

CN 221

EURO - AUSTRIAN TANK UNITS HOLD MANEUVERS

VIENNA, SEPT 4 (UPI)--SOME OF AUSTRIA'S MOST MODERN TANK UNITS ARE REMAINING NEAR THE AUSTRO-CZECHOSLOVAK BORDER ON UNLIMITED MANEUVERS, A DEFENSE MINISTRY SPOKESMAN SAID TODAY.

THE MANEUVERS ARE BEING HELD AT THE MILITARY TRAINING GROUND AT ALLENSTEIG, SOME 60 KILOMETERS SOUTH OF THE AUSTRO-CZECHOSLOVAK BORDER, THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

HE DID NOT ELABORATE ON HOW LONG THE MANEUVERS WERE SCHEDULED TO LAST.

THE UNITS, EQUIPPED WITH AMERICAN-MADE M60 TANKS, ARE THE MOST MODERN ARMORED EQUIPMENT IN THE AUSTRIAN ARMY, THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

THE UNITS WERE SLATED TO HOLD MANEUVERS HERE IN TWO WEEKS BUT STARTED THEM EARLY ON THEIR RETURN FROM ALERT POSITIONS NEAR THE AUSTRO-CZECHOSLOVAK FRONTIER.

AUSTRIAN GARRISONS NORTH OF THE DANUBE RIVER ALONG THE AUSTRO-CZECHSLOVAK BORDER WERE STRENGTHENED CONSIDERABLY AFTER THE SOVIET ARMED INTERVENTION IN NEIGHBORING CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

AUSTRIA DEFENSE MINISTER GEORG PRADER RECENTLY ORDERED THE INFANTRY UNITS TO RETURN TO THEIR HOME BASES BUT STRESSED THAT THE ARMY WOULD REMAIN IN A STATE OF ALERT.

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