shows how threat perception influenced reports and their

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<sup>1</sup> Günter Bischof, *Austria in the First Cold War 1945–55: The Leverage of the Weak*, Cold War History Series (Basingstoke & London – New York: Macmillan/St. Martin's: 1999).

interpretation: from the very beginning, U.S. commands were confronted with reports of occasional Soviet abuse of authority and maltreatment of Austrian civilians. But these reports were not taken seriously at first – only when the threat perception changed were they interpreted as proof of the Soviets' aggressive aims.

**Siegfried Beer**, associate professor at Graz University, complements Carafano's study, giving an overview of the various organisations and structures of the U.S. intelligence services, and focussing on the role played by Austrian collaborators and sympathisers. When the Western agencies redirected their efforts from chasing Nazi war criminals to fighting the former ally in the East, they became more open to recruiting former Nazi intelligence officers for their own schemes.

Some of these cases are detailed by **Dr. Arnold Kopeczek**, a historian in the Austrian Ministry of Education, whose paper focuses on the gradual shift of intelligence work from information gathering to the support of anti-communist partisans in Eastern and South-eastern Europe, and to preparations for guerrilla activities in Austria in case of a Soviet advance into Western Europe. This topic has recently attracted public attention in connection with the much-publicised GIA arms' caches in Austria.

In the past, most research on post-1945 history in general, and intelligence studies in particular, was based on Western sources. We are therefore particularly grateful for the contribution by **Edda Engelke**, MA, from Styria who was able to use Russian sources to shed some light on intelligence activities directed against the Soviet forces in Austria. Drawing mainly on files concerning Austrian civilians who had been arrested and, in many cases, sentenced to harsh prison or labour camp terms, she shows how the situation looked "from the other side" – how the Soviets felt threatened by Western intelligence efforts and how they attempted to discourage Austrians from participating in them.

**Dr. Rudolf Jeřábek** of the Austrian State Archives writes about partisans in Austria in the late 1940s. Partisans in Austria? A largely forgotten phenomenon of the late forties, he examines three cases in detail: the transit of anti-Soviet Ukrainian partisans through eastern Austria in the West in 1948, the activities of Jewish extremists (mainly directed against British installations) in 1947–48, and the activities of Croatian and Slovene anti-Tito partisans and their adversaries on the Austrian-Yugoslav border in 1946–52. None of these fought against the Austrian government or the Republic, yet their activities caused grave concern and harm, including loss of life.

The next two papers deal with military contingency plans for Austria. **Dr. Erwin A. Schmidl**, head of research at the Austrian Ministry of Defence's Institute for Military Studies, details American plans to supply Vienna by air in the event of a Soviet Berlin-style blockade of the capital. As Vienna did not have an airport within the Western zones of occupation, the Americans drew up plans to build a new airport in Vienna-Simmering that could be used in the event of a blockade, and in 1948 they stockpiled both the construction material that would have been necessary, as well as a three-months supply of food and fuel for the city's civilian population. This example is a good illustration of the fact that Austria's position during (and after) the occupation period can only be understood within a broader European context, especially with regard to Germany.

While most studies so far – due in part to the accessibility of the sources, but also because of the language barrier – have focussed on American and British policies, the next article illustrates the contingency plans in the French zone of occupation (North Tyrol and the Vorarlberg). As a continental European power, France was far less convinced of the wisdom of abandoning the continent in the case of a Soviet attack (as was envisaged by all American war plans until 1949), and consequently included Austria in their preparations to stop a Soviet advance as far east as possible. As a former officer in the Austrian Corps of Engineers,

**Colonel (ret.) Bruno Koppensteiner** (now an MA student at Salzburg University) is eminently qualified to discuss the extensive French preparations to destroy road passages and bridges in their zone of occupation. In addition, he provides an overview of the planning and creation of Austrian (para-)military forces in the Western zones of occupation: the nucleus for the Austrian army established after the signing of the State Treaty in 1955.

The final paper discusses the events of 1958: when U.S. planes crossed Austrian airspace on their way to the Lebanon in July 1958, this presented the Soviets with a perfect opportunity to put pressure on Austria to adopt a more balanced policy of “neutrality” between East and West, instead of the clear pro- Western stance shown during the Hungarian crisis of 1956. The author of this study, **Walter Blasi**, is a historian at the Institute for Military Studies, and is just completing his PhD studies at the University of Vienna.

By examining these questions, this volume intends to present an overview of Austria in the early years of the Cold War and to show how much Austria was involved in – and affected by – crises originating outside the country. It thus covers aspects of Austria early post-1945 history which have so far been rather neglected.